Anna-Liisa Heusala

The Transitions of Local Administration Culture in Russia
The Transitions of Local Administration Culture in Russia
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## Glossary

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<tr>
<td>Administrative-command system (of government)</td>
<td>Soviet period economic administration system in which guidance was exercised by the Communist Party structures</td>
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<tr>
<td>Appellation (Kassatsiia)</td>
<td>A legal procedure which became possible under the Russian system of government during the 19th century legal reforms</td>
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<tr>
<td>Central Executive Committee of the USSR (Tsentral’nyi ispolnitel’nyi komitet SSSR)</td>
<td>The highest administrative decision making organ in the Soviet system of government</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chinovnik</td>
<td>Civil servant, both state and local administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commissar (Komissar)</td>
<td>A head of a Soviet Commissariat (ministry), a member of the Soviet Government (Sovnarkom)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District (Uezd)</td>
<td>An administrative area, which in the tsarist period was below the province and after 1993 was also a part of a city</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Double (dual) government</td>
<td>A joint system of the party and the state with a regulated decision making hierarchy between the two systems</td>
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</table>
Duma: A town council, both in the tsarist period and after 1993 (Russian towns could choose whether to use the name duma or soviet)

Emergency law: Legislation which was widely used in the post 1917 revolutionary building of the Soviet state

Estate: A social stratification of a specific and hereditary group of people. The four tsarist period estates were nobility, townspeople (merchants and professionals), clergy and peasants.

Executive committee: Executive organ of a soviet at local, regional, republican and state levels

Federal administration: State administration above the republican, regional and local administrations

Federal government: State level government, which includes both the representative and executive side.

Federal law: After 1993, all-state wide law which needs to comply with the Constitution of the Russian Federation

Glasnost: “Openness”. A policy of administrative transparency which was most famously adopted by Mikhail Gorbachev in 1985 but also used in the administrative ideology of the tsarist period.

Goskomstat: The State Statistical Committee in the Soviet Union which collected statistical
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Governor (Gubernator)</td>
<td>Before 1917, the head of the provincial administrative area. After 1992 the head of a regional level of administration (oblast).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gosudarstvennoe uchrezhdienie</td>
<td>State bureau, state administration agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guberniia</td>
<td>Province. A tsarist period administrative area which was below the state and above the local towns and villages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gubernskoe prisutstvie</td>
<td>The tsarist state administration of provincial affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Komsomol</td>
<td>The youth organization of the Communist Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landed nobility (Dvorianstvo)</td>
<td>A land owing aristocratic estate which had a dominant position in the Russian Government till the end of the 19th century</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local self-government (Mestnoe samoupravlenie)</td>
<td>Town or city local government which is made of an elected council (duma or soviet) and an executive organ (administration or executive committee)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local administration (Mestnaia administratsiia)</td>
<td>The executive side of local government, made of professional, paid staff and headed by a mayor, or in the Soviet period called the executive committee, headed by a chairman</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nomenklatura</td>
<td>A list of posts filled by the Communist party, a closed system of rewards and benefits</td>
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<td>Obkom</td>
<td>A regional executive committee in the Soviet period, which was the administration of a regional government</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oblast</td>
<td>Both in Soviet and post 1993 Russia, a regional level (of government) which has its own elected assembly, administration and head of the administration (presently the governor)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peasant</td>
<td>A member of a rural estate, freed from bondage in 1864</td>
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<td>Peasant commune (Mir)</td>
<td>A type of local self-government in the peasant villages of 19th century Russia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Perestroika</td>
<td>“Restructuring”. A reform of Mikhail Gorbachev’s leadership period (1985–1990) aimed to cut down the economic ineffectiveness of the Soviet government system and to bring more political and economic freedom to the local level while preserving the Socialist system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Politburo</td>
<td>The Communist Party’s Central Committee executive organ which guided the party organizations by giving directives to party members and informed the leadership on developments in the country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postanovlenie</td>
<td>Official regulation, order</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Prokurator</strong></td>
<td>Public prosecutor who also has a general duty to supervise administrative decision making with wide discretionary rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prokuratura</strong></td>
<td>The office of the prosecutors</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Prosecutor General</strong></td>
<td>The head of Russian prosecutors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rule of law government</strong> <em>(Pravovoe gosudarstvo)</em></td>
<td>A government which is divided into legislative, judicial and executive systems, and which confirms to a norm hierarchy where a constitution (which puts emphasis on human and individual rights) is the basis of all decision making and official action and in which the discretion of officials is limited by law.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Senate</strong></td>
<td>The highest legislative organ in the Imperial Russian Government, which also included the judicial body acting as the highest court of appeals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Soviet (Sovet)</strong></td>
<td>After 1917 the local government body which was made of a representative assembly and an executive committee acting as the administration of an area. Usually refers to the representative body in the Soviet system of government.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>State Duma</strong></td>
<td>The lower house of the parliament in the Russian Federation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Town government</strong> <em>(Gorodskoe upravlenie)</em></td>
<td>Tsarist period local government made of a duma (elected council) and an executive body (gorodskaia uprava)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<td>-----------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Town administration</strong></td>
<td>An executive body of the tsarist period town</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Gorodskaiia administratsiia uprava</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ukaz</strong></td>
<td>Decree. For instance the Presidential ukaz, widely used since 1991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Uskorenie</strong></td>
<td>“Speeding of socialist development”. Political slogan used in 1985–1986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ustav</strong></td>
<td>After 1993, a fundamental law of a self-governmental area such as a city</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vedomstvo</strong></td>
<td>(Government) agency/bureau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Zemstvo</strong></td>
<td>A rural self-government organ which had an elected assembly and an executive body, 1864–1917</td>
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Acknowledgements

When I travelled to Moscow in 1991 to study there for a year, there were hardly any books about local Russian administration. Since then, literature about the transition of Russian government and economy has mushroomed. Both Russian and non-Russian studies concerning the country’s administration have appeared. Moreover, researchers from different fields have become aware of the need to look at institutional changes in a holistic manner. Economy, politics, traditional cultural aspects and administration cannot be artificially separated. Viewed this way, I believe that grave mistakes in reforms are less common and planning becomes more rational when organizational culture is understood and taken into account. In this respect, I hope that my work contributes to the important body of research concerning transitions in local administrative culture in Russia.

This study has been made possible by financial assistance from different organizations and support from a number of important people. I received a scholarship from the University of Helsinki to study as part of an exchange program at the Moscow State University during 1991–1992 in the Faculty of Sociology. Both the Academy of Finland and the Academy of Sciences of Russia have also financed a part of this research in the form of a four month scholarship in an exchange program during 1993. A major part of this work has been financed through the doctoral program of the Aleksanteri Institute of the University of Helsinki, in 1998–2000 and 2003. In addition, I was granted a three month scholarship by the rector of the University of Helsinki in 2003.

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I wish to thank the Administration of the city of Murmansk for giving me the opportunity to conduct interviews in the October city district administration in 1993 and 2000. I particularly wish to thank all the employees of the administration who took part in these interviews. Valeri Pushnov, director of the environmental department in the Russian state oil and gas company, Artikmorneftegazrazvedka, has kindly helped me to organize the official contacts which were necessary in the city administration of Murmansk. The Murmansk administration case study would not have been possible without him.

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I dedicate this research to my sons Esa and Timo who live in a society where combining cultures and crossing borders is an every day event.

Anna-Liisa Heusala
July 2005 Espoo
Introduction

The year 1991 was a definite one in the last major transition of Russian history. The building of the new Russian state was dependent upon the structures of the old Soviet Union, while the social system was itself being simultaneously abolished and replaced. At this time, there were two fronts in operation: the internal transition of the Russian society and the state in order to overcome interrelated political, economical and social barriers was one front. The international transition aimed at meeting new demands for global and European cooperation based on certain values and obligations rising from then was the other. The year 1991 saw the culmination of both front in this transformational period of Russian history.

From a historical perspective, this study examines one area of this transition: changes in Russian administration. For this is the critical factor in the building of a new relationship between the state and society in Russia today. In the study I have drawn a general picture of developments in local administration from the point of view of administrative culture. The main focus of the study, however, has been the executive body of local government.

The contemporary Russian state includes three administrative structures which, within the system, all have separate status and meaning: the federal, regional and local level. All levels have a representative (elected) and executive (administrative) side of government and the judiciary. The federal administration includes the sectoral ministries, central agencies and services. These federal bodies have their branches in the regional and local (municipal, city) level. The regional administration includes the executive side of regional government, headed by a governor who has so far been elected by the population of the region. The local level means the executive side of the local municipal government which is also headed by an elected
mayor. The regional and municipal administrations fulfill both federal and self-government functions.

These three structures have not always existed in their present form. For instance, there have been different types of regional structures, such as the republics in the former Soviet Union which in actuality fell somewhere between the state and the present regional government. In 19th century Russia, the state level was much further away from life at the local level than it is today.

The local level concept itself has been formulated differently in history than it is today. This is also partly a reason why the local administration has received less attention as a separate entity in research. Studies about the transition period usually concentrate either on changes in the state’s political system or case studies which are problem specific. Along with macro-economic studies, a major interest has been the development of state-regional relations in the 1990’s. Information about the development of local administration in Russia is scattered among different types of literature. It is therefore difficult to collect because of the very different levels of analysis and formulation of questions involved. Yet the effect which territorial arrangements have had on administrative networks, policy implementation and the position of civil servants has been huge within Russian history. The meaning of territoriality for the development of administrative culture therefore needs more attention.

Similarly, local administration as a separate concept from local government has received rather little attention in the studies of the present transition. Historically the concept itself is a rather loosely defined one. In this study it means the executive functions of local government, the joint jurisdiction of the state and municipalities and the territorial state functions in municipalities. This definition includes the implementation of both locally made decisions and state imposed (legally sanctioned) obligations.

Before the collapse of the Soviet Union, studies of Russian and Soviet administrative systems could broadly speaking be categorized into two groups: totalitarian theory which stressed the political and economic unitarian links and controlled practices; and socialist theory of the state in which political ideology was understood to translate directly into structures. Since 1991 a more varied view on the Soviet/Russian state has begun to emerge. This includes elements from both orthodox approaches as well as new theoretical insights which see the Soviet Union as having possessed
features of different types of competition and “market” (for instance Simon Kordonskii 2000).

For Russian administration the political history of Russia is the story of alternating cultural identities. The municipal administration at the local level has been a target for a series of political-economic developments inflicted upon it by other levels of government or by the ongoing transitions in these relations. The local level has thus not dominated as an independent accelerator of events. In the history of Russian administration, there have been two major waves of cultural influence. The first has seen the municipalities as a direct functional part of state governmental organs and state ideology. The second has seen them more a representative of local cultural and economic interests with at least some autonomous decision making potential. Importantly, though, it is the relationship with law that has been the basis of the center’s relationship with the local level.

 Transitional periods have served a socialization function. That is, they have tried to change the citizens understanding of what is good and desirable in society. Yet while the concept of good government refers to the modern day vision of an effective administration and stresses its relationship with law, many of the issues in focus today were raised over a hundred years ago in discussions of structural changes. One such issue has been the citizen’s relationship with the government. This fundamental question has followed all administrative transitions.

 This work therefore connects four fields of study. It connects cultural and organizational studies in the context of administrative science and administrative history. Combining organizational and cultural studies is a well established and much used theoretical approach, particularly in the research of organizational learning. Conceptual tools have been borrowed from these organizational studies. In the historical part of the work the starting point is a theory of public administration. Here, I have wanted to understand the cultural logic underpinning previous forms of local government instead of looking at the past via a “pure” historical method. To this end, conceptual tools from the study of law and legal institutions have been useful, such as legality, legal protection and democratic control.

 Since the subject of this study is administrative culture, mere description of structural arrangements would not suffice. Instead of choosing one “macro-theory of Russian studies”, the culture of administration is approached more on its own terms which includes both the ideological level of change and structural arrangements. Culture is seen as being born
at the intersection of these two in the social system of organizations. It is thus a human product which eludes any rigid theoretical categorization. Administrative culture is seen to include various elements and conflicts between these different elements form an essential part of its production.

The basic ideas of structuration theory developed by Anthony Giddens are used in a modified version, along with more recent interpretations of organizational and bureaucratic culture. Theoretically the central question is what should one concentrate on when studying administrative culture? Is it the structures (economic, political, legal and administrative) which organize institutional work? Or is it the human interaction in bureaucratic social groups or some type of a combination of these?

The chosen starting point has been the structural environment of administrative work which I call the ecology of administration. Transition in administrative culture is explained as a process in which the effects of structural changes are felt in the social system of organization which returns these effects to the structures, either as desired development or as dysfunctions. Culture is the social system of a structurally governed administration. In this sense, culture cannot be looked at separately from structure.

The research therefore asks: how do structural reforms and the old culture of institutions meet in transitions? To help answer this, two historical periods have been chosen as objects of study:

1. The administrative reforms before the revolution leading to the October revolution (1879–1916) and the subsequent cultural radicalization of the socialist government during Stalin (1917–1938).
2. The perestroika years as a reform period of the mature planning system (1986–1991) and the consequent change to capitalist government system since the beginning of the 90’s (1991 onwards).
3. Because the intention has been to draw a general picture of the Russian administration from historical perspective, the empirical work forms just one part of the whole.

I have chosen a group of dominant cultural elements in these historical transition periods to see what meaning they held. The aim has been to form ideal types of local administrations which would show the transitions of administrative culture. To pinpoint the effects of structural changes on the
social system of the administration, I have chosen to concentrate on a few central elements which can be found in different types of bureaucratic organizations and which are also central to the idea of the rule of law. These elements are studied at two levels of change: the political ideologies of administrative change and actual state buildings.

Political ideologies of administrative change are useful and meaningful because they show the manifest goals of organizations and thus help to reveal unintended side-effects which materialize in the formation of a new administrative culture. The state building stage of transition includes the description of the administrative ecology for each time period. Here, authority relations and legislative changes dominate. The lengthy time covered includes different types of structural arrangements in terms of municipal vs. local level state administration relation and different types of municipal administrations themselves. The Russian city administration, as a legal concept, is explained in different time periods to show what types of authority and political power have existed and in what proportion. The relationship with law and higher supervising bodies is thus incorporated closely into the analysis.

Methodologically, a case study has been used. I treat the four time periods as separate cases. In the last part (the present day transition) analysis is based mostly on a material collected in one sample organization. The attempt is not to describe all aspects of the political and economical events in chronological order but to look at the transitional time periods through selected elements of administration in order to see how they have changed in relation to the previous system. The aim in each historical period has been to create an ideal type of administrative culture which has developed during the transition. The ideal types are answers to both the question of what and why. The description of administrative elements of ideal types helps to understand the central question of transition: why is changing the structures and law not enough to change the culture of administration? Conversely, what have been the elements of administrative culture and the mechanisms of change which have made the realization of political ideologies of administrative change difficult? By looking at this connection we can make sense of the difficulties faced in major social changes.
1 Theoretical Framework

1.1 How to Define “Administrative Culture”

1.1.1 Defining Concepts in the Study of Administrative Cultures

The definitions given to key concepts deserve concentrated attention, because they touch the fundamentals of how we perceive meanings in cultures. When the subject of study is an alien culture, this task is even more acute. Surprisingly, the present day transition literature has not paid much attention to the meaning of concepts in political and economic studies. In my view, this has contributed to the lack of dialogue between transitional societies and the West which has resulted in unhistorical thinking during the 1990’s.

The study comprises three different cultural perspectives: Russian/Soviet, Anglo-American and Finnish. As an example, the word “administration” has carried very different connotations in all these cultures, which are bound to the historical roots and social dynamics of each time period. The discourse between political and scientific spheres heavily influences the official meanings of words. I support Ilmari Susiluoto’s view that “the grammar of politics has a wide task in examining, for instance, the “grammar” of planning discussion, the latent and manifest meanings of the term planning, or the rational and emotional aspects of Finnish planning” (author’s translation from Susiluoto 1977: 60). This example, given by Susiluoto, is also a descriptive one in the context of the present study. With new terminology, social action is given meaning which is connected with the political and social relations of society. The study of change thus needs to understand the previous meanings of words and the values, goals and rationale which they carry with them. Translation becomes interpretation and analysis of ways of life (comp. Susiluoto 1977: 4–5.)
I use three key concepts: “ideology of administrative change”, “structures” and “new culture” which are the components of the transition of administrative culture. Each of these concepts has inspired many thorough studies of their meaning and effects in society and institutions. My goal has not been to create any new definitions or go into the different variations of their use. I have quite straightforwardly chosen such definitions which are appropriate for the understanding of the transition process. For instance, I use definitions of structures and a culture in a way which is directly based on my theoretical view of the transition process itself. These definitions will be described more extensively in the following chapters of this study.

Here I only want to briefly address the concept of ideology. Ideology as an everyday term has been used in a very liberal manner, much like the concept of culture, to include anything from a written document to whatever is “in the air” in a society at a certain historical moment. Often it is used as a synonym for doctrine. For instance Darrell P. Hammer has described doctrine as “the authoritative and usually well-publicized ideas that make up the official philosophy (…)”. In his view “ideology is those political values that are parts of the belief system of the individual. In contrast to doctrine, ideology tends to be ambiguous, inconsistent, and even irrational.” (Hammer 1986: 58.)

I use the concept of political ideology of administrative change which is behind all major administrative transitions. It is a synonym for official ideology which is used in building state institutions. It includes both state doctrine, such as marxism-leninism in the administrative ideology of the Soviet Union, and the general political ideology of constitutional liberal-democracy in which the core “doctrine” is the free competition of different (legal) views in the society. It would probably be best to say that doctrine means the core values of a particular political ideology. For instance in liberal democracy such core values include freedom of individual liberties, such as free speech, or the right to private property. From these follow principles of free information flow and property rights protection.

In this study, however, the hierarchies of definitions do not matter as much as the relevance of concepts for administration. I have concentrated on the ideological thoughts of the decision making elite to find out what types of official purposes of action have existed for administrative organizations. What is good administration in general? How are basic political relations organized in administrative decision making? What is the relationship with law and economy, and so on.
In the empirical research I have two objectives. The first one is to define the meaning of the elements of administrative culture based on a general framework of administrative theory. The second is to examine the meaning these concepts have in the respective cultural cases under study.

The most vexing lexical task is to define the concepts “administration”, “control”, “power” and “guidance”. These are words without which the examination of administrative culture is hardly possible. Discussing administrative culture easily becomes frustrating. The most common use of the word power, for instance, is as a substitute for authority. Yet, from an administrative studies point of view, these two belong to separate spheres, the first meaning general possibility to influence affairs, the latter stating an official position in a system.

It is often quite important to make a clear distinction between formal organizations and the social system in which the daily culture is formed. Susiluoto points out that in the study of the Soviet administration, it is necessary to understand the difference between terms relating to action, in separation to words used in the description of structures. Translating terms from Russian to English and Finnish, for instance, requires theoretical work based on understanding. For instance, the word “upravlenie” (administration, government, in Finnish hallinto) has been translated with the use of several words. On one hand there are “administration”, “leadership” and “politics”, on the other there are “steering”, “management”, “control” and “guidance”. The first group underlines the structural side of the word, its connection with bureaucracy and authority relations, where as the other group puts stress on the action perspective of its meaning. (Susiluoto 1977: II-III, 23–24.)

In the Western discourse guidance, supervision and management are often used as synonyms for administrative work in a very general manner. In this work, these words have their specific meanings which correspond with different administrative elements. Some of the most meaningful changes in transitions take place in relation to guidance, power and control. In my work guidance refers to supervision, the steering of everyday work and relations between actors according to legal requirements and ethical/procedural principles. Power means an ability to affect wanted changes. Control means an ability to secure the work process for the advantage of the decision maker. Guidance, control and power are thus parameters of administration which effect other elements of administrative culture such as leadership, personnel, organization and economic relations.
When the meaning of these words is examined in the different historical context, something essential about the cultural differences between different regimes can be revealed. These differences will be looked at in the description of the political ideology of change in the 1917–1938 period, and again in the 1991–2000 period. The differences show not just the meanings of words themselves, but the whole theoretical and political context which they advance. Words have a double role: they communicate the new while they are used in the state building process.

Structures, formed according to new meanings, are connected to values which structures advance, and power which different groups in these structures have. The latter is particularly interesting for the history of administration. The personnel chosen in different times, develop practices of planning and control. The political meaning which different professional groups inside the administration have acquired along with the growth in importance of their work, has significant meaning for the creation of cultures. Different professions on the other hand have influenced the interpretation of words. Susiluoto pointed out the meaning of the word “steering” which as a term of cybernetics has belonged to the language of engineers, mathematicians and planners. As the planning and steering tasks became more complicated in the Soviet Union, the political meaning of these groups also grew. (Susiluoto 1977: 51.)

One important aspect of the study of words is to remember that words and organizational languages have both manifest and latent meaning. These differences can be very important for daily routines of organizations. When major changes take place, organizational learning requires replacing words with new ones, or attaching new meanings and values to them. In transitional studies, it is therefore important to remember that the same persons can mean different things with the same words when speaking of different times. For a researcher then, this represents a challenge in understanding the cultural context from the point of view of the studied organizations.

1.1.2 Elements of Administrative Culture

The study’s definition of administrative culture needs to combine elements which do not mix easily: the structural characteristics of organization and the social behavior of people in them. Much has been written about what constitutes culture and how it can be understood in the administrative
environment. Different fields come to conflicting conclusions. Legal experts and economists stress those structural components which should exist and often treat “culture” as something which inhibits progress. Transitional studies made from an economic perspective, concentrate on building new models and seek to explain the errors of old ones in (macro) economically rational terms. As with purely legal studies, culture is often viewed as a group of unsolved problems.

Social sciences, on the other hand, have developed a multitude of different concepts of culture, which leads to everyone picking according to their preferences. Definitions of culture range from unconscious assumptions to concrete physical artifacts (for a list of definitions see, for instance, Rousseau 1990:153). From an administrative sciences point of view, this variety may not always give the best chances for analyzing ongoing processes. It is generally agreed that such a thing as culture exists and that it effects daily functioning. The connection between large societal changes and administrative development has only recently received more attention. Unfortunately for Russian development, the early years of the latest reform period meant the attempt to simply destroy the old state structures without offering an alternative. The experience taught at least one thing: that the complexities associated with changes in large public organizations require the combined use of perspectives and methods of different fields.

There are several ways of looking at an administration: structural and behavioral/social, legislative work and implementation, planning and control, and so on. The division of economic, political and “administrative” aspects has been used both by socialist and capitalist writers. For instance, Makarenko (1989) who has written about the development of bureaucracy in the Stalinist culture, has stressed the need to consider forms of production, political and social structures in the study of national administrations. In his view, the culture of administration is closely connected to the interests of that class which has the dominant position in society. (Makarenko1989: 32.) In this sense, and as far his views reflect the general socialist perspective, he represents one more classification: elite – democratic administration, which has been used in different forms within administrative literature (for instance Heady 1996 has examined such approaches to administrative cultures).

My choice has been to look at the basis of administrative culture and its development in historical ruptures. In my operationalization of the concept of culture in these matters, I concentrate quite heavily on the structural side
of culture. Structures effect practices and ways of thought. I see structures as a medium through which internalized and even unconscious aspects of culture are transmitted. (Comp. Rousseau 1990: 157–158.)

The study’s perspective is similar to that of Heady (1996) who has examined several ways to categorize the elements of administration. He sees that administration can be defined primarily in two ways: by its basic structural characteristics or in terms of its behavioral characteristics which are attached to structures to describe bureaucratic behavior. In the latter, the more common emphasis underlines the negative, dysfunctional traits of organizations. The writer has composed three central structural elements: 1. hierarchy (principles and levels of graded authority, order of control), 2. differentiation and specialization (division of labor, goals, roles), and 3. qualification or competence (professionalism). (Heady 1996: 74, 79.)

Heady detected three variants for looking at bureaucratic behavioral characteristic. The first could be called “the Weberian ideal” in which functional, desirable behavior is expected and accepted as natural in bureaucratic operations. Another stresses dysfunctional behavior which develops from the rationalistic orientation of bureaucracy and structural features designed to maintain it. I would call this the “typical transition model” which in the study of Russia concentrates on the failures of change. The third alternative in Heady’s list relates the propriety of behavior to the bureaucratic environment and results in a more flexible standard as to what behavior can be considered functional. (Comp. Heady 1996: 77.) This approach can also be called “cultural” since it aims to understand the logic of things from the actor’s perspective.

In this study, groups of elements are not separated into two of which one is purely structural and the other social. The elements of administrative culture are most of all derived from the theoretical formulation of transition in which transitional purposes are overriding. Yet, to have a common measurement “model” for each historical case, the elements also have to be the same in each case. The elements can be found, for instance, in the modification of Markku Kiviniemi’s model (1994) in which rules, resources and external relations presuppose certain elements to be present in administrative systems. They are also present in the description of the transitional society which is given later in this work.

In the structuration theory of cultural change used in this study, structures and behavioral elements of administrative culture become one by way of
creating new practices and patterns of thought. These practices and patterns of thought reflect the core values of organization which have their origins in the political ideology of administration.

There are two main manifestations of culture: values which determine what people think ought to be done and practices which include everything inside the organization (Brown 1995: 8, 21.) For me values mean the ethics of an organization which are carried into principles of behavior. Practices mean procedural rules which are followed without reconsideration in every day situations. In practices we can therefore see how ethics work and what logic institutions follow.

I look at the changes in administrative elements in the transitional process through three themes: the political ideology of administrative change, state building (organization, laws and economy) and the transformed culture of the administration. The political ideologies of administrative change play an important part in the strategic decision making of the elite which guides transitions. Political ideologies of administrative change give new definitions to administration. New linguistics determine the thinking which is officially recognized in Constitutions and other laws. Looking at these definitions adds to our understanding of possible side effects and risks, if not of direct causes. Cultural transition changes the self-understanding of both citizens and administrators.

Ideologies of administrative change include three notable aspects: the use of metaphors, stories and myths. Both in the 1917 and 1991 ruptures, metaphors have been used to create powerful images. These have been used to gain political power and legitimize administrative authority. Political ideologies both include and exist as stories themselves. Stories can be used to control because they are memorable, they generate belief, and appeal to legitimate values. Organizational codes of ethics can be anchored into well known stories. Myths are beliefs which are often enshrined in stories and which influence how actors understand meanings and react in social situations. Andrew Brown has separated four functions of myths which influence the development of culture. First, myths create, maintain and legitimize past, present or future actions and consequences. Second, they maintain and conceal political interests and value systems which affect whole organizations. Third, they explain and create cause and effect relationships under conditions of incomplete knowledge. Fourth, they rationalize the complexity and turbulence of activities and events to allow for predictable action taking. (Brown 1995: 14, 22.)
The third and fourth variants are particularly interesting for understanding organizational cultures in transition. Typical examples of how myths maybe used to reduce anxiety is by making some things to be either beyond the reach of action (for instance Russian “historical way” or national character which makes westernizing impossible), absolutely necessary (dictatorship of the proletariat) or something which can be remedied with a straight forward and one sided action (privatization policies as a method of changing the state or collectivization to create a new class base).

For this study, important in these myths are the images which are created of citizens and civil servants, their positions and roles in society. Similarly, it is interesting to look at what types of ethical codes can be found in stories of political ideologies of administrative change.

State building means the practical implementation of the purposes of the official ideology at the structural (institutional) level (comp. for instance Sharlet 1999). Changes in the original meaning of a political ideology take place when risks, new opportunities and unintended side-effects appear. Institutions begin to have new social meanings. I look at transition both through the institution building of the state administration (of which the local level is a part) and at the work organization level. In the first, the emphasis is on the effects of structural changes on the role and position of state/local level administration and the organization of hierarchies according to the new (mostly legal) requirements. In the latter, the emphasis has been on personnel and client-relations (i.e. good service and openness).

Political scientists have attempted to categorize political regimes with corresponding administrative cultures (for example Heady 1996). I have not categorized different historical administrations but the nature of state level decision making is an integral part of describing the lower level.

Finally, the new culture (social system) shows us the real meaning the different cultural elements of the new structures have had. Transformation processes in different elements of the administration lead to the creation of new practices and patterns of thought which reflect new institutionalized values. New administrative ethics and procedural principles are created which show the basic assumptions of the organization.

In transition, the old culture mediates the range and differentiation of public resources and rules, and of external relationships as a result of changes of ideological purposes. The transformed administrative culture is in fact a transformed version from the ideal administrative type described
by the political ideology in each historical case. Each theme has sub-themes. The logic which I follow is:

1. The basis of cultural changes is a political ideology of administrative change which includes purposes. Purposes tell about the vision of good government, and about the type of changes which are needed to reach it.

   An ideology of administrative change involves presumptions about

   - the economical basis of government
   - authority (formal decision making positions, territorial arrangements of hierarchy)
   - use of information and language in the administration
   - leadership
   - personnel and
   - external relations (i.e. types of clients, elites, relationship with them).

2. Purposes are carried into state building in which there are changes in rules and resources. Structural changes represent ethical choices. Changes which take place are looked at in the following elements:

   law and rules
   - sources of law and rules, and their order of importance
   - the territorial element in the development of and execution of laws and rules
   - legal culture and legal institutions

   administrative organizations
   - hierarchies, their territorial basis and relations between institutions
   - systems of civil service

   economy
   - the economic base of state building
   - the relationship between economy and politics
   - the territorial element in economy.

3. A new culture is formed in the social system of the organization. Changes in different cultural elements, and the level of institutionalization of different administrative elements begin to show. The elements of the new culture are:
Theoretical Framework

- economy: financing of administrative work
- authority: type and ownership, market of authority, territorial hierarchies
- law and rules: legal consciousness, discretion in administrative decision making, legal control of administrative work, territoriality in laws and rules, and in their application
- organization: guidance and control
- information and language: openness and publicness, language and symbolism
- leadership: roles in the organization and in the administrative market
- personnel: working style, specialization and professionalization, hiring and promotion practices
- citizens and other clients: relations to different groups in the society.

Each historical case is looked at with this set of questions. The resulting four ideal types of administration show the most significant cultural elements of each time period and their changes within the theoretical framework. Concepts relating to an ideal type (the liberal-democratic one in this case) can be used in two ways. They can show the relevant similar features which correspond with the ideal type or qualities which differ in other administrative cultures. More interesting, however, is to discover the meaning which the same concepts have in different administrative cultures.

The concepts are not predictive nor exhaustive of what an administration in each case is like. Not all, possibly even important qualities are included. The aim is to make the narrative assuring enough to submit evidence for each element. The “cultural” and “transitional” are then bound to the limits of my outline, and are not universal by nature. The descriptions of administrations which are drawn from the research material are not mechanical patterns for the interpretation of individuals and their behavior in different situations. Instead they give an overview of the most dominating cultural features of different historical administrations.

The materials used in the description of different historical time periods are not objectively comparable. In this sense, each group of material used to describe historical time periods forms a separate “case”. Here it is vital to notice that the groupings can include in themselves many subcategories of
which “power” and “control” are among the most meaningful ones for the social system of administration. The material upon which the categorizing has been done covers such a wide variety of descriptions and analysis that not all historical time periods can be described with comparable precision to every point on the list. New empirical material has been collected only for the last time period of 1991 onwards.

1.1.3 Administrative Ethics, Procedural Principles and Citizenship in the Liberal-Democratic Ideal Type

The present day (European) liberal-democratic administration ideal type is used as a reference point in this work. I claim that this framework is applicable to a study of different historical, political and philosophical foundations for administration. This is because a “cultural yardstick” gives the researcher a chance to see differences between cultures which go beyond structural arrangements.

The political programs of different time periods serve as guidelines for state building. Culture in this sense is a practical realization of values (comp. Virtanen 1986: 4). I suppose, to some degree, that certain types of structures help enable the birth of a certain type of behavior, while others make it more difficult. For instance, the structures which build upon the ethical and procedural choices of a liberal-democratic rule of law administration, should not in principle lead to undemocratic, dictatorial or highly corrupt administrations. Alternatively, one-party systems of authoritarian government, without the separation of powers, make organizational learning through open interaction with society difficult. In this way structural arrangements are ethical choices: moreover, they are choices conducive to the appearance of a certain type of culture, either immediately or over time.

The ethics of administration is a central issue in the legitimation of a new order. As Camilla Stivers has pointed out, the process of restoring support and legitimacy to government will mean a return to an emphasis on the public aspects of its work and to the basic issues of democracy (Stivers 1994: 443). Different definitions of ethics are connected to different types of government. For instance, in the case of the liberal-democratic ideal type, ethical principles of administrative work and the content of democracy stand out. Yet, these terms have been used in the past with different lexical and practical meanings.
Since the 1993 Constitution of Russia, the rule of law concept (or the German legal term *Rechtstaat*) has been used in the evaluation of Russian state building. This concept has acquired wider meaning than its original legal interpretation of law-based reliability and predictability. In the language of Western economic and political organizations, rule of law usually means legal certainty in administrative actions and decisions, i.e., administration through law (Sigma papers: no 27: 9). Today it more widely includes the respect and advancement of human rights in general.

It is practical to use the rule of law concept to understand the value basis of Russian administration, because law has twice been a political tool of major system change. Law has also been the key instrument of state building aimed at altering the most basic assumptions of public institutions, i.e., the social contract (Grosenick 1994: 189) of the administrators. Furthermore, law is closely connected to many of the cultural elements under study here.

Administrations share aspects of citizenship, public organization and professionalism (work organization). The *citizenship* aspect means that the administration forms a link between the political sphere and the citizen. In general, the government’s responsiveness refers to a correspondence between the decisions of officials and the wishes of the people who are subjects of these acts. (Anckar 1984.) The link is not direct because in modern states a complicated mediation structure formulates the “public” opinion. Democracy can be seen as a system defined by the people’s ability to participate in the decision-making process. Democracy deals with power, not the fulfilling of needs and wishes. (Anckar 1984.) Democracy means the public accountability of public institutions, which have to at least take into account the lawful equality of various interests.

Liberal democracy is not a dictatorship of the majority but a compromise by those who take part in the decision making. At the actor level, the resolution of interest conflicts between individuals must at least be compatible with the non-negotiable values of rights. (Clark & Dear 1984: 155, 162.) These same non-negotiable values of rights form the basis of the relationship between administration and its citizens. Discretion is used with the intent of protecting individual citizens from arbitrary decision making: the administration has horizontal authority (i.e., the delegation of decision making to interested parties, as an opportunity to take part in the preparation of decisions); concepts of public interest (i.e., broadened definition of expertise); and local community which strengthens the link in a non-coercive way. (Comp. Stivers 1991: 444–446.)
Peters (1984) has presented a classification of societal cultures into three groups with different client-administration relationships. The closest to the liberal-democratic ideal type would be found in societies which are either rationalist-deductive such as most of Continental Europe, or pragmatic-empirical such as the United Kingdom, the USA and Northern Europe. In the first group decisions about an individual case are made on the basis of deductive reasoning from a legal premise which both the citizen and the administrator accept. The ideal is minimal use of personal discretion. (Peters 1984: 41.)

The second group uses generalities which are drawn from a series of individual decisions. This way, each case is to an extent a new one which can be modified according to situational reasons. The ideal is a well-informed individual administrative decision based on a precedent. The work of a single administrator is made more difficult when all the specifics need to be counted. (Peters 1984: 42.) Both of the above variations, however, require a large amount of trust between organization and citizen.

The third group is the non-Western world, were administrative decision making is generally assumed to be a result of personal bargaining and negotiation. Rules which the administration itself has promulgated constitute a place from which to begin bargaining. (Peters 1984: 43.) This type of personal “flexibility” is often characterized as being typical for societies in transition. The political instability of the country intensifies what can be considered a permanent dysfunction from the view of a stable rule of law ideal. Trust is personal and not institutional.

The liberal tradition has been ambivalent about the role government should have in society. The traditional liberal view is that government should only have authority when it is necessary for the protection of life, liberty and property of citizens, and legitimacy to do so only when it has popular consent (Hollis & Plokker 1995: 51). The welfare state in the Scandinavian model has meant an active state which regulates the development of the whole society. This type of government needs large popular support. The present neutral liberal democratic ideal type tries to combine these two views of government. In the ideal case, members of society have an internalized sense of responsibility based upon the notion that by following the rules they will benefit the most. There is trust in the way laws work within the administration’s daily routines.

The public organization aspect requires legality. Legal practices in the administration have a significant meaning in the creation of citizenship
within the society (comp. Burbank 1997: 82). In a state governed by the rule of law, norm hierarchy is clear: there is trust that laws are beneficial and that every one normally follows them. There is horizontal cooperation and transparency between different public organizations. Instead of mere orders and coercion, transparent procedures and communication ideally help to make decisions more rational and cost-effective. Even in the least favorable situation, they hinder illegal activity and the misuse of discretion.

The citizenship and public organization aspects of administrative cultures are guided through basic legal principles and procedural principles. The first include the legality-principle (decision making based on laws, norm hierarchy) and equality-principle (equal treatment of citizens in similar cases). The other principles include that of proportionality (administrative actions are in reasonable proportion to the issue), the goal-directness principle (discretion cannot advance inappropriate goals) and the protection of legitimate interests -principle (including prohibition of retrograded decisions). (Ryynänen 1991: 11, Sigma Papers: no. 27: 9–14, Mäenpää 1996: 173–202.) In transitional periods, it is expected that not all principles are institutionalized at the same time. Similarly, some principle may never be institutionalized and a legal legitimation is created for this situation. The discretionary rights of a single administrator are important because discretion is a part of real power. It can be called “the area of free consideration” in which legality and expediency are used as measurements. (Ryynänen 1991: 12.) Political environment influences the way administrators use discretion.

Discretion is also connected to relationships in hierarchies, guidance and information. Discretion is limited or affected by different types of written directives, orders, assessments and so on, which circulate within the administration. In terms of rule of the law, these guidance tools should be based on an appropriate law which authorizes such regulation. Administrative guidance should not exceed the limits given for administrative regulation and higher administrative organs should not be able to command, limit or extend the implementation work of lower levels based on their position in the hierarchy. (Mäenpää 1992: 183.)

The procedural principles include the official’s duty to work actively for the individual’s case. They also include a right to be heard and to be informed, legal reason for decisions which are explained; and time limits based on laws which are followed. (Mäenpää 1996: 242–255.) In transitional periods, the changes may happen to any direction depending on the starting point. From the point of view of democracy, the right to be heard and be informed would
seem the most acute requirement. At the same time, time limits may in some cases be just as important for the equal treatment of citizens.

Both the citizenship and public organization aspects of administrative culture depend on the third aspect which is the work organization aspect. The professional ethics, the ethics of the organization and the personal beliefs of an administrator play a role in the process (Moilanen 1999: 12.). In the work organization, rule of law and private rights either materialize or face obstacles. The concept of professional ethics has been particularly important in many public organizations in which legal training has been valued. In the Soviet Union, engineers were considered to be qualified as all-round managers of different types of organizations. The definitions which are given to different administrative elements vary in different professions. In transitional times, though professionalism changes. This can lead to conflicts in work ethics among different organizational groups.

In the liberal-democratic ideal type the legal protection of individual rights emerges from the formal limits of legal and administrative decision making. Legal protection is a value which is deeply embedded in the ways of thought that people have. Yet within the relationship between legal protection and administration there exists an interesting duality of state and society. It is from this duality, that rights appear within the real world.

“Rights”, as such originate from extralegal ideas, which were turned into practical principles and institutionalized as a result of political, religious and social development. The development of states since the early 20th century has made the appearance of new rights possible. Two important new categories of rights have evolved: civil rights and human rights. Neither is an objective concrete fact which can be found in society as such. They are not parts of economical exchange relations which, for instance, the Soviet legal theories used as the only objective basis of law. Instead, they are created as purely politically based moral rights. Both are incorporated in the rule of law concept.

Rights in today’s political discourse are assumed to have a strong moral status. Especially since the diffusion of the human rights concept, it has been thought that rights exist even without the approval of the state, which has infact made their institutionalization possible. The creation of Soviet legal thinking and creation of administration took place in a world where these ideas were just emerging. Western legal thinking, on the other hand, had developed further as a result of its liberal state politics.
The idea of rights materializes as rule of law when it guides the work of authorities whose legitimation is guaranteed by the state. The state is seen both as the object of the process and its legitimation. When rights become institutionalized at a procedural level, it is possible to talk about a rule of law society.

In a rule of law society, legal norms thus formally create (at an imperative level) a reciprocal relationship between the state and society. Rights appear in the real world context when this relationship extends beyond the boundaries of written law into legal consciousness of both parties. Legal consciousness means, above all, social control which requires trust. Rule of law goes to the heart of the administrative system. It involves the transition of self-interest with regard to the way person who work in the administration see their double role as both citizen and administrator of citizenship.

When considering the amount or depth of legal consciousness in a particular society, it is good to remember that it is not the same as legal culture. Jane Burbank has suggested that “legal culture rests upon the citizenry’s recognition of the legal system as a preferred means of solving conflicts and punishing evil.” (Burbank 1997: 85.) It is useful to see that legal culture can, for instance, have some elements of rule of law and many traditional ways of behavior. Legal consciousness on the other hand, deals with institutionalized rights between the citizens and the state.

Naturally, the qualities of liberal-democratic ideal type do not correlate directly with reality. The liberal-democratic ideal type, in its purest form, is a myth built upon the presumption that everything is governable, legitimate and rational, including power. This myth is important because when a myth is widely accepted in society, it becomes a major force of social change. People develop practices and get accustomed to a way of thinking. They pass this tradition to the next generation and, most importantly depend on other people in the same society to believe in it too. The practices and ways of thought which are developed go on even after the myth itself has stopped corresponding with reality because they have become a part of everyday social tradition. (Comp. Virtanen 1986: 29, Yaney 1973: 13.)

The essence of looking at political ideologies as a starting point in the administrative culture is thus clear. The stated desirable value change and the actual evolving practices are connected to each other because organizations require trust between their members. Trust in a deeper sense is built upon rules which uphold certain types of values. In a mature culture the
interpretation of rules and the expectations of people are based on these
same values.

1.2 How to Define “Transition”

1.2.1 What Does Transition Mean for Administrative Culture?

Administrative culture is often, quite understandably, seen from the
integrationist (functional) view of culture which stresses consensus and the
leadership’s role in modifying and creating it. In the ideal type Weberian
organization (Weber 1968), the subordinates have internalized the general
ideology and practice it in their actions. There is a reliance on rules and
procedural rationality in which decisions follow from programs and
standards. Stability exists and goals are reasonably consistent. When the
manifest goals and language do not match the actual developments in
behavior, language becomes formalistic and ideology symbolic. As the gap
between the manifest and latent become more evident, keeping control of
matters becomes all the more difficult and goal attainment is endangered.
(Martin 1992, comp. Sormunen and Kuparinen 1990.)

Civil servants effect large societal change programs in their daily decision
making. In transitional situations, administrative questions of structural
arrangements become highly political. In fact, political power “slides” into
the administrative system, because the foundation of political decision
making is weak (Salminen & Temmes 2000: 37). The object of a study of
administrative transition can be reduced to a question most fundamentally
connected with the role of administration itself: why is changing legislation
not enough to enact a transition of administrative culture?

Firstly, it is important to separate the definition of culture from several
common-sense understandings of culture. Especially within the studies of
transition, culture (as a definition of something unconnected with the
structures) easily becomes a wavering description for everything “qualitative”
from high culture to “national character”. It is then usually a waste basket
for things which are diffuse and vague, but which somehow seem to
influence daily functions.

Another view is to see culture as an equivalent to the normative goal of
an organization. In which case unmet requirements are seen as a proof of
the failure of that particular “culture”. An example is looking at the socialist
administration from the point of view of its official ideological requirements only to conclude that the socialist culture (actually, ideology in this case) was doomed.

Culture can also be equated with the myths of the organization. Myths are important to transitions in the sense that they effect the way public organizations are defined. Conceptions are created which are separate from daily life and which change very slowly. Myths reinforce aspects which have gained importance in the past. (Comp. Vuori 1994: 157.) In this role, myths maybe a strong component of transitional risks which may create more permanent dysfunctions in organizations when central myths are under attack.

In revolutionary changes, new myths may be created in the form of transitional purposes which rise from the political ideology of administrative change. An example is Communist utopia. Even in less dramatic situations, transitional purposes connote “mythical” qualities such as “democratic”, “civil rights”, “liberal” and so on. These have different meanings for different people who may be disappointed in each other’s definitions. Again, myths are an element which has significance in the transition of culture and in preservation of established culture. But perceptions and mystified meanings are not cultures.

In this work culture specifically refers to the rules of organizational behavior which are governed by institutionalized norms. Cultures are concrete entities. Structural factors are present in cultures both as objective frames for action and practices which reveal values behind the rules (i.e. laws) of society. Culture means institutionalized practices and patterns of thought reflecting certain values and norms. Institutionalization can be legal, open and officially wanted. It can also be practical, illegal and even a type of taboo. The main criteria in the assessment of the importance of a practice is to look at its meaning in goal attainment. What channels of administrations are used in getting decisions made, what sources of authority are these decisions based on, and what gives access to the channels and sources of authority?

Alena Ledeneva (2000) has written about formal and informal practices which coexist and sustain each other. Both exist in all societies but in different balances. In stable conditions, a good formal system has good filters, such as the rule of law. There is less room for informal practices. The more abstract qualities the formal system has (such as laws), the stronger and more elaborate the informal order and rules become. The more effective
the informal practices, the more ineffective the formal order. (Ledeneva 2000: 331.)

Ledeneva’s thoughts coincide with the political process view of culture which sees organizational environments and group boundaries as constantly changing. Individuals have fragmented, fluctuating self-concepts because they are faced with inescapable contradictions. (Martin 1993.) In the creation of a new administrative culture, authority is often in persuasions and power in shifting coalitions. Decision making is bargaining and there is no unifying force of thinking because goals are inconsistent and pluralistic. (Comp. Sormunen and Kuparinen 1990.) The self-interests of actors override decision making rationality and goal functionality.

The concreteness of cultures and their close connection within structures of society becomes evident in the changing of laws in transitional societies. This is usually hard work and even when it is successful, the effective implementation is difficult. Why is this so? The obvious answer from the point of view of the organization of administrative work, is that there is a crisis of functionality. What are the elements of this crisis? In the answer given by this study, the institutionalized forms of old structures hinder transition. Old forms have left a mark in the patterns of thought and practices of organizations. Theoretically then, a connection between structures and cultures needs to be found.

Structures and social systems often become “one” in the common understanding of public organizations. In this study, this view is reinforced. Structures are seen as products of historical developments which are shaped by the actions of groups of people. (Bendix 1977: 137.) Organizations have certain official goals around which the daily work has to be arranged. Structures are not only supposed to advance these purposes but in reality they also affect the way these purposes can be achieved (Denhardt 1994: 172, comp. also Ledeneva 2000: 331.) In this respect, structures have a normative character. Structural arrangements involve orders of importance. Assessment of administrative ethical principles, for instance, requires looking at how structures support or hinder the realization of these principles. In this study, this normative character is mirrored against a definition based on the previously examined ideal type of liberal-democratic administration.

In Anthony Giddens’ theory, which I borrow in an altered form, structures (rules, resources, transformation relations and properties of social systems) and social systems (regular social practices of reproduced relations between actors) meet in the structuration process in which the
conditions governing structures also effect the reproduction of social systems. (Giddens 1984: 24.) A related view has been presented by Markku Kiviniemi (1987) who looks at public organizations as a combination of the structural (objective), cultural (subjective in his analysis) and organizational action which mediates the former two.

I see that structures of administrative culture involve manifest functions (comp. Riggs 1964, Beck 1996) of the organization. Structures are made of rules, resources and official transformation relations (Giddens 1984, Kiviniemi has used organizational action in place of transformation relations 1987: 7). They include legislation which defines authority and its proper use, and sets official tasks for different levels of administration. Resources include money, concrete material objects (buildings and equipment) and personnel which brings along its education and professionalism. Official transformation relations mean formal internal and external relations in which authoritative decisions are made. Transition means organizational action which has certain purposes. Rules and resources create conditions for possible actions (Kiviniemi 1987: 6.)

In the description of transition of culture I have borrowed from Markku Kiviniemi’s research a view in which the environment for transition consists of three levels: the societal, governmental and organizational (agency) level (Kiviniemi 1994: 10). The accent in this study is on the organizational level. At the same time, as the environment is going through a major social change, it affects the administrative organization more directly than in a stable situation. The ecology of transitional administration is looked at from the point of view of it producing new risks for the ethical basis of an organization. Transitions include great decision making uncertainties. Legislation and its implementation usually cause unintended side-effects as well. Transitions produce administrative risk cultures (see following chapter 1.2.3). Learning requires understanding the logic of new demands and successful adaptation to them. In major changes this often involves an “unlearning” of the past logic. In revolutionary changes the “unlearning” is often coercive which again produces side-effects of its own.

For a transition to succeed in its purposes, all three levels of society have to be connected to each other in the actions of people sharing the same meanings. Problems arise when these connections serve different purposes for different actors and actor groups. Goal attainment is disrupted by side effects of the social system which return them as dysfunctions. In many cases the dysfunctions become institutionalized and it is difficult to separate
them from the formal system. An important example is the blat in the Soviet system, which Ledeneva (2000) has studied extensively. Blat, as a system of mutual assistance, was used as an informal daily practice in the official administrative market (Kordonskii 2001) of the state.

Seeking the transition of culture primarily involves studying the development of the elements of a particular culture in contexts which set new requirements for the old culture. In the transitional process, culture is “born” in the old culture as a result of adaptation. In addition to seeing the concept of culture as being a social context of action (comp. Kiviniemi 1994), I see it as a process in which structures and social action develop (comp. for instance Griseri 1998:121). Thus, a transition is a process in which a new administrative culture is born inside the old culture. It has transitional purposes which means an ideology of administrative change. The implementation of purposes first has effects on the old structures in the form of state building which is done through new rules and public resources, and in changes of external relationships. During periods of state building the authority, tasks, range and strength of public organizations changes.

The formation of a new culture takes place in three different stages:

1. Integration of the old culture and the structural changes. The state building which is based on the transitional purposes can be in conflict with the old culture which produces new dysfunctions and risks, or intensifies existing dysfunctions.
2. Mediation of the transitional purposes is done in organizational learning in which unintended results are typical.
3. Institutionalized new norms in practices and patterns of thought emerge in time as a result of changed consequences for individual administrators and for the organization as a whole. The successful transition of culture means new norms for action and thought.

In transitional situations, changed structures and the old culture usually do not evolve simultaneously. Structures can change rather abruptly through revolutionary transformations, but social system changes need more time. Other times, a changed social system signals great need for reform at the structural level where changes are politically difficult to achieve. The directions of structures and social systems can even be contradictory, or one changes much faster than the other. The new culture is never completely
identical with transitional purposes. Permanent old dysfunctions and the power balance of the changing administrative market effect the way mediation takes place.

1.2.2 Transitional Purposes and Structures

Transitional purposes are intended solutions to question as to how people should live. These questions are answered in the political ideology of administrative change. The political ideology of administrative change deals with fundamental questions as to why the administration exists. For instance in the latest changes of Russian state, this has to do with the introduction of new concepts of democracy and public organization. Essentially all political ideologies of administration build legitimation for authority.

In administrations, the objective of the state, is reflected in structure: new legislation, policies supporting it and resources given to the administration to fulfill its duties. The objective may be in practice badly formulated, idealistic or under constant political re-examination. All the same, major systemic changes at the level of the state are not possible without it.

Purposes which are given in the form of the political ideology of administrative change may have impossible objectives. As Hogwood and Peters have pointed out, this can have two consequences. In some situations, impossible objectives can motivate people. In other they lead to a situation in which there are no useful targets to aim for and consequently no realistic criteria by which performance can be judged. Guidance about the appropriate level of resources becomes difficult. All of this can lead to a lower level of achievement than is realistically and cost-effectively possible. (Hogwood & Peters 1985: 27.)

The formulation of purposes effects implementation. Hogwood and Peters (1985) have separated two types of purposes. In the first case, the smooth operation of the political system is the overriding criterion, which means that vague objectives maybe desirable. In the second case, substantive achievements from the use of scarce resources are the main focus, and vague objectives may lead to these resources being used for objectives which would not be priorities if explicit decisions were taken. (Hogwood & Peters 1985: 26.)
While answers to these questions are being sought, it is important to remember, as Hogwood and Peters have pointed out, that there maybe different interpretations of objectives (i.e. purposes). This may even be regarded as a desirable source of variation in a system of federalism and/or decentralization of programs. (Hogwood & Peters 1985: 26.) Organizational interpretations of what purposes mean and how they are put into practice are important for the creation of administrative cultures at all levels of bureaucratic hierarchies. Purposes which are vague, may cause many tensions, inter-organizational conflicts and contests, as well as opportunities. Interpretations of purposes are connected with the formerly discussed theme of language definitions and with the birth of unforseen risks and side-effects.

Structural changes carry ethical choices. In the reformation/revolutionary programs, strong old administrative cultures need to be approached at a deeper, basic assumption level for a real change to take place. New ethical principles need to be a part of the organization’s “social contract” for implementation as daily procedures. The leadership is most effective when it can employ ethical changes strategically. Behavior changes are difficult when organization members are expected to change ethics solely on the basis of their importance. (Grosenick 1994: 190.)

The strategic choices of the leadership in this process mean, most of all, structural arrangements which reflect values. Changing culture is difficult because learning new behaviors means changing organizational consequences. This is often so difficult that it is easier to start a whole new organization with new employees. (Thomson & Luthans 1990.)

In his analysis of social change and civil service ethics, Antti Kivivuori (1984) has listed ways in which administrative structural changes affect the consequences of work. For instance, new tasks, authority, strength, range and rules are the changes which lead to new types of choices by individuals. As the administration grows, the need for new control organizations increases and it becomes more difficult to pinpoint actual responsibility relations from outside. Weakened control and responsibilities add to the ethical choices a single administrator has to make. At the same time work tasks require large units which leads to divisions. These work against intergroup cooperation, while at the same time, many administrative decisions (such as welfare) build human relations and require ethical choices from the whole organization. In addition, new norms of administration can be contradictory and/or contain more general language
which requires interpretation, or delegation of authority to lower levels of administration. (Comp. Kivivuori 1984: 32–33.)

In the historical parts of this work it is impossible to show changes at the organizational level directly. One must merely suspect that some type of organizational learning has taken place. Instead the intention has been to show how political ideologies have been operationalized to change organizational structures and practices.

In the assessment of transitions, the attempt is normally to somehow separate that which is generally administrative from the transition process. Larjavaara has pointed out that looking at transitional processes is not identical to mapping general dysfunctions of administration, which are dominant negative features of the (existing) administrative culture and stand in the way of development and planning of organizations and their work (comp. Larjavaara 2001). In this work, permanent dysfunctions (for instance Temmes 1991: 15–16) are of course one aspect of administrative culture which will be looked at. But because I see culture as a process, permanent dysfunctions and transitional side-effects cannot always be separated in the structuration process. In transitions, old dysfunctions often lose their meaning, new ones are created as side-effects of risk administration. It is also possible to see transition as a process in which the balance between dysfunctional parts of bureaucratic life changes as well.

This is why clear understanding of both the new purposes and the characteristics of the old culture is so important. The basic problem in transitional administrations is that the old culture serves other functions than the ones which the new transitional purposes would have it advance. Side-effects which are born in the social system often take over and become dominant forces. More political and social pressure is born in the external relations of the administration as a result of the subsequent dysfunctions of the system. In this way, dysfunctions both create a need for transitions and make successful goal attainment in them difficult. A transitional cycle of administrative culture is thus created. In this process, the dysfunctions of the old culture are easily recycled into the new administrative culture. This often signifies failure of the original purposes in the eyes of citizens.

The meaning of trust is paramount in transitions because the political system is weakened by changes. As Guy Peters has pointed out, it is fragmented, full of ideological argumentation and “blockage”. Bureaucracy then steps in to fill the power vacuum in the system. As more power passes on to it, the image of government as authoritarian and impersonal is
reinforced in the population. This reduces the legitimacy of the political system – and thus prevents the executive bodies from becoming effective rule-making bodies. (Peters 1984: 56–57.)

Understanding transitional administrations is easier if the stress is both on the manifest (official) and latent (unofficial, side-effect) administrative functioning. These are important in understanding why people act the way they do, because often people change their behavior from the intended when the side-effects become large and meaningful enough. In the end of this development, side-effects can assume the directive role of the execution of law. Actual culture can deviate from law and official policy goals and form a different type of organization from the one intended by the leadership.

Transition of culture involves fast changes which often leads to ineffective organizational learning. New risk positions appear rapidly which makes planning very difficult. In major structural changes, the shared climate breaks and people often need to find quick individual survival solutions. In administration, where law and rules normally (compliance with the law, ethical codes and professional standards) make the ideal climate, a more instrumental (pursuit of organizational or personal interests regardless of consequences) attitude can appear (comp. Denhardt 1994: 173).

In transition, people rearrange and re-prioritized elements even when this is not officially in their competence. Inside the administration different internal binds (authority relations, promotion and status guarding pressures, traditional ways of assessing different types of matters and so on) may cause administrators to act in a way which conflicts with formal stated purposes. Mutual favoritism, nepotism and corruption are typical examples of conflicts. The actual weight different actors in an organization have is further more not bound by organizational limits. Group goals inside an organization can be protected and advanced by outside pressures coming from the political arena or from authorities representing other organizations.
1.2.3 The Ecology of Transitional Administration and Organizational Pathologies

What happens to administration when the society around it changes rapidly and becomes unpredictable? My answer is that the administration becomes a risk organization. Its ethical base is at risk because of the economic, political and social pressures of the surrounding society. There can be two types of risks: outside structural changes which threaten the organization, and cultural opposition inside the organization which hinders (ethical) change imposed upon it by outside structures and leadership.

On the basis of existing literature it is possible to say that the Russian federation has twice been a risk society where many permanent dysfunctions of the old administrative culture have been reproduced in altered forms during the transition. Risks and side-effects are often the same thing and their analytical definition is at best relative. In his framework for the evaluation of administration Juhani Nikkilä (1992) has proposed to find out the extent to which things happened as planned or consequentially. In addition he proposes to look at the meaning of changes for the administration and its environment. (Nikkilä 1992: 78.) Side-effects are then things which take place in spite of planning and are often unwanted. Risks are effects which have significance for the administration and its environment and may create difficulties for purpose attainment in the future.

I have looked at the Russian administrative cultures as “markets” (Kordonskii 2000) in which different actors influence (mediate) the formation of a new culture. These markets could also be named as bargaining networks which would stress the fact the there were negotiation rules and an attempt at reaching satisfactory compromises for all administrative parties. The concept of market puts the stress slightly more on the competition of different groups inside the administrative structures.

For understanding the environment of transitional administrations, important factors are the state’s role, institution building, center-periphery relations, economic goals, and citizenry (social roles, attitudes and action in terms of participation) in transition. My collection of risk organization qualities (based on the writings cited at the end of this list) is as follows:

1) Structural changes effect two levels developing at parallel speed but, in many ways, separate directions. One is the political state or government level and the other the socially adapting citizen. Hectic change produces
risks and does not allow for proper planning. Social, economic and political side-effects of the side-effects themselves can become decisive.

2) In the economy a quasi-market exists in which negative side-effects of the past system determine the present situation. New risk positions rise in the society while “legitimate levels” of new bad things become a part of life. This leads to a normative horizon of broken trust which affects directly the legal system, respect of laws and administration. The earlier predictable (if not just) environment becomes a risk producer and transmitter of latent side effects which are unintentional. These produce often intolerable consequences for different citizen groups. The expectations toward the state are lowered which leads to growing illegal means of survival.

3) Structures of the state do not make a coherent system. The social space is re-divided by new actors and security institutions become important. There is incoherence in the structures between manifest and latent functions and their consequences. Administrative authority is formally in place but in practice it is diffuse. New types of actors can assume authoritative roles and advance into important decision making positions. New norms which were created to make structures more coherent become rigid. In the end, the structures themselves can become norms.

4) Law, rules and norms are often formalistic. They may be formally adopted when they don’t reflect the social traditions of the environment and thus the climate of the surrounding society makes enforcing laws difficult. For the administrator the dilemma then is how much can he try to enforce the law? Should he try to enforce it on a limited segment of the public, and if so, on what segment? Corruption rises and morale is undermined. As a result, the public view of administration becomes more cynical. In this absurd way law intensifies problems. Instead of reliance on law, legitimate levels of bad things are accepted. Law may become a naked instrument of power relations. Territorial aspects become important. Laws and norms are not interpreted or executed in a uniform manner.

5) Guidance can be ineffective because there is a loss of social thinking. At the same time this frees those who opposed or were disappointed with the old order. They are easily frustrated, because the structural weakness of the system makes purposeful action difficult. The strength of professional norms is tested. If they conflict with new norms, there is a clash of expectations.

6) Power and control change their nature. There is a lack of consensus, official and unofficial powers are separated. The need for more control
creates unintended effects in the structures. It is common to intensify the severity of policy rules. Territorial differentiation takes place in actual power and control. In administration corruption can be one of the most effective ways of gaining power and control.

7) In a risk society new information is flowing but it does not produce a balanced reflection on the new social and economic demands required for developing legislation and institutions. A new type of ignorance (difficulty in choice making and calculation) is created as a result of mounting knowledge. Outside models can be accepted uncritically or through revolution, and the dichotomous thinking (good-bad) continues.

8) Politics are inside the administration which means that administrators need to fill the gap left by politicians who cannot formulate clear and enforceable policies. “Best-intentions” guide decision making. Often quick solutions are sought. In the long run there is an attempt to colonize the future which brings surprises. When administration fails, politicians see that laws and rules which have been adopted as “policies”, are not carried out. The rhetorical confrontation which results in this situation spreads over to public debate and further underlines the mistrust in administrative work. At the same time, politics and morality gain new importance over scientific information because rational calculation is often impossible.

9) Client relations are complicated by the attempts to enforce the law. As a result of the resistance by the population to law, the public view of the administration becomes cynical. In the worst case, bureaucracies can appear as forms of organized irresponsibility.

10) Class structure of the elite fluctuates. Cliques are important and nepotism gains even more meaning as a way to secure positions in an uncertain economic situation. At the same time, new routes to the elite emerge, and new types of elites are born within the administration. New and old members of the administrative elite who coexist in the administrative organizations are in subtle “wars” in which new ideas based on changing values clash with old routines. The traditions of preferential treatment and corruption are often used by new actor groups trying to gain power. It is very difficult to actually destroy these systems to introduce new professional norms.

11) The position of the personnel varies. Cliques, nepotism and corruption gain importance in the hectic changes as means of survival, social advancement and relations with citizens. Education opens possibilities for survival and handling uncertainty becomes a cultural qualification as a
result of manufactured uncertainty. In revolutionary changes new types of administrators begin their work, often coexisting with the old staff. New administrators are often eager to adopt the new role they have in the building of the state, especially if they represent groups which were earlier outside of elite recruitment. In their way stands the lack of a reliable system of measurement for success. A weak or distorted system of rewards exists as a result of financial problems and the old culture. This leads to more severe policy rules and less innovation. (Compare Riggs 1964, Beck 1964, Yanitsky 1999, Salminen & Temmes 2000, Rowney 1989, Denhardt 1994, Grosenick 1994, Vartola 1984.)

In administrative organizations, the changes of society are multiplied by the general features of administrations themselves, of which formalism is the most evident. Relying on the formal structures alone can bring unintended results depending on the level of formalism in which there is an incongruence between formally described institutions and real life informal behavior (Riggs 1964.) This is one example of how transitions intensify existing dysfunctions in the administration.

In transitions, different strong developments affect the organization at the same time both from the outside and as a consequence of these from the inside. This process is usually very difficult for the leadership to handle, not least because its own position is now more easily changed by internal opposition. When proper planning becomes possible, unintended side-effects may have already begun to dominate daily functions thus creating new obstacles.

Changing the law is not enough because transitional institutions going though major changes which try to replace their previous cultural legacy are often not culturally strong enough to sustain evenly spread and uniform administrative functions. Cultural weakness is based on new legislation which contradicts old standards for administrative behavior. At the same time financial inability to provide the infrastructure to execute the changes creates lack of trust in organizational purposes both inside and outside the administration. In the international cooperation of the 1990´s, this has meant that there has been a reliance on personal ties with partner organizations because the organizations themselves are not relied upon in spite of their formal authority.
1.2.4 The Institutionalization of a New Culture

The institutionalization of culture has taken place when new practices and patterns of thought inside a structure are taken as given. A new culture can be looked at from at least two angles:

1. To find out what kind of a culture has developed, new dominant institutionalized patterns of thought and practices have to be found both at an organizational and system level.
2. To see how successful the transition has been in institutionalizing new values, the administrative culture can be mirrored against the transitional purposes.

Culture is a process of constant adaptation by the members of organizations to both the possibilities and limitations of structures, and an attempt to influence the conditions defining these structures. Routines reveal the actual manner in which the administrative ethical principles are implemented (i.e. how effectively laws are brought to life or discarded as meaningless to daily customs).

In major political transitions different forms of systemic transformations can take place which affect the administration in various ways. Assimilation occurs when the other party willingly adopts the identity and culture of another. This usually this happens only within a small elite or vanguard section of society. Except in violent revolutions, integration is more likely to take place. It means the structural assimilation of two cultures, but less deep cultural assimilation. People at “the receiving end” try to maintain many of their basic assumptions, beliefs, organizational practices and systems that make them unique. (Comp. Nahavandi & Malekzadeh 1988: 82.)

Deculturation can also take place. It happens when members of the old culture no longer value their culture and organizational practices, but they also do not want to be assimilated into a new culture. If the old culture disintegrates, a result is a great deal of collective and individual confusion, feeling of alienation, loss of identity and stress. (Nahavandi & Malekzadeh 1988: 82.) Similar types of feelings are evident among those who are losing in the power struggle of the administrative elite, who resists the fundamentals of the change and see imminent threat to their position. They see that previously excluded groups gain importance and new types of values emerge which require new skills, work habits and contacts in the society.
Instead of open separation they might use different types of retardation tactics.

In the administration’s wider environment, there is overlapping of competing and often incompatible types of social systems which often causes a deep feeling of guilt over not being able to meet one’s own norms in the surrounding society. It is natural to swing extravagantly between contradictory extremes, giving loyalty to opposing things. Both at the individual and organization level laws may simply be ignored or executed only partially. (Comp. Riggs 1964.)

In successful transitions of administrative culture, clients of administration see the usefulness of organizational purposes for themselves in daily routines. The ethics of structures which become “alive” in the routines, establish the foundation of this new social reality. Structures are not separate from people. As fast as a culture develops, a convergence takes place between members of an organization and its structures. A more profound cultural change goes beyond error correction in a learning process when individual members create new requirements, their own sources, conditions and consequences. This kind of change rarely happens without larger changes in the structural conditions and thus it can be described as happening successfully when the (often more or less forced) structural and social changes work towards the same direction (Argyris 1978: 20–24, comp. Giddens 1984).

Gagliardi (1986) has pointed out that policies can only be adopted if they are produced by the structures “naturally” or – in his opinion – by a leadership which can bring the organization into new territory and reconstruct its competence and identity. (Gagliardi 1986.) From our basic beliefs of what is true, we build our organizational structures and functions to protect these beliefs in society. In successful transitions, the motivation of administrators which is supported by structures coincides with the acceptance of the public. A cycle of reinforcement develops in which the institutionalization of desired values of the organization spills over to the society.

Commonplace routines of life in the administration can deter even large scale structural policies. Transitional periods mean confusion at the level of law making and lack of clear policies, but they may also open unexpected opportunities for a social system which is less controlled. Giving up a major part of the social values is followed by a lament for the past and is a major obstacle to planned development. (Tilev 1994: 59.) Unwanted and surprising
cultural changes deny people the time for adjustment which may manifest itself in the form of shock, inconsistent behavior and resistance. These lead to organizational dysfunctions, risks and side-effects.

Hogwood and Peters discuss professionalization of public service which increases possibilities of conflicts among professionals when a policy succession is undertaken. When different professions need to interact, they will tend to conflict over the control of clients (citizens). Professional rigidities are concentrated in law, where policy successions can encounter institutional and behavioral problems. In addition, recruitment is typically selective and training attempts to transform personnel as useful for the organization’s goals. In a transitional situation, people whose recruitment has involved different values and policy perspectives need to cooperate with new types of organization members. (Hogwood & Peters 1985: 30.)

An organization which is required to inherit procedures of a predecessor organization, may find that these are being used to subvert the purpose of the new policy (Hogwood & Peters 1985: 30). Thomas Fitzgerald (1988) describes how the deep authoritarian values of many peresroika time plant managers were revealed during the freeing up of the initiative and self-direction of subordinates in the transition process. The resentment over the decline of status was “expressed in delay, avoidance, disinterest, back-pedaling, talking for the record but finding endless excuses for inaction, discounting benefits while exaggerating costs – all sorts of “confusion games”.

The ideal solution to this transitional culture problem, namely a planned alteration of the entire structure and its processes (including reward systems and re-education of members) while keeping up visible support and guidance from the top leadership, required “the sort of end-state the change project seeks to bring about”. An ideal solution can work only if there are unlimited resources of time and attention invested throughout the whole organization. (Fitzgerald 1988.) In transitions where change is often hectic and planning thus very difficult, such time and resources do not exist.

The socialization of long-term employees of any organization often results in isomorphic relationships of the character and the structure. (Fitzgerald 1988.) In transitional societies the connection is broken and people’s self-images require drastic sudden changes. Because the trust and motivation to enforce the new values is lacking, changing laws does not really change the way people prioritize things. This creates a psychological problem for anyone attempting to push forward changes. When negative
changes dominate, the natural response is withdrawal from the process into more immediate daily problems of survival or slowing down the development in order to win time. Withdrawal gives more political room for authoritarian decision making which may be temporarily good for political decisiveness of the elite but negative for building the commitment of the population (and line administration) which is needed for deeper cultural transition. Stalling the process on the other hand can intensify dysfunctional features of systems and thus erode trust between state and society. This is one of the greatest concerns for any reformist groups or leaders working inside administrations.
2 Methodology

2.1 Research Material and Its Use in the Work

The materials which have been used can be put into three groups. All groups have been approached with the same style of content analysis (see for instance Tuomi and Sarajärvi 2002). The material has been used to obtain answers either to questions of ideological purposes, state building or the culture itself.

The first group of materials have been used to describe and analyze the purposes of transitions in the political ideology of administrative change. This material consists of what I call factual material about transitional purposes. It includes:

- political writings of Soviet political and state leaders,
- official reform programs,
- legal and political theories of society, economics and law which have been used in state building by Soviet and Russian legal and political writers of different time periods.

I call this material “factual” because the ideological purposes which they document is undisputable, first hand material. I have concentrated on political writings and official programs as a starting point in all periods, with the exception of the last one where the ideological purposes have been described with the help of both an economic program and the new Constitution of 1993.

The second group of materials includes those which have been used to describe state building, in other words structures and their development in different time periods. This group consists of:
- factual material of structures such as normative material (Constitutions and other laws), the history of structural arrangements
- analytical material of structures such as political science/economical and legal studies of Russian administration by both Soviet, Russian and Western writers.

Constitutions have been used as a basis for the description of structural arrangements (hierarchies of decision making, economical arrangements, authority of different levels, vertical relations). Other laws have been used to describe the tasks set for administration (in the present day study) or to see how major laws regulate public decision making. Descriptions of structural arrangements have also been searched in general historical studies about the four time periods.

Besides writers of political science, I have used economical and legal studies which approach Russian and Soviet administration and its functions from different perspectives. The third group of material has been used to describe the new administrative culture. In this group there have been:

- Analytical material of Russian and Soviet administration: Political science/economical and legal studies of Russian administration by both Soviet, Russian and Western writers.
- Historical background material: historical studies of time periods, administrative and political archive material (original but collected in ready volumes), instructions of administrative organizations.
- In the Murmansk city district administration in 1993 and 2000, interviews were conducted (all together 31) by the author. These interviews dealt with the present day work of the case study organization. The intention has been to look at the development of practices and ways of thought in one sample organization in the studied 7 year period. The interviews have been recorded, transcribed in their original Russian language and reviewed with the set of questions used in the study. Each interview has been studied to find either direct descriptions or indirect evidence for the description of those administrative elements which are in the focus of this work.
- The persons interviewed all worked in the same October District administration in the city administration of Murmansk. They represented different educational back grounds (lawyers, engineers,
economists, book keepers and information technologists). Ages differed from late 20´s to 50´s, most were between 30 and 40. Five were men and 26 women. All worked in expert positions in which they either dealt with direct customer service or higher administrative positions.

As in the description of state building, a picture of the new culture has been produced through the use of different types of materials within social sciences, economics, law and cultural studies. Instead of seeing this as a methodological obstacle, I have approached it as an opportunity to build a picture which includes the inevitable conflicts between different viewpoints. It is possible to build a theoretically solid picture of a culture by using just one type of material, but this picture can easily be inadequate when we try to understand major administrative changes.

Structurally my work consists of parts which universalize findings into pictures of past Russian local administrations, and a part which builds an individualized picture of one sample organization along with the analysis of more general developments in the surrounding state and society (comp. Salminen et al. 2000: 28). This type of a structural imbalance is mostly due of to the limits of the available material. The first three parts of the study can be seen as a back ground for the last part.

When choosing material I have looked at the following issues: richness or descriptiveness concerning the arrangements and practices of Russian administration, economical decision making in the Soviet Union or Russia, legal thinking in general or in the work of administrators. Studies about the use of information and language (particularly censorship) have also been important, as well as elite studies connected with Russian and Soviet government (Russian administrative positions and nomenklatura in the Soviet system). With the selected studies, I have sought answers to the questions mentioned in section 1.1.2. Proof for each administrative element of the culture has been based on the assessment of the reliability and validity of the material used, as well as of the corroborating evidence found in other materials.

From each interview, excerpts have been chosen by way of looking at what types of answers (general style of describing one´s work and attitude toward changes) dominate the interview and thus can support the general picture which is built. The generous use of this type of direct quotation material is, in my view, appropriate in a cultural study, particularly when a
part of the task is to understand the language (terms and ways of describing) which people and organizations use.

There has obviously been a hierarchy of the importance of different types of materials. In the historical background material, academic studies have formed the core of the material, where as other material has served to corroborate the analysis. In the case study, interviews have been given considerable space as source material.

2.2 Evaluating Changes in the Past

This study builds a picture of Russian local administration culture in four epochs by using a present day ideal type as a model for understanding each case. I search similarities and differences in several cases with the presumption that these cases are ultimately somehow comparable (see Salminen et. al 2000: 28).

Because one definition for transition is the formation of a new culture, the past serves as a good comparison of transitional changes. “Cultural” is defined as an ongoing adaptation process of attempting to influence one’s own conditions which have been produced by earlier generations in previous structures.

The justification for the study of history in organizational research is obvious: understanding the work of administration any further from a formal structural level is impossible without some consideration for the traditions, values and motivations which rationalize practices. The similarities which can be found in the administrative cultures of different historical time periods help to understand why the present administration is such as it is. At the same time, it must be noted that not all the historical material deals with purely administrative matters. The political, economical and legal matters of each time period needed to be included in such a sufficient manner so as to place administrative developments in their contexts. This is also why this work includes quite a lot of general history concerning the periods studied.

Even though it is less debatable to see why we would need to look back to understand the present, it is more difficult to decide the precise approach to use. The debate over the proper way of researching the past administration will have to be decided separately for each research task. Seppo Tiihonen (1995), for instance, sees the value of historical research in its ability to
answer such questions as what lies behind the surface of administrative practices and what can be found in both the information structures of administration and the language which is used in it. Our understanding of order and meaning lays in the core of all these. (Tiihonen 1995: 39.) Both pure historical methods and administrative studies can contribute to such knowledge of the past.

One way of describing the difference between administrative studies and history is to say that social scientists studying administration evaluate their subject in a finalist manner. That is, from the point of view of the end result in all development. The meaning is to find laws according to which changes in administration take place. Historians, on the other hand, seek the unique in a phenomenon. They situate it in its historical moment and study it to see what was important then and what was the role of administration in that setting. (Tiihonen 1995: 39.) The main difference lies in the *a posteriori* approach of historical research which proceeds from empirical material to the deduction of probable causes. If one looks at a singular historical case, it is more than recommendable to use different approaches, when possible, for it adds valid information into the description and analysis of a phenomenon. But in transitional studies which aim to compare different time periods both with one another and with a chosen goal, the natural choice are the starting points of those administrative studies. A common bond between different time periods and different systems needs to be built. Transition studies particularly like to view the environment as possessing more general societal qualities than purely place and environment connected historical peculiarities.

This discussion is connected to the primary methodological choices to be made: is the study about causal relations or does it explain the meaning of action? Transition would almost naturally be connected with causal analysis and quantitative material where changes appear to be unambiguous. It could be equally argued, though, that teleological methods which explain the meaning of action give more profound knowledge of what types of things lie beneath the surface. An evaluation of past changes of culture does not need to exclude either methodology, but the material and the analysis produced by them are different.

This study hangs between the knowledge of traditional historical research and the general theoretical view of administrative culture in transitional time periods. It seeks to explain the meaning of action without a specific intention of finding causal relations. At the same time, these two are not
seen as mutually exclusive. It can be argued, that in understanding the meaning of action, we produce information about its causes and the processes which are taking place. Understanding organizational culture means penetrating beneath the level of organization into that which answers to the question of “why?”.

This work does not try to prove a general law, but to link the individual ideal types together in a framework of concepts. In other words, units (ideal types) are not compared to each other but to the theoretical concepts which are relevant in all cases (Salminen & Lehtinen 1982). Problems of comparison are numerous: the “measurement” model and the concepts used need to be valid in all of the systems under inspection. A researcher needs to understand when the practical functions of similar systems serve different purposes, or when different structures serve the same functions. Models can simplify the picture too much. Sometimes there aren’t enough facts to sustain a comparison with the ideal type. The most difficult question of all is that by using a theory, can we proceed from clear definitions to study the undefined reality. (Salminen & Lehtinen 1982.)

Most of the problems can, to a certain degree, be eliminated by getting to know the historical environment which provides the data. It is important to keep in mind what it is that we are looking for and what are the limitations of the search. For the results of this study, these considerations mean above all that the final categorization and choosing of relevant elements of administrative culture can be decided only after the data is collected and interpreted. In this sense, even as the theoretical concept help reveal what we are looking for, it does not decide what we will find.

### 2.3 Searching for Culture in Case Studies

A building of ideal types uses the maximal dissimilarities of different systems and time periods to show the culturally relevant elements within each type against the theoretical background. The present day elements of “good government” can be found being interpreted differently in historical administrations. This concept helps us to find qualities which are relevant for our understanding of administration. This does not mean that the historically unique conditions of different times are overlooked and the found qualities are interpreted as “negative” or “wrong” if they do not meet the present day requirements. On the contrary, the comparison is hoped to
add to our possibility to understand the logic of the past administrations. In
fact, the so called “good government” does not exist anywhere as such, but
is a model which helps us analyze the cultural logic of administrations.

A case study approach is used both in the present day study of a sample
organization and as a general structural method in writing. In general, a
case study is appropriate when the investigator has an opportunity to
observe and analyze a phenomenon previously inaccessible to scientific
investigation. (Yin 1984.) The aim of such research is to make observations
of an phenomenon in the reality and to collect and organize these
observations into a concept of the phenomenon. This type of a conceptual-
inductive model puts importance into choosing of the unit of analysis. The
aim is to find many different sorts of data, which the researcher later makes
sense of with the help of an “observation method”. From the gathered data
qualities are formed and collected which make up the concept of the studied
phenomenon. (Eneroth 1984.) Eneroth´s ideas are in parallel with a
Weberian model’s way of looking at organizations. This approach tries to
find first hand knowledge about the subject matter to understand how
social realities become constructed. Behind it is a holistic theory building
which compares different types of cases to see what they have in common.
(Sormunen and Kuparinen 1991.)

Typically, qualitative research is interested in the competence of the
concept which is drawn from observations. A low reliability is actually
positive because the meaning is to find as many qualities (data) as possible
using repeated method. (Eneroth 1984.) In this sense, reliability is not
universal, bound to certain procedures.

For the purposes of this study it has been necessary to be able to somehow
construct an intermediary methodological way of looking at the situation
similarly to the concept of public administration which was done in the
beginning of this work. The transitional process refers to the way the
administrator in his every day work adapts to and effects the structures
within the social system of the organization. “Transitional” on the other
hand refers to something extraordinary and non-stable.

The aim of the case study part of this work is to describe the effects of
cultural transition without the intention of seeking causal links. I do not
intend to find variables which caused some chosen end result but to describe
the transition from the viewpoint of the interviewed persons. The building
of an ideal type based on a present day case means gathering heterogenous
material from a variety of sources. Other than interviewing, the study
included observation of work routine in a customer service situation, acquainting myself with the staff and collecting written material about the regulations and procedures used in the administrative work. Getting to know the actual legal procedures of their daily work was important in understanding the practical conditions. Observation included everything from the material conditions of buildings, offices and physical organization of service (where people wait, how much information is available on the walls, where the point of information in the building was, and so on).

In the practical field work, my goal came close to that which Silverman (1985) calls realism. When discussing a topic with an informant, I did not plan to reveal truth, objective facts or something else like that but to take responses as displays of routines, daily perspectives and possible motivations of the people who work as representatives of a certain type of organization in the official roles of administrators. (comp. Silverman 1985.) It meant that the knowledge so gathered does not objectively tell “what is out there in the world” but what is in the informants’ world as administrators. That is, how they themselves are adapting to the situation at hand. Our roles and official attitudes are ways to survive in our environment. The views people have about work are a result of many things: the setting, historical situation, daily politics, personal ambitions, internal conflicts of the administration, personal ambiguity and so on, which form the background of the world as it is seen by those interviewed. The most a thematic interview can do is point to the logical connection of things and the affirmation which informants themselves may give, but stronger proof of causality cannot be obtained. Important instead is to look at all answers as personal descriptions of the official roles of informants.

2.4 Finding Meanings in Interviews

2.4.1 Self-evaluation as a Way of Discovering Practices and Thoughts

Self-evaluation of one’s official role is different from the description and analysis of administrative work as such, which also requires a comprehensive description of administrative routines, decision making processes, customer service and such like. This would require studying clients as well as extensive participation in the daily work of the studied organization. The objective of
this case part, however, has been to mainly concentrate on the self-understanding of the administrators, as far as material facts and observation of routines have been used, they serve a supportive role in the analysis, as a type of checking device against misinterpretations.

Self-evaluation has both strengths and weaknesses from a methodological perspective. The greatest hazard connected with my study is that as an outsider I have entered an organization with a de-ontological view of what administration should be like. I have an idea that certain things are bad in themselves irrespective of circumstances (such as corruption or authoritarian way of leadership). On the other side of the table sits a person, who has to have a more consequential perspective on matters. He or she may well understand the good sides of fully developed democracy but realizes that actions have to be judged according to their effects. (Comp. Griseri 1998: 11.)

From this it follows that what people say their practices and thoughts are, are things that do not necessarily translate directly into action. Even when people seem to have fixed rigid views, they may act more flexibly in a given situation. A result is that they seem hypocritical. In addition to this consideration, people in general have different types of roles in an organization as group workers. Some may, for instance, be more interested in simply getting things done, while others may reflect upon the significance of concrete situations. (Griseri 1998: 51–52.)

Besides trying to map the general attitude towards different elements of administrative culture in the self-evaluation of an interviewed person, there is also the problem of connecting the findings to the organizational and general administration level. Important for the understanding of interviewing process is what Michael Brenner (1985) calls “a view of something between (inter) people”. The accounts which people give are a result of interpretational work, selected aspects of the past which seem important within the frame of reference provided by the interviewer. Whether the interviewed persons stick to the particular frame of reference or not, is another question. Exaggerations or understatements can take place for various reasons which do not have to do with covering up things or changing the truth. Each interviewed person has his own style which has to be understood with reasonable confidence in order to read the accounts. (Brenner 1985.)

The starting point in analysis has been not to try to “read” anything into the interviews that is not visibly there. In this sense, I do not follow the
methodological objectives of content analysis. I do not try to find “hidden worlds” beyond what the interviewed persons have themselves told me. I see that the limits of what people can or want to say as indicators of cultural openness but telling nothing conclusive about “the hidden”.

According to Barbara Mostyn (1985), the ultimate purpose of analysis of open-ended material (content analysis) is to understand the meaning of the communication, both its manifest and latent meaning within the context of the respondent’s own frame of reference. In this, a researcher relies on what the interviewed persons can tell, and not what is necessarily going on inside of their heads. It is important that the analyst understands his/her subjects as people, their roles, values and life styles in order to interpret the data (Mostyn 1985.) Again, subjectivity is not considered a negative thing, because the aim is to discover the internal logic of each respondent’s views: the reality of their experiences.

It is possible to interview enough persons in key positions to assure oneself that the collected accounts tell about the general culture of the studied organization. But how much can self-evaluation of official roles actually tell about the general culture and its changes in local administration? How can one in practice prove that there is a connection between structural changes and the evaluations which people make about themselves? In the strictest sense of positivism, this connection cannot be proven in my work. What I can do though, is show that respondents claim there to be a connection and that structural facts to an extent support this claim.

Whether people in fact reacted according to a culturally sanctioned manner to questions is the most intriguing factor in the interview material. If this was so, then in fact an important quality of the studied organization has been found. But to say that something is “culturally sanctioned” requires quite a bit of proof. In most cases, the culturally sanctioned interpretation of reality is so fine and delicate, that it takes a lot of time and personal experience to find such qualities. In my view, general knowledge and personal understanding of how things are expressed in a different society is the key to finding out what is in fact a subjective interpretation of something and what is clearly “cultural”. Further more, there are different layers within culturally sanctioned responses. There is the general culture of the society and then the separate sub-cultures which all have their own unwritten laws (comp. Mira Bergelson 2005). In my case, I had to first penetrate the “Russian” in order to get the “Russian administrative”. The connection between these two is not always quite clear.
Motivational effects are connected with culturally sanctioned responses. The respondent reveal a culturally important norm in the way they assess the questions for answers. Their reactions to what is important and what is less important not only tells about the structural side of the work. The interview is a process during which the interviewer has to be open to chances of topics and questions if the respondents indicate that the questions do not target the right issues. Asking “wrong” questions can be the best way to find out what is, in reality, meaningful for the interviewed persons, if they actively correct the interviewer. For something not to be important from the point of view of the respondents, is indeed a result in itself.

2.4.2 The Interview Process and Themes

A thematic interview was used in this work. The same set of questions was asked from all participants in both rounds and in most cases in the same order. I did not try to interfere with the interpretations the interviewed persons gave to each question. Additional questions were used when it was appropriate. Informants were chosen by the organization itself, via those superiors responsible for accepting the researcher. My task was to make sure that the objective of the study was sufficiently clear to those making the selection after which I had to trust the superiors in their judgement over who would make a suitable informant. The interviewed persons were “key-informants” (Grönfors 1982) whose formal role, willingness to participate and work history were considered appropriate. In the first case of fall 1993, informants were chosen according to their seniority position, and in the latter case of summer 2000, those with enough work experience from different levels of the hierarchy were chosen.

The interview topics gave the interviewees chance to describe their orientation in the workplace and to describe decision making dynamics if they wished to do so. The formal work routines in the organization have played a secondary – although important supportive role. The basic assumption in the field work was that people will themselves tell what is important for them without too much provocation. Routines were prioritized as the main focus of attention.

There are several weak points to the style of interviewing which has been chosen. Brenner (1985) describes the most typical problems faced in this
type of social interaction to which I have added some qualities found in my particular case:

1. The undesirable factors which operated in the interviewer-interviewee interaction.
2. Problems of understanding for different respondents.
3. No verification data for attitudes, value statements and cognitive experiences. The only way of assessing the authenticity of such expressions is to scrutinize the interaction for possible biasing effects. Another is the comparison of different accounts to find out if there is a high concordance between them.
4. Motivational effects in questions. There can be a need to respond in culturally sanctioned ways.
5. The informant can be disinterested. (for a fuller description see Brenner 1985: 157–158.)

In the present interview study, problems were found in all four points of attention. The interviewers age and sex were definitely a factor which at the same time made the connection less formal and even open (the interviewer was considered less threatening), but at the same time diminished slightly the motivational level of some respondents in the first group of 1993 who might have considered a different type of interviewer more official. Yet, a female interviewer was an advantage because most of the interviewees were women working with either pensioners or people receiving social benefits.

The interviewer’s foreign nationality did not go unnoticed, particularly in the first round of 1993 when the political situation was open, but cannot be said to have been an obstacle in obtaining meaningful results. People were surprisingly open even in the 1993 group and in the latter group of 2000, the problem of foreign nationality evaporated as the work in the organization progressed and the collective became more familiar with the interviewer.

At a practical level, some of the words chosen for the questions and had been proof-read by native Russian speakers, did not work during the interview. A typical example was the word “challenge” which seemed to involve different meanings. The different cognitive styles of respondents also shows in the answers. In the 1993 group the difference between personal styles was larger than in the latter group. Some are very descriptive and
personal, others more mechanical answers about observable facts without any personal assessment. The more mechanical answers were in some cases a type of “shield” to avoid getting too analytical. In the latter 2000 group, all were voluntarily taking part and with just one exception, were eager to share their experiences.

As the administrative organ had gone through structural changes during the 90’s, not all of the same functions were represented in the interviews as before. In the 1993 group, the interviewees represented a broad category of departments ranging from book keeping, pension and benefit assignments to inspection of businesses. In the 2000 group, all interviewees were working within the pension and benefit section, notwithstanding the director of the district administration. Some of the departments from 1993 had disappeared and the pensions and social assistance sector had grown.

The actual questions were not completely identical with the elements listed in section 1.1.2. Some questions which were attached to the cultural elements list were only asked indirectly because of political and situational constraints. Thus the decision of what to ask involved finding themes which would have covered as many of the sought after elements as possible.

The following interviews in the summer 2000 were conducted based on those questions of daily work, which had either remained poorly answered in the first round or had otherwise proven important. In other words, not all of the same questions were asked the second time around, and similar themes were formulated slightly differently. Comparison is thus made on the basis of the content of answers in both rounds, not question by question as in structured interviews.

The two major themes covered in the interviews and their sub-themes were the following: How does the financial situation and changing legislation affect the organization?

- Task and structural changes (tasks/ services given)
- Personnel policy, family and work (specialization, new roles of personnel, women at work)
- Work with higher organs of administration (central government, legislation)
- Information, quality and circulation (legislation, work organization)
- Leadership (authority, delegation)
How do the new influences from society and the political instability effect the work?

- Political atmosphere (stability vs. changes)
- Clients, their service and public opinion (Client ethics)
- Information, quality and circulation (media and society)
- Relationship with the local soviet/duma
- Leadership (policies)

The themes of politics and atmosphere relate to several cultural elements of public administration. The administrator is situated in the delicate balancing point of different cultural demands. In transitions the breakdown of both the political structures and the social system together with uncertain or conflicting new views make long term planning very difficult. Information, for its part, is an element inherent in all political life. The way it is gathered, the pluralism of decision making and the value of criticism in the system, are central questions of responsive administration.

Officials often have to consider what is “politically possible”, in other words what can be realistically done now and in the future. In times of deep political crisis the civil servants may be forced to live in a officially “non-political” environment to avoid any future confrontations. This may, of course, cause many practical and personal complications.

The idea of citizenship is at the center of the questions concerning citizens. How much can the “receivers” of the services influence the planning stage through civil servants? What is the civil servants’ margin for discretion? Whether the administrator sees his position as a mechanical provider of legally bound services to a passive client or as a participant, assistant in the process of coordination of the (hopefully active) client’s individual situation, is an interesting issue. So, too, is the relationship of administration to local interest groups and organizations of active individuals. The manifestations of “public opinion” and the responsiveness of the civil servants is important for the pluralism of information, as well as for power and its sources.

The local level structural changes and the new tasks the administrators have had to take upon themselves, make an important part of the description of the daily work. One area of interest was the separation of party politics from the administrative structure in 1993 and the practical new demands which might have risen from this. Particular interest was directed at those
who worked inside the old system. I have, myself, considered some elements as of more interest: the position of single administrators, the changes of official authority for the work and the idea of effectiveness as manifest in the description of organizational form and rules of work. In the Soviet Union, “effectiveness” held its own specific meaning which included such matters as political correctness, stability and order for centrally guided planning systems and speed. What I consired of interest were the descriptions of what is now regarded effective work. Of particular importance in pursuing this area of interest was discovering how much and in what direction the interviewees wished to develop their own work.
3 The Transition of Administrative Culture, 1870–1916

This chapter describes the main features of administrative culture before the reforms of the 19th century, the competing ideologies of administrative change, structural changes which followed and, as a result of all this, the new administrative culture after 1906. The analysis will show how the qualities of the old culture affected the creation of local administration both in town and rural forms of local government.

3.1 The Political Ideologies of Administrative Change: Community Government vs. State Functions

3.1.1 The Administrative Culture in the 19th Century Civil Service

The reforms of Russian administration at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th focused on two main developments: the strengthening of statehood, and the connection between law and administration in the Russian empire. This synthesis produced many of the structural and policy changes which enabled the transformation of legal thinking in general, duties of administration and ideas about citizenship in Russia before the 1917 revolution. For the development of statehood particularly important administrative matters concerned territorial strategies, hierarchy of decision making and the professionalism of the civil service. For the development of legal thinking the most important administrative issues where the separation of powers, structural arrangements for legal protection and the discretionary power of administrators. In 19th century Russia, the state (as an ideological
The Transition of Administrative Culture, 1870–1916

concept) was embedded in the person of the emperor. Before 1906 the Emperor was the supreme authority in both legislative and executive functions in Russia. Unlike in other parts of Europe, in Russia the emperor maintained his unlimited position up till the first Constitution. Centralism and absolutism which had their historical roots in the Mongol rule (1240–1480) were a part of organizing public affairs and unifying the state in the Russian administrative culture. The rulers of Moscow used the Mongolian principle of compulsory service by tying the new nobility to the head of state through military and civil service, making it totally dependant upon the personality of the ruler. Similarly, the creation of new types of estates was a way of unifying the structure under one rule. The landholder (pomeshchik) received a size of land from the Tsar in return of service. The relationship with the state was one-sided and dependant upon the ruler’s decisions. The bondage of the peasants (1649) came as an after effect of this move to centralize ownership, decision making and political control. (Tiihonen 1994, Berman 1963.)

The aristocracy which formed the first civil service was an interesting dichotomy: at once landowners mastering the fate of people given to them by the ruler, were simultaneously servants of the state themselves. This type of bondage to the ruler’s decision making considerably affected their cultural role as political and legal dependants of supreme power. As Fred Weissman has argued, in Russia land was neither a means of self-aggrandizement nor a mark of status, but a way of performing state service. Proprietorship provided the material support of the nobility in their service role and insured that they would retain contact with the rest of the local citizenry. The nobility’s role of mediating between the Tsar and the people applied particularly to the peasants. (Weissman 1981:13.)

Besides the strong personal power of the ruler, the autocracy of the Russian empire had a religious nature which made it different from the ruling ideologies of the West. The unity of the church and state, and the ideology which regarded the power of the Tsar to be from God, meant that people had to obey him for reasons of conscience as well as of necessity. This prevented restrictions on the state’s action. The competition between the Church and the state which characterized the development of Western culture did not exist in Russia. Instead the Russian church was replaced by the state as a structural source of cultural influence. Tsar Nicholas II, for instance, considered his position to be a matter of personal loyalty to the ideas of orthodox faith which he embodied, autocracy as a tradition, and
Russia as a land. This special relationship needed to be passed on to the next generation. The autocratic power of the Tsar was a central myth which sustained social relations and in which it was simply unthinkable that an emperor could share his power with anyone. Authority and power in governmental decision making could come from two sources: the Tsar as the personal owner of the land and people, and God who was represented by him through the church, of which he was the head. As the will of the Tsar remained a fundamental source of regulation, the administration in effect continued to execute the will of the autocrat as law. (Hosking 1972, Tiihonen 1994, McDaniel 1996, Berman 1963, Makarenko 1989.)

What effects did this cultural reality have on the development of local administration? Local administration developed in the absence of a strong town culture which affected its role in the Russian state. According to Makarenko (1989), the destruction of Novgorod and the strengthening of Moscow as the center of the land can be viewed as the historical background for the weak development of town culture. (Makarenko 1989: 31.) The merchant class for instance was too weak to develop within and from its own ranks a more emancipated circle of intellectuals capable of being a meaningful political and social power. Political factors had also played a role in the development.

Instead of a strong town culture, the development of administrative authority played a significant role at the local level. Peter the Great institutionalized a European style civil service of hierarchical positions which served as a legal basis for state authority. Yet, the development of civil service as a profession remained connected to the earlier described social system which surrounded the Tsar and maintained the official legitimacy of autocracy. Within the official structures, rules and norms were connected with family, debts of gratitude, mutual favoritism and inherited ties between members of a clan and the Emperor. Tiihonen (1994) describes how Russian civil servants traditionally were chosen according to the loyalty their ancestors had shown to the Emperor. The official’s place depended on his origin, former services of the family to the throne, his own merits and his service position. (Tiihonen 1994.)

The strong personification of institutional power at the top effected administrative culture through the personnel system which included characteristics of both legitimate authority and rules, and social relations of the court. In the 1800’s the state administration culture of Russia had developed a “mature” social system to which social climbing was central.
Tiihonen has described how elite recruitment happened through three different channels: 1) by origin of birth in which the best patron was one who belonged to the same family. 2) through marriage to an influential family, and 3) by finding a patron who was situated near the court in St. Petersburg. A patron was needed throughout one’s career. Loyalty was guaranteed in the administration by this network in which criticism was not allowed because it was interpreted to be always directed at the supervisor. The most valued qualities of a civil servant were loyalty, submissiveness and rigid observance of commands. Methods of control included the use of a secret police system, letter censorship and spying. However, it is noteworthy that the elevation of the educational level of civil servants and official requirements of education also consolidated the authority of single administrators, particularly at the lower level. (Tiihonen 1994.)

The status of higher administrators naturally depended upon the level of power in the top echelons of the hierarchy. As Mustonen has pointed out, regulated social communication and its credibility were a particular source of status for the highest administration and it was thus in their interest to preserve it. Furthermore, the institution of autocracy did not have clear outlines. It overlapped with the regular administration by controlling its activities with the help of personal agents, and by way of trusted state officials, favorites who represented the emperor in these institutions. Different administrative organs could be differently incorporated into the system of autocracy. The level of administration was not a decisive factor in this matter, political and situational factors were often more important. The principle of personification of power played a major role in the formation of jurisdiction for personal agents. (Mustonen 1999: 282, 283.)

In the old administrative culture, a major element was the organization of civil servants promotions. During the 19th century, this system had been subject to several reform attempts aimed at enhancing the relationship between efficiency and position – all of which had failed. What had remained was a view of all civil servants – from the top to bottom – having in fact the same legal position before the Tsar. The civil service was a combination of office posts (dolzhnosti) and extra-administrative ranks (chinyi, the original rank table from 1722 has been presented for instance by Aarrevaara 1999: 27) which were not connected to each other directly in the appointment system. Besides state officials, ranks were given to municipal officials holding relatively high administrative posts. More people could hold a specific rank than were office posts which required it by law. The main basis
for appointments was the age of a candidate holding a specific rank or in case of two candidates of same age, the length of tenure in one. Receiving a higher rank was made practically automatic and considered a form of legal protection for civil servants against their immediate supervisors. The municipal administrators were an exception to the general rule in that their ranks were, in many cases, bound to the length of the service. (Shepelev 1999: 166–167, 188.)

During reform discussions, the proponents of the prevailing situation viewed it by comparison with the general European system of hiring and promoting civil servants based on the evaluation of their origin, property and talent. In Russia however, the basis of citizenship was derived from the evaluation of a person’s rank which was given to him by the supreme power. Equality before law was guaranteed by a general opportunity to rise in the service system. Appointment depended on a person’s service to the state and could be given to him by a socially lower level person. In this sense, the appointment system was seen as a guarantee of political control for the autocracy combined with the dignity of equality. (Shepelev 1995: 173.)

The separation of office posts and ranks in the civil service attracted persons of questionable suitability. From an efficiency point of view, there was a need to unify the numbers of actual posts with required ranks and equalize the qualifications for similar types of posts in different areas of civil service. The proponents of the system of ranks considered official ranks to be a way of attracting people into state service and a keeper of work morale. There was a concern that giving up this incentive would lead to some civil servants going to the private sector where the material conditions were better. (Shepelev 1999: 178,180, 183.)

In the (dominantly) state administrative culture the quest for rising status, decorations and additions to personal finances were central matters of guidance. A side-effect was the misuse of official posts in order to better one’s positions in the hierarchy artificially. This was done by changing positions to a higher rank in the system within administrative organs sometimes several times over. Another way was giving people job titles which exaggerated the meaning of their actual work assignments. The use of “head” and “director” was not just misleading but led to giving accordingly high ranks and decorations. The critics of the time noticed the absence of actual devotion to affairs themselves. Instead there was an underlined insistence on pleasing supervisors upon whom an official’s career depended. (Shepelev 1999: 181–182.)
The structures of administration developed along an official communication style. During Peter the Great’s time, one quarter of foreign words which entered the Russian language were related to administration. Another quarter were with the military, another with sailing and the rest with French luxury items. (Susiluoto 1977: 9.) From this perspective, the representation of state power was both “foreign” and quite distant from the culture of the rural villages. The local towns thus formed a bridge between these two cultural realities in 19th century Russia.

3.1.2 Legal Reforms in the Old Administrative Culture

In the development of local administration law became an important instrument in connecting society with the state. In Russian history, the state administration became powerful in partly by filling the void in the written legal authority of the ultimate decision maker. The state, as an institution running alongside the ruler, became the object of different policy programs with their own ideological purposes. These purposes were attempts to answer different but acute practical problems in the changing society and its economy. In this process, the administration assumed a very active role which had consequences for the way legal thinking and statehood developed. At the local level, administration consequently developed its own features.

For the development of the legal thinking in Russia, Peter the Great’s reforms were most interesting because of the difficulties faced in the attempt to change the prevailing relationship of law with the surrounding social life. The public law to be incorporated into the state structures, had been developed in the West over a long period of time. It required a particular relationship between the state and society. In Harold Berman’s (1963) analysis the following qualities were missing from the Russian state: 1) a monarch who ruled according to legal procedures rooted in the entire society, together with public law institutions which had an extralegal (religious) historical character given to him by the society. 2) A hierarchically coherent rational system of courts and government cadres borne out of a locally active public and private legal and political life. Berman has concluded that both were difficult to attain in a system where the overwhelming majority of the population were slaves without legal rights. As a result, the head of state ruled by his personal authority and used
purposefully legal means of his own creation to exercise power which was derived from this authority. (Berman 1963.)

Although autocracy was officially unlimited, its functionality cannot be understood merely by stating the ideological foundation. As Mustonen (1998) has pointed out, in the formation of its practical political distribution the social-political structure of the society was a factor without which the Emperor could not make decisions. In this way the autocracy had, in fact, limits. Autocracy should actually be seen not as a matter of persons but as a political institution of the state. There was a connection between the loyalty expected of actors towards the autocrat who, for his part, took care of their material well being and rewarded them accordingly. (Mustonen 1998: 277.)

Even as the system of authority relations was such that the autocrat could dictate his personal will into the legislation and change them, he could not, however, break his own laws. Before the reforms, the idea of legality in Russia carried a meaning of strict obedience to the letter of the law and the effective execution of this by government organs. This was a type of authoritarian relationship with legislation in which the “progressive” law was in harmony with the climate of the monarchy. (Taranovskii 1992: 303.)

Legally, the first Constitution of Russia meant breaking up this harmony. Law and legislative work in general was brought to the forefront of reform debate. The battle for the administrative rule of law was connected to the practical work of collecting and harmonizing the Codex of Laws (Svod zakonov) carried out by the State Chancellor’s Office between 1906–1917. The discussion and work of editors of the Codex showed that legal reform was used as means to enact political changes. The legal front was mostly concerned with how to handle the constitutional laws of the country (Osnovnye gosudarstvennye zakony) and new requirement for separation of powers between the legislator and the monarch. The liberal critiques of the codification practices saw it necessary to install a clear hierarchy of laws which would make imperial orders subordinate to state laws enacted by the legislator. In addition, some form of control over the decisions made by the Emperor, arbitrary changing of legal texts in the codification process, rules of codification and the jurisdiction of the codification administration should be defined by a law. (Borisova 2001: 12–24.)

The conservative view on legal reform saw that the Codex of law should be a practical tool for the administration and that it should reflect reality. This meant that all legal acts, including decisions of the Emperor, should be
included and have the same legal power. The liberals saw that this was an administrative attempt to sabotage the beginnings of rule of law in Russian government by undermining the actual meaning of law enacted by the representative organ. (Borisova 2001: 25. 40.)

The meaning autocracy attached to the practical work of administration is difficult to show directly. In fact it is possible to contend that in the absence of legally bound rules of governing, there could not have existed an actual guiding principle for all Russian administration. From this it follows that the institution of the emperor and the institution of local administration were separated not just by geographical distance but by different realities.

3.1.3 The Competing Ideologies of Administrative Change after the 1864 Reforms

The reforms of the 19th century were a product of both “the top and the middle”. This was so, since the initiative for big changes came from both the Tsar and the administration, in which progressive minded civil servants were effecting the legislation. The Emancipation of peasants by Alexander II (1855–1881) was a recognition of the social risks which peasant unrest and old fashioned economy presented to the autocratic order. Defeat in the Crimean war further strengthened the decision of abolition of serfdom and the beginning of the great rupture in the Russian state in 1864. (Florinsky 1969.)

The initial reason for the structural changes was territorial governability of Russia. President Mauno Koivisto has contended that the Tsar wished to relax the pressure on (state) bureaucracy by creating a formal place for the local level in authority structures. (Koivisto 2001: 122–123.) At the same time, there was a need to find substitutes for the defunct local administration institutions of the serfdom era in which police, judiciary and economic powers were concentrated in the hands of the landed aristocracy. (Vucinich 1960: 196.) According to Hosking’s (1972) analysis, the central bureaucracy had two territorial strategic goals in the countryside zemtsvo reforms: its economic and military development and control of any elements which were showing too much local initiative. The first question remained unanswered during the tsarist time but the last question was attended by a series of change plans, of which the Stolypin reforms of the beginning of 21st century were the most notable. (Hosking 1972.)
Georg F. Yaney has contended that the administrative culture at the state level in the middle of the 19th century remained largely unchanged after the structural changes of the 1860’s. He describes the administration as being one in which “the officials could not adhere to the system and still get their work done if they wanted to. […] Chains of command and office routines were established, forgotten, and re-established unendingly, but outside the capital city no standard system emerged. When an official in a guberniia (province size administrative area) or uezd (smaller provincial administrative area) actually functioned with a purpose in mind larger than the satisfaction of his own whims or the demands of his superior, he generally found that he had to work according to custom and social structure of the locale, utilizing his formal prerogatives to influence and manipulate local factions in whatever ways he could. […] If the rules of the system came to him at all, they came as a burden – more faked reports, more facades, more formalistic constraints, not as a mechanism to be used or relied on.” (Yaney 1973: 238.)

The Tsar wished to use civil servants as a professional tool for modernizing administration, but without being a challenge to the autocracy. In the spirit of the great reforms, guidance was revised to include the concepts of publicity (glasnost), legality (zakonnost), decentralization and self-government (samoupravlenie). (Pearson 1989.) The operational systematization of administrative practices themselves was a goal of change. The ministries dealt with the peasant population directly without the interference of other administrative levels and were very keen on acting efficiently. (Yaney 1973: 239.) The following decades in the Russian provinces meant a slow change toward a society in which these principles took different shapes and acquired different meanings for administrative culture. The contradiction between action and administration effected the way changes were designed and how their execution succeeded.

The competition between political ideologies of administrative change in terms of territorial arrangements, hierarchy of decision making and legal reform, started with the ideas of the 1864 legislation reformers. These were people who thought that ideas of law and legality should not be the means of executing the will of the sovereign but had a specified role. The liberal bureaucrats wished to bring Russia closer to Europe to keep up with the progress of the rest of world but they preferred working within the existing authority system. It was the intention of the reformist, however, to limit the power of the bureaucrats and share the state power with new groups and levels of the society which materialized in both the zemstvo and municipal
reforms. This was clearly against the psychology of a society in which questions of administration could only be decided by state officials. Legality in the new thinking became a symbol for new external relationships. (Taranovskii 1992: 308, 310, 312.)

Discussion about modernizing administration coincided with considerable academic debate over the concept of local self-government in which different proponents described their preferences for the best way to organize center-local relations. The political ideology of administrative change essentially became a quest for local self-government. Circles who promoted the change formulated their objectives mainly in three different ways. First there were promoters of communal theory, which saw the peasant land communes representing local self-government as such. In this group the Slavophiles fought mostly against westernization in administrative change, while supporters of autocracy wanted to make the dissolution of serfdom administratively straightforward. (Vucinich 1960: 196.)

Second there were intellectuals and state administrators who promoted social theory in which the state and society were seen as performing different functions. Therefore, the local level which represented the society had to have its own autonomous social institutions outside state bureaucracy. Logically included was the idea that the local level and the state bureaucracy did not need to have formal ties. (Vucinich 1960: 196–197.)

Third there was the state theory of local self-government which saw the local level performing state affairs as delegated to them by the state. In this perspective state administration (which was indivisible) had two structural forms: the bureaucratic ministerial pyramid and the institutions of local self-government. (Vucinich 1960: 197.)

The social and state theories which competed for influence up till the revolution of 1917 had the strongest influence on the local level development. The differences of views between different political groups inside the administration were present in the contradiction of the so called “police state”, which meant a strong security administration and sharing of power. The balancing of administrative ideologies was at the heart of the administrative-political problems surrounding the development throughout the reformist era. Because of the two different types of cultural images of administration, the development of both structures and social systems was alternately accelerated and slowed.

In the 1864 rural administration, social theory reform ideas were applied to practice. Local self-government was outlined as a domestic type of self-
organization in the immediate living environment of the citizens, and not interfering in the political questions of the state. The philosophical thinking stressed the interests of the local community being different from those of the state and thus immune from state interference. The *zemstvos* were meant to be purely local and dealing with non-political daily problems which were not considered to include major policy issues. Official authority in the situation was delegated by higher organs in different proportions, depending on fluctuating political courses. Local self-government was not meant to revolutionize the existing system but to add a dimension to it. State and local were separate and required their own forms of administration. Local meant an elected self-government taking care of matters of local welfare, such as elementary education, public health and charity. (Weissman 1981:15, Shlemin & Fadeev 1993, Abramov 1998, Mamut et al 1995: 281.)

The deficiencies found in the *zemstvo* reform, prompted the popularity of an opposite ideology of state theory in the city administration reform of 1870’s which understood the local level as taking care of state functions. A major writer of this line, B.V. Bezobrazov, saw the concept of self-government as “political” and thus not compatible with the state’s interests in the localities. The institutions of self-government were assigned certain administrative tasks not by virtue of their local nature but because they could handle them more efficiently than the state bureaucracy. The *zemstvos* and town councils were considered an integral part of the state structure, unique only in that their personnel was selected differently than regular civil servants. The elective character of self-government was essentially a pragmatic device for recruiting participation and did not mean independent political authority. The *zemstvos* and town councils had no rights against the state. Furthermore, the delegates were not representatives of the populace but state officials who happened to be selected by local residents. (Weissman 1981:15–16, Abramov 1998.) Theoretically it was argued that the local level was protected by the fact that the members of the local decision making organs did not belong to the professional bureaucracy as they were not named by the state government. Independence from the state on these grounds was considered sufficient to guarantee the *zemstvo* members free room both in discipline and economics. (Abramov 1998, Lapteva 1996.)

At the turn of the 20th century, reformist ideas were brought up again when the society-state relationship required re-examination. One proponent
of local self-government was V.V. Ivanovsky who, in 1903, wrote about self-governing organizations as slowly replacing the old way of state structure and social order dominated by the central bureaucracy. He saw the bureaucracy holding back the development of society by undermining the citizens’ self-worth. The local decision making organs, on the other hand, were closer to the populace and could slowly begin to displace the central bureaucracy. As the process of decentralization advanced, the bureaucracy would eventually “retreat” until administration would be entirely in the hands of “society itself”. In the zemstvo perspective a clear distinction was drawn between the state which was identified with its officials, and society (obshchestvo). The civil service was seen as an independent class or category which was divorced from the society and thus doomed. Through the decentralization and development of public institutions, the officialdom’s status as a ruling stratum would end. The primary bodies in the progress of society were the zemstvo and the town councils, which would eventually replace the state administration. (Weissman 1981:33.)

Decentralization meant different things to different groups involved in the discussions. The Russian liberals saw it necessary to go further to “a real” decentralization which meant devolution of authority. Mere delegation was not enough, because the state authorities were passive, obedient subordinates of the ministries and eager executors of all commands from the center. The only remedy would be expanded jurisdictions for the zemstvo and town councils. (Weissman 1981:34–35.)

The various reformist ideas of government collided with a political order in which only those social groups and political parties fitting the reformist autocracy were legal. They had the required conception of statehood in which autocracy was unchanged. This was the concept of a “national state”, not a “nation” or a “nation-state” which started from the assumptions of freedom and sovereignty. (Vchislo 1992: 44–45.) The meaning of reforms for the autocratic state was primarily in the strengthening of the state psychology. That is, in the creation of a positive atmosphere for the government and its initiatives. The meaning was at the same time to erect a strong power structure in the form of governorship and limit administrative interference in local administration. All of this was meant to consolidate the unity of vertically organized government organs which would, in turn, help to revive the local culture. A specific goal was to intensify cooperation between the zemstvo and urban governments in order to make the governing of provinces easier. (Vchislo 1992: 47, 48.)
The last short reform period of the Provisional government in 1917 was important in the sense that a key principle of the following socialist system was put into practice. Because of the lack of cohesion between state and local level decision making, local authorities often prioritized local matters in their work. This led to an official need to underline provincial government as being both self-government and state institution. Critiques of localism saw the central government as representing the will of the people. All spheres of state; politics, economics and administration were to be merged into one unit: the local administration. The distinction between state and society were to disappear since the administration were organs of the state. (Orlovsky 1989: 117.) The state, in this way, represented the society it governed.

In the political theories of administrative change, the latter part of the 19th century did in fact bring about a concept of separate local administration in service of the municipalities. The legal basis of local decision making – although not a linear development – gave birth to a separate entity in which activity was controlled by laws defining its work and organization. The discussion concentrated on hierarchy, territorial authority and economy. Although representation of the population was also central in the legislative reforms, external relations continued to play a less significant role in the autocratic culture. Ideologically, popular representation was introduced mostly through the idea of legality which tried to underline the meaning of state laws in the post-constitutional framework.

3.2 Structural Changes: State Building Since the 1870`s

The structural transformation of the Russian city government started rather late with the 1870 Statute on Cities. Previous concentration on the local level had been directed at the radical changes which took place in the countryside after 1861 and 1864. This was when the peasants were first freed from bondage and then allowed to start their own self-governing organs in the form of the zemstvos. As a result of the economic, social and political changes set in motion in the late 19th century, the towns of Russia went through several administrative changes which altered the role of local level activity, in the administration of public services.
The growing number of people needing services and the political situation which required decisiveness, became dominant factors in the state building processes since the 1870’s. The decisiveness which in some cases took the form of counter reforms, also affected the implementation of local administration decisions. Local level administrative culture thus developed as a part of state building, not of society building. The reform period did not attempt to change the status of the ruler, so the whole period could be described as a sort of perestroika of the late 19th century. The reforms of administration concentrated on matters of authority, economy and practical task. It largely left out matters such as leadership and information, and only formally touched upon questions of personnel (i.e new legislation on their position) and clients (i.e their legal protection). Yet, in comparison with the old situation, significant changes did take place in these areas, too.

3.2.1 The State and the Regional Administration

At all times, the state’s role has been a dominating force in the cultural development processes at the Russian local level. State building in Russia can be seen as a separate but continuously interacting and contending force in the political process of different times. The state’s interests have not been all together compatible with the interest of the dominant class or all groups represented in the society. As state functionaries, the civil service have had an inclination toward a distinctive bureaucratic perspective rooted in their functional role. (Comp. Weissman 1981:5,8.)

In the latter part of the 19th century the tsarist state organization was structurally based on a system of three different levels of administration: the head of the state, the central government and the local level. Functionally, the organization itself was made up of more than just three territorial levels. This did not form a coherent executive body but, instead, different actor levels which performed their tasks in separate social spheres.

The structure of the tsarist government is shown in annexes A and B which show the position of the zemstvos and town administrations in the system. These are my illustrations which show the main structural arrangements during the studied period.

The reforms of 1860’s eliminated for the most part the earlier elective collegial posts in the central administration. The ministerial government was formally divided between the supreme organs (verkhovnye organy) and
the subordinate organs (podchinennye organy). The supreme organs performed mostly coordinating functions. They included the State Council, the Committee of Ministers and the Senate. The State Council advised the emperor and considered legislative proposals, annual budget. It had the right to make recommendations but no legislative powers. The Committee of Ministers was active in specific matters concerning the work of the administration. It also had authority to issue recommendations and was in this sense as powerful as the State Council. The Senate acted as the Supreme administrative court in disputes over the legality of subordinate organ’s decisions. In 1861 the Council of Ministers had been established for the purpose of considering legislative proposals from individual ministries before they were presented in the State Council. Although it did exist formally, the meaning of this organ was insignificant in executive decision making. (Yaney 1973: 250–251.)

His Majesty’s Imperial Chancellery continued to be one of the supreme organs. After 1894 it was the final place of arbitration in personnel matters such as promotions, dismissals and awards. In addition there were supreme organs which served the imperial family. The military council, admiralty council, finance committee, guard ship council and the Imperial office of petitions were also supreme organs. The first two had the right to enact orders and regulations without the decisions of the State Council or the Committee of Ministers. (Yaney 1973: 252–253.)

Special committees (councils) for instance in defense, food supply, fuel and transportation were used on a temporary basis to solve a specific matters (Orlovsky 1996: 270). They were often used by the Emperor and his ministers to bypass the regular supreme organs or to overcome resistance in the State Council. (Yaney 1973: 254.) In this sense they gave an avenue for more flexible decision making and perpetuated the dysfunction of the system which was the authoritative weakness of all supreme organs. All of them could be bypassed, if not by other decision makers in the network, then by the ruler himself. Yaney has contended that, in fact, the ministers enjoyed considerable freedom in a system locking a clear tri-partition of power into legislative, executive and judicial (Yaney 1973: 254). The administrative developments of the 19th century did not change these relationships.

The central administrative apparatus which executed decisions approved by the ruler, was made up of the ministries which had a right to give orders to the administration beneath them. Each of the ministries and major
departments in the capital possessed subordinate agents in the provinces. Through them, the central authorities exerted their power over local matters. Questions relating to the authority and functions of local decision making were the concern of the Ministry of the Interior. Its position became stronger in the 19th century developments. (Tiihonen 1994, Weissman 1981:10.) In 1858 the Central Statistical Committee had been established in the Ministry of the Interior which had two departments: statistical and zemstvo affairs. This committee was responsible for the preparation of the 1860’s peasant reforms. (Ministerstvo vnutrennikh del Rossii 2005.)

The main structure of the local level had been systematized in Peter the Great’s reforms. In 1708 the province (guberniia) was created. These worked beneath the central bureaucracies as the territorial middle level and had divisions of smaller administrative areas. The administration was headed by the governor who was named by the Senate. The smaller administrative areas called districts (uezd) were headed by commandants who possessed very much the same authority in their areas as the governors. In 1712, a province headed by a deputy governor was created between the districts and the provinces. (Mezentsev 1996, Peterson 1979: 237–239.)

Besides serving as the representative of the supreme state authority the governor was responsible for the supervision and coordination of practically all institutions in his administrative area. This included the organs of ministries, self-government, the estate bodies and even private societies. Originally the idea had been to organize the administration along functional lines under the governor. In practice, though, the governors combined in their own persons all gubernatorial functions. They headed the provincial board which was composed of a general bureau and a chancellery divided into various departments (McKenzie 1982: 32).

The governor’s administration was accountable for public order, law enforcement, health and sanitation, food relief in time of famine, fire protection, economic prosperity, local charities and welfare. Included in a day’s work could have been matters ranging from planning to prevent famine to the granting of approval for a charitable ball. These wide territorial responsibilities created tension with the line ministries. (Weisman 1981:10,44, Mezentsev 1996.) In fact Robbins (1996), for instance, has concluded that the governors were legally outside the apparatus of any ministry (vnevedomstvennyi). Disciplinary control by the Ministry of Internal Affairs was imperfect. The Ministry did, however, succeed in developing the administration through personnel policy. Since the end of
the 1870’s the educational level of governors rose and a growing number had legal education. In the beginning of the 20th century the Ministry of Interior began to promote an idea that the key provincial officials needed to have experience in the local administration. (Robbins 1996: 234–235.)

There were a number of control organizations which oversaw the decision making of the local self-government organs. From the end of the 19th century till the October revolution, a typical number of such controlling organs in a province was 22 (a full list see: Shepelev 1999: 88.). Represented by them were the interests of the ministries of Interior, Finance, Trade and Industry, Information and the administration of State Control. (Shepelev 1999:88.) The local agencies of the central government where, of course, not bodies of local self-government but functioned directly as a part of central decision making.

The governor was involved in numerous special organs where he acted as the chairman of a collegial body sometimes called a committee, other times a commission or bureau. These bodies included representatives of the Ministry of Interior, other ministries and the nobility. The police captain worked as the main subordinate of the governor at the district level and also took part in these various organs. (McKenzie 1982: 32.)

As this description shows, the zemstvo’s and later the urban town self-government were not established in a vacuum. By the last part of the 19th century, the Russian local level was already mushrooming with different decision making organs. In addition to the different organs mentioned above, the local scene was inhabited by estate organizations and societies of different urban groups. (McKenzie 1982: 32.) The reforms instead, therefore, tried to answer the problem of governability.

3.2.2 The Local Level in the Post Reform Structures

The local level institution of 1864 were not organizationally very precise and their structures and functions partially overlapped with those of the state and the estates. The basis of local administration was a tripartite division into state bureaucratic, estate and local self-government bodies. Legally however, there were no written rules about their interaction which raised questions of state building. (Weissman 1981:15,17.)

The zemstvo system is important for the town administration for two reasons. First the political and social experiences of rural Russia were
important background developments in state building. Second the zemstvo served as a comparative model for the practical construction of decision making structures in city administrations. The zemstvos, which had been established by the Statute on Zemstvos in 1864, were general administrative institutions whose jurisdiction covered all inhabitants living in their geographical area (either district or province). (Yaney 1973: 231.) Originally the zemstvo system was erected in 34 areas in the European Russia and new areas where added only in 1911–12 (McKenzie 1982: 33).

The original 1864 Statute organized the system on district and provincial levels. The zemstvos consisted of assemblies (sobranie) and administrations. The lower level district assemblies had from ten to 96 deputies who were elected every three years by three electoral groups defined by property holdings: the landowners, city property owners and village communities (peasants). The district zemstvos elected members to the district zemstvo administration and to the higher territorial level of the province for a three year term. (Vucinich 1960: 195, Yaney 1973: 231.) The main functions of the zemstvo assemblies were levying taxes, financing operations in their administrative organs and electing executive officers of which the chairman of the administration (predsedatel´ zemskogo uprava) was the most prominent.

The 1864 zemstvo institution followed the social theory thinking on government which saw the local level as its own legitimate category (McKenzie 1982: 36). As a political construct, the zemstvo system was meant to give the freed peasants a say in their own local affairs. In effect, the decision making process became dominated by the nobility and consequently the zemstvos regularly adopted policies which suited the nobility’s own group interests. At the same time the peasants were largely indifferent to zemstvo activities. (Hosking 1972, Shlemin and Fadeev 1993, Yaney 1973: 231.) In 1886 nobles and officials made about 55 percent of the district board members. By the year 1903 the number had increased into almost 72 percent. (McKenzie 1982: 54.)

The change of politics came in the form of the 1890 Statute. This followed the state theory of government which emphasized that the local level and the center had the same administrative identity. The Imperial Ukaz from 1890 which introduced the new Statute, explained that the zemstvos had to work in unity with other governmental institutions to carry out state tasks. The new electoral arrangements were made according to the estates which deprived numerous categories of people the right to vote. These included
the clergy, Jews, peasants and their associations owning non-allotment land, merchants, business owners of a certain category and people under police surveillance. Peasants could take part only as members of village communities. (McKenzie 1982:37, 42.)

Under the 1864 Statute, the zemstvo officials were not originally considered to be a part of the state service. Their salaries were paid by the zemstvo organ and they could not receive a state pension. Yet, their positions were formally strong because becoming an official required the decision of the Senate. Taking an official to court required the decision of the Senate, after which the matter was transferred to a judicial organ. (Mamut et. al 1995: 285.) This protected elected officials from being the targets of arbitrary influence.

The 1890 Statute on the contrary demanded that the zemstvo board chairman had to be a person eligible for state service. This meant that peasants and townsmen could not be chosen for this work. The statute, according to its purpose of stronger central control, increased administrative control over personnel and set up an entirely new control organ over the zemstvo, “The provincial bureau of zemstvo affairs”, which was to consider the legality of zemstvo work. It could, without the Senate’s approval, remove members of the zemstvo boards. (McKenzie 1982:57–58.)

By the 1864 Statute the zemstvos could not enact any general legislation in their area, only directives on specific issues. In this respect the 1890 Statute strengthened the role of the zemstvos by giving as the right to pass obligatory decisions (postanovlenie) binding on all local population outside the towns. (McKenzie 1982: 47.)

The practical power the zemstvos was also based on cooperation with the local police, who acted in case someone did not comply with zemstvo decisions. Zemstvos could also take individuals to court. In practice localism was limited by the Ministry of Interior, which issued directions for decision making and implementation processes in the local organs. The highest legal control belonged to the Senate which decided matters between the zemstvo and the local state administrations, higher administrative organs and governmental and social organizations. The Senate functioned as the Supreme (constitutional) court which interpreted the law on a wide variety of issues, including the competence of authority of local government organs in different matters. (Mamut et al.1995: 286.)

The zemstvos from different areas were prohibited from forming unions. Restricted authority meant that the localities did not have the right to
formulate their own educational programs or have their own policies on health protection. This was combined with a lack of coordination from the central government as official contacts between provinces were not allowed and there did not exist a general imperial coordinating center. (Abramov 1998, Shlemin & Fadeev 1993.) As a side-effect, the actual development of different administrative areas was largely dependant on local priorities and money.

The financial support of zemstvos was done with local and regional orders of payments. The main source of income was the right of the zemstvos to collect new taxes. This was a restricted right, since the zemstvos could not tax retail business or industrial enterprises. The only source of tax revenue, therefor, was the land. The legislation of 1864 had given the zemstvos wide but legally undefined functions many of which required the approval of the provincial governor and sometimes the minister of Interior. Even as a number of state agencies were closed and their functions were transferred to the local level, the formal control on decision making was retained in the center. Every decision could be protested by the governor in which case the Senate decided the issue. The main tasks of the zemstvos was to take care of the welfare of legally free but socially dependent peasants. This meant organizing the collection of money for those in need, bread shops and arranged points for the inspection of epidemics. Socially the zemstvo system directed political energy into local development and charity and eased social tension between different groups. (Giltsenko 1996, Lapteva 1996, Hosking 1972, Shlemin & Fadeev 1993, Mamut et al. 1995:282.)

As a result of the narrow official interpretation of jurisdiction, the zemstvo reform was criticized at the time as ineffective. This was because it had given the local level a great deal of freedom but not the power which would have come with being incorporated into the general state system. (Abramov 1998.) The main structural weakness of the zemstvo organization was its segregated position beside the imperial network of local government bodies and courts. In both administrative and judicial functions it was subordinate to the Ministry of the Interior. (Hosking 1972.) This criticism also shows that the governor’s role as coordinators of territorial administration did not work very well.

The Statute on Towns was made public in 1870 and it introduced city Duma (municipal assemblies) throughout Russia and certain parts of Central Asia. (Vucinich 1960: 195.) The new structure of authority which it laid down existed from 1870-1917. By the end of the 19th century there
were four types of towns and cities: the provincial town, and its capital (gubernskii gorod), the county town (uezdnyi gorod), other than county town (bezuezdnyi gorod) and non-administrative small town (zashtatnyi gorod). (Prosiannkina1996.)

The legal basis of urban administration was based on two decrees of 1870 and 1892 which regulated the organization, structure and authority of town administrations. The town government consisted of a municipal assembly (Duma), an executive board, and a mayor (town head). The assembly was voted every four years by urban tax payers in three separate social groups in proportion to their tax assessments. The executive board – the town administration – was made up of the city head and two to six members. It was formulated by the Duma which also chose its members. Similarly the town head was elected by the Duma, even though his nomination was accepted by the governor or the Ministry of Interior. His position as the speaker of the assembly was explained as giving maximum security against possible illegal decisions by the Duma. In these arrangements, the idea of wider public participation based on property ownership was introduced for the first time. Each subject of the Russian Empire, who was at least 25 years of age and owned independently some type of property in the town, could take part in the elections and be elected himself. (Florinsky 1969, Giltsenko 1996, Prosiannkina 1996, Mamut et al. 1995: 288.)

In comparison with the zemstvos, the town governments were given the right to pass decisions which were binding to all urban inhabitants under the original statute. In this respect, the zemstvo authority was strengthened in 1873 at the provincial level. (McKenzie 1982: 47.)

The 1892 Statute on Towns replaced the three-class electoral system with a territorial division of election units. This did not contribute directly to a more equal representation. Nor did it have an effect on the state-local authority relations or the dependancy of the municipalities on state government. (Vucinich 1960: 200.)

Since the 1870 statute, the members of the town administration were considered administrative officials (dolzhnostnye litsa) whose term was limited to four years (Mamut et al. 1995: 289). They were not, however, considered to be state officials with the exception of the city secretary in provincial cities who had a special status. Outright nepotism was prohibited by the requirement that the members could not be relatives. Half the members were re-elected in two year periods in a system of rotation. The official guidance of the administration was done by legislation and Duma
instructions. Inside the executive board, the division of labor was decided by the members themselves. (Prosiankina 1996.)

The executive board handled administrative questions of town economics such as the renovation of the town, the development of the budget, gathering information for the town duma, starting new projects for the town, collecting and distributing town funds, and defining time limits and rules of financial responsibility of its workers and administrative organs. Decision making independence was strongest in locally important questions of property maintenance: approval of plans for private buildings on the borders of the town; giving permissions to fundamental renovations and changes; dealing with business issues. (Prosiankina 1996.)

Town funds were used to finance such local responsibilities as the police, fire fighting, development of public schooling, and jails. At the same time, the work of local organizations was developed administratively. For example, In 1871, the local police were given regulations about criminal investigation. The prosecutor had the right to appoint a named police officer to a preliminary investigation on the recommendation of the provincial police chief. In 1876 the city of St. Petersburg founded a Committee for the work of fire fighting which set out to compare different fire fighting methods. In the following year another state level commission was founded to work on the reform of the prison system and criminal punishments. Foreign experience available at the time was used in the recommendations of the commission. (Ministerstvo vnutrennikh del Rossii 2005.)

Officially the Duma exerted control over decision making through the report which was given to it by the board. On specific issues, commissions were used with members from the administration and among eligible voting inhabitants. Commission members could participate in the town executive board meetings in cases concerning his commission. The town head’s authority was strong because he could stop the processing of a matter when the board did not reach consensus. In these instances matters were sent to the governor and to the (state) administration of town affairs in the province. (Prosiankina 1996.)

The municipal administrators were usually men whose interests centered around economic questions of the town and its population. In the beginning of the 20th century, 17% had a higher or middle level education, 27% had minimal formal education and 49% were so called home-educated, which in many cases meant that they had the elementary level of reading and writing skills. The rest, 4% could not read and write. (Nardova 1992: 58.)
The sons of peasants and members of the lower middle class found new advancement opportunities in local government. After having finished university level studies, representatives of these groups could find employment as civil servants in local administration. (Edeen 1960: 281.) For daily administrative and economical tasks of the town, the town assembly could hire people. These municipal workers either worked directly for administrative organs of the zemstvo, or for the different town services provided by the administration (such as schools and hospitals). Those who worked in municipal services could be accepted to the state service and receive full rights if the governor accepted their nominations. (Mamut et al. 1995: 285.)

Even as the authority of the town administration was limited, the state’s need to expand services and control resulted in local communities performing many functions which were officially the obligations of the state. For instance, at the end of the 1870’s the city of Moscow disbursed 37% of its budget for the army, police and other such functions which were directly subordinated to the central government and over which it officially had no jurisdiction. (Vucinich 1960: 199.)

As a measure of government control and unity in local matters, the legal authority of the town administration was under double control of the governor and of the Administration of zemstvo and town affairs which existed as the state control organ in the provinces from 1870 to 1917. The organ had authority over both the administration and the Duma and its decision was necessary for the city executive board. The governors role was strengthened in his position as the chairman. Besides the legality of the administrations decisions (and complaints about them), the body handled mistakes which had been made in the selection of officials and disputes between the local public administration and the local police department. Since the 1892 decree it became the supervising organ of both legality and general purposefulness of zemstvo work. Its members were now decided by the Ministry of Interior and included the governor, deputy governor, the chairman and the delegate representatives of the zemstvo executive board in the province. (Vorobieva 1996, Giltsenko 1996.)

As was the case with the zemstvo system in which the governmental office for peasant affairs (from 1874) and then the land captain system (from 1889) served as the controllers of decisions with a veto right over any decision, the city administration was also under monitoring. The mayors of larger cities needed approval by the minister of the Interior, and those from
smaller towns by the governor, to start their work as public officials. (Vucinich 1960: 198.)

Even before this there had been laws and regulations which had seriously limited the self-governing nature of the zemstvo-system in the rural areas. The government had passed a decision in 1879 which gave the governors the right to supervise the transfer and appointment of all zemstvo employees. The 1890 Statute on Zemstvos ruled that without the governor’s approval no person could be a member of the zemstvo or its administrative body. Besides cases of illegality, the governor could annul zemstvo decisions when these were considered “unsuitable”. In addition, the landed gentry was given an absolute majority in the zemstvo organization. (Vucinich 1960: 203.)

The strengthening of central decision making coincided with administrative reorganizations and establishing of new central bodies. The Ministry of Interior is a good example of this development. The local prisons and places of arrest became a part of a state administration restructuring in 1879 when the Head administration of prisons was established in the ministry. All police administration was made subordinate of the ministry in 1880. The state police and local police were united in the Department of state police the same year. The number of police officers and the ranks in the police grew both in the capital and in the provinces. In the following year a decree was passed which allowed the minister of Interior to give emergency regulations at his own discretion in any part of the country to secure order. These regulations expanded the rights of the local police and the governors were given the right to pass binding commands during a state of emergency, let go any civil servant, arrest and detain people for up to three months, and stop the work of town and zemstvo organs. In the year 1883, a law was passed about the establishment of Imperial secret police. (Ministerstvo vnutrennikh del 2005.)

The zemstvo-system as a rural organization and the towns collided on several points. In the consideration of the entire local administration in any particular geographical point, all three sectors usually need to be examined: zemstvo, municipal government in towns, and local state administration. Of all the areas of common interest, taxation was particularly meaningful for the practical work. The zemstvos were by law required to take care of the offices of certain provincial officials and to provide transportation for the local judiciary and police officers. This made them a unique combination of both public state providers and local “third sector” operators who took care of local hospices and public schools. In the 1890’s the zemstvo activists
debated among themselves the need for a more unified *zemstvo* operations at the provincial level and struggled with their governors to have the emphasis of their work be in the social, health and educational sectors. Yet this relationship was not clear cut. In some instances the governors were responding to the displeasure of the population which did not always unanimously support all *zemstvo* programs.

There was discussion about the missing idea of rule in the lower administrative levels and the power of governors and deputy governors being too weak in real decision making relations. In particular, the activities of local inhabitants in towns raised questions over the role of governors. The governors themselves criticized the situation where their opinion was not asked over questions concerning the development of services and building projects. It was argued by the minister of Finances (1881–1886), N. H. Bunge, that the administrative power rested not on undefined authority but on the exactness and definitiveness of the borders of authority which give a right to control all sectors of governmental administration and local government. (Shepelev 1999: 89.)

The decree of 1892 lifted the role of town executive boards by making them more independent of the Dumas and into a direct extension of the state administration. This was secured mostly by making the head, members of the board, and the town secretary (in bigger towns) state officials who were appointed and let go by the state administration (the governor), and were given orders through the civil servant hierarchy. The police were used as general administrative controllers. (Nardova 1992: 57.) The changes in the town administration, in other words, followed those made in the *zemstvo*-organization according to the state theory of government.

Strengthened state authority and diminished local legal control meant that the Duma could no longer take members of the board to court. The town head’s position was weakened for the benefit of the representative and the governor was given a right to pass orders to all sections of the town government. Maybe the most important method of strengthening political control by the center was the governors’ right to stop the implementation of assembly decisions when these were incompatible with the state’s general use and need, or clearly breach the rights of local inhabitants. In such a situation, the Administration of *zemstvo* and town affairs – in other words the state – decided the matter. Further more, the coercive powers of the local administration depended on the local police which undermined the authority of the purely administrative organs. The local organs could take a
person to a court or ask the police to take action in case some one did not fulfill his specific duties. In the Russian Empire, the police retained an understanding of policemen as general administrators. While their general concern was law enforcement, their duties also included such tasks as participation in tax collection, statistical work, registration of internal passports, rehabilitation of prostitutes, temperance measures and care of orphans. (Weissman 1981:10, Vorobieva 1996, Mamut et. al 1995: 286, 294.) The mixing of duties and rights between separate spheres weakened local administrative jurisdiction.

3.2.3 Professionalization and Growth of Tasks in the Local Level

The closing decade of the century saw a rapid expansion in the work of the zemstvos and town councils. Between 1880 and 1890 zemstvo budgets had only grown 5.1 % but in the following decade the number was expanded to 18%. Personnel, “the third element”, grew accordingly. The zemstvo boards often served as organizational centers for the progressive movement, and professional congresses of the third element served as surrogates for the open political meetings otherwise prohibited by the authorities. Lastly, the self-governing bodies were a forum for the growth of “zemstvo ideology”. (Weissman 1981:32)

Improvements in town services were seen as practical matters. Voters included approximately 30 % or less of the electorate and assemblies were dominated by the merchant and honorary citizen groups. The gentry, meanwhile, played only a minor role in the urban localities, even disappearing altogether from the town board of Moscow. Politically two groups emerged among the decision makers: conservatives who protected the property owners against raising taxes while fulfilling state-imposed obligations, and the liberals who wished to invest in municipal services and their development, particularly health care and education. (Brower 1986: 335–337.)

The number of locally employed municipal workers, indicates the level of local community activity. In 1912, among 34 provinces, there where approximately 3.000 physicians, 1.000 veterinarians, 1.100 agricultural experts, 1.000 insurance agents, 1.400 other medical workers, including midwives, 300 statisticians, 500 engineers and technicians and 45.000 teachers. (Vucinich 1960: 204.)
The statistician’s work offers an interesting example of local administrative culture. The first statistical investigations began in the early 1870’s but the greatest amount of work was carried out in the mid 1880’s and between 1906–1914. The statistician worked with the zemstvo and carried out household inventories throughout the provinces, resulting in publications to determine taxable property. In 1893 a law was passed which required the zemstvo to carry out property assessments. In addition, the statistician’s aim was to collect data which would show causes of poverty and indebtedness for the planning of reforms. In 1899 the central government started to subsidize but also closely monitor the statistician’s work. The activities of the statistician were supervised by the zemstvo, the governor and the ministry in St. Petersburg, all of which could veto projects, hold funds and reject the appointment of staff members. According to Johnson’s (1982) evaluation, the professionalism of the statistician brought them into conflict with local governors and self-government leaders. In these situations the administrative control was not total. The statistician could rely on the support of the public, and to a certain extent on one another. Their environment was determined by opinions at all levels and spheres of life in society. The inner solidarity of the profession helped local statisticians. Publications influenced the way the research was done in the localities. During disputes, leading statisticians could use their connections within the state administration and either intervene or offer alternative employment. Job referrals were also given by senior members of the profession which affected local research. (Johnson 1982: 344–345, 347–349, 356.)

Another example of professionalization at the local level is the police. The Statue on Towns in 1870 made the municipalities responsible for funding the town police and places of arrest. In the following year, rules governing the use of police (gendarme) in criminal investigations, made the police members of the state criminal process. The prosecutor had the right, with the consent of the gubernatorial police chief, to appoint a policeman to work on a criminal investigation. In 1879 the country policemen were more closely linked with the district police system as they were ordered to subordinate themselves to the police chief of the area who gave them their instructions. In 1880 the police were organized under the Ministry of Interior as an independent department. The political situation in the country led to a need to separate the police more clearly from the local rural and town administrations. In 1889 rules were set to ensure the financing of police living quarters and other material needs. (Ministerstvo vnutrennikh...
del Rossi 2005.) In 1897, about 260.000 persons worked as state civil servants. Of these 105.000 were in the police. (Edeen 1960: 276.) The police, in other words, evolved from local officials into participants in a state organization with common interests secured by the government.

Along with professionalization, the economy was producing a new type of social landscape. Trade was accumulating meaning as a force of economic growth. In Saint-Petersburg for instance almost as many residents worked in commerce as in industry. Occupational diversification was also under way but none of the major towns were predominantly industrial by nature. Artisans remained as large a group as the factory workers and the proportion of educated professionals and other white collar workers was growing. Towns demanded new efforts from administrative services, particularly in sanitation and housing. (Brower 1986: 325, 326.)

Even though the historical literature points to the dependence of the local administration on the structures and guidance of central bureaucracies, it is worth noting that at the start of the 20th century, the state administration itself was barely penetrating the county level in provinces. According to Vchislo’s analysis, the government did not have real authority in the provinces in 1906–1907. Zemstvos did not attract large groups of people to beneficial social activity and, generally, citizen activity was not a typical characteristic of the rural population. (Vchislo 1992: 52.) Yet, at least in geographical terms, the local self-government system was covering a large part of the Russian empire in the beginning of the 20th century. In 1914 it included 70% of all Russian territory, and had 113 million people under its jurisdiction. (Mamut et. al. 1995: 297.) How can this situation be understood?

One explanation is that for the majority of the population who lived in rural areas and smaller towns, administration was offered via their own corporations. The aggregate size of the tsarist state administration was not impressive, particularly given the huge expanse of the empire it ruled. For instance, in France the number of administrators per thousand inhabitants was 17.6 and in Germany 12.6. In Russia it was 6.2. Similarly the financial resources were below European standards. In order to rule, it was necessary for the state bureaucracy to depend on other non-bureaucratic organs. Of these the most important, traditionally, were the estate institutions. (Weissman 1981:11,14.)

The original cultural and economic meaning of estate institutions in the urban municipalities eroded as the towns themselves saw the “revolving
door” of a changing population. In the end of the 19th century, about 20 % of the inhabitants in the towns had either just arrived or left by the end of the year. The towns were both a disappointing experience for many and an environment of “transitory” opportunities. (Brower 1986: 327–328.) As commerce expanded, direct taxation of the peasant population became less important and the meaning of trade grew. The role of government changed as well. Instead of being a mechanism for extracting financial tribute, it became a structure which rested on the developing nationwide market. In this development the town population depended on grain production which caused great problems for the peasants. (Yaney 1973: 44.)

In the beginning of the 20th century, central government was pulling the still largely agrarian society in two directions by fostering industrialization through the Ministry of Finance and by pursuing conservative social policies which ignored the economic changes. This led to repeated conflicts inside the government but did not change the official view that industrialization does not need to upset the traditional social structure which originated from the divine authority of the throne. Mercantile and scientific contacts with the rest of Europe had been encouraged for almost two centuries. New actors grew frustrated with not being able to express their ideas in an organized manner but only through petitions to the Tsar. Political party representation at the state level was not possible because subjects could not be conceived as an organized society but as loyal people. The Tsar viewed the urban population with particular suspicion. He considered it socially alien of Russian people even though his governments reforms and the works of his predecessors had made its birth possible. (McDaniel 1996, Acton 1986, Shlemin & Fadeev 1993.) The contradiction of political risks at the top and the practical development needs in the localities effected the choices of administrative ideology at the turn of the century. Political risks became more acute as the traditional social groups closest to the Tsar underwent change.

The landed nobility, which was so vital for the autocrat as a source of support, eroded as many sold their lands. The peasant agriculture was left on its own as the size of the rural population swelled. Political awareness was growing as literacy and contacts with the urban world became more common. The lower and upper classes of the society were still officially categorized into estates but in fact the occupational and economic variety in these classes had already changed their meaning (Brower 1986: 330). The new workers of the industries were no better off with no job security, poor
wages and overcrowded living conditions. The rural culture which they came from did not prepare them for the conditions. In these social conditions, Marxist ideas which had began to gain room in Russia started to develop into a fully Russian version of the ideology. The result was the mobilization of radicals and conservatives alike. (Acton 1986.)

The first Constitution opened the door for a real perestroika of the local administration. In 1906 the Ministry of Interior started to work on a general reform of the countryside. The aim was to include the main proportion of the Russian people in local self-government. Stolypin brought to the Council of Ministers a proposal with the intention to democratize the structures and unify the decision making at the local level. Voting restrictions were to be lifted, the localities’ power to tax would have been increased and their control made to concern only legality. New district councils with the district commandant as the head were proposed to sort out the confusion of authority between government and zemstvo offices. The proposal was opposed by the nobility on the grounds that undermining its meaning in the localities would be irresponsible. Stolypin failed to get support even from the zemstvo members themselves, after which the reform was dropped. (Hosking 1972.)

The following debates in the state Duma hearings and the subsequent changes showed among other things the difficulties in turning the peasant population into citizens. Giving up class barriers did not gain unified support from political parties. The Duma’s Local government committee made its own proposal but the bill only came to the house in February 1911. The government in this battle stressed the need for more control over local decision making, the naming of personnel, its territory and finances. In the end the reform was buried by the State Council. (Hosking 1972.)

Nardova has come to the conclusion, that both structurally and socially, the need to unify the system at the lower levels was not a move towards self-government but a way to diminish their elective character. (Nardova 1992: 56.) Yet the reforms brought along many structural changes at the local level, which enabled its institutional development. As the transition process intensified, at the turn of the century local administration culture was becoming both the central state building tool and a forum for its fast developing political troubles.

The towns of the early 20th century did not develop in an even manner. There existed poor districts in which the residents felt forgotten by the local government. The central areas on the other hand benefitted from investments
in the infrastructure and services. The difference was evident in the manner these areas were run. Public order and the following of administrative regulations was a priority in the central areas but in the marginal districts arbitrariness was more evident. (Brower 1986: 343.) The inequality in the provision of services and fair treatment, fed radical feelings among the poorer urban population. Better funding, flexible local decision making and regulated authority relations to give it room were urgently needed. Most of all, the relationship of citizen to government demanded change.

Socially the towns continued to develop in their own course which the central administration did not plan and controlled only partially. Pressure towards the local administration was growing both in terms of its economy and politics. The literate part of the population was expanding the circulation of inexpensive newspapers. The different ethnic groups which made up the Russian empire were creating a split population of diverse ethnic communities. Even as cities were essentially providing possibilities for assimilation, the group boundaries were even strengthened by what Brower calls “social communication” at the turn of the century. The suspicion among different groups further changed the social environment. (Brower 1986: 329.)

The Constitution institutionalized the social developments of the past decades. Its cultural aim was to confirm adherence to the letter of the law in administration. The ideas of popular control of administration and legality of decision making were goals which had emerged in the process of class, occupational and economic changes to which the administration tried to react. The slowness in structural reforms after the Constitution, failed the society and created a huge risk. The last structural change at the local level came in 1917 when the Provisional Government passed a law establishing the right of all local inhabitants to vote zemstvo deputies in direct and secret elections. It also abolished the non-elective offices of police and land captains, whose duties were transferred to the elected bodies. (Vucinich 1960: 207.) These changes came too late.

3.2.4 Law As a Tool for State Building

The legal development in the 19th century had a variety of effects on the administration. It would seem that law played no part whatsoever in the real formation and development of decision making and execution in the
Tsar’s administration. As Taranovskii has pointed out, the traditional view of the autocratic regime has been to see it as combination of an all powerful state power and an equally passive society which can largely be attributed to the absence of a Western European legal tradition based on the principles of Roman law. Yet simultaneously the development of the Russian state can be viewed through its similarities with the European situation since the great reforms of 1864 due to its use of same legal concepts. Law as a system official norms and institutions, jurisdiction as a sector of academic thinking and lawyers as a developing group of professional-specialists, appeared in Russia only after the reforms. (Taranovskii 1992: 301–302.)

Before that most of the population lived under local customary law, which meant the decisions of village elders, landlords and local aristocracy. The national law which existed included rule-decisions and statutes which were often unpublished and contradictory. There was no national court system and judicial functions were often adjunct to administrative functions. Judges could be former soldiers or administrators who had no formal legal training. (Levin-Stankevich 1996: 224.) A major change of this situation took place when a reform of the judiciary was implemented in 1865–1866. It established a hierachy of courts. Judges who were appointed by the Ministry of Justice, were required to have legal qualifications, were paid salaries and had life tenure. (Bowring 2000.)

The developments of local administration and law were connected to geography. The geographical coverage of the reforms was limited mostly to the European parts of Russian provinces. In other areas changes happened gradually and incompletely. At the same time reforms of courts and the law were significant for the development of the ideas of citizenship and to the legal ethos of civil servants. (Taranovskii 1992: 306–7.) The modernization of the administration itself also required application of standard rules. There was a tendency in post-reform Russia to depersonalize procedures through public law, formalize these procedures and to define organizational relationships within the government more precisely. This created a need for employees who had legal training. (Levin-Stankevich 1996: 226.)

Jane Burbank (1997) argues that law penetrated daily life in various ways creating a legal culture in which the growing legal consciousness of citizens was a potential basis for a rule of law society. This legal culture, however, did not correspond with the ideals of people knowing written law or uniform national court system. The state law which developed was not antagonistic to national definitions and re-definitions of ethical behavior.
Burbank argues that law was in fact just as essential to the development of the citizenry in Russia than it has been elsewhere. (Burbank 1997:82, 85.)

In the development of autocratic Russia, law had been a major component in a paradoxical way, and not only in the court system where Western legal theories and practices played a role. Through law the Russian autocracy had a specific relation with the traditional “police state” which came about after the reforms as a way of secularizing its ruling ideology. Public law, which included administrative law, had a specific role in the culture of the system in which law was coercive (*prinuditel’noe pravo*). The primary instrument of this law was the *ukaz*, a decree from the sovereign which maintained public order, as did other administrative decisions (*polozhenie estestvennogo prava*). In a vast geographical area with a social contract between the population and the state that did not involve mutual constraints or trust, the decrees also served as a method of control upon administration. Administrative law did not offer protection from discretionary decrees (of the sovereign). Its main purpose was to secure compliance and not the rights of individuals. (Taranovskii 1992: 302–303.)

The different reform policies reflected in the laws were often difficult for the civil servants to implement. George Yaney has contended that an imperial Russian government agency “often had not only to perform its official functions and enforce its rules but also to conduct a crusade on behalf of them, a crusade that went on simultaneously within its own organization and in the society at large. This is why so many of the statutes of Russian law throughout the period of 1711–1905 were not enforceable legal rules but exhortations to behave or work according to this or that ideal. [...] ... the laws either could be ignored entirely or they could serve a strong-willed official as a basis for compelling people to do his bidding regardless of regulations to the contrary.” (Yaney 1973:21.) Law in this sense was a tool for transition which required organizational adaptation at all levels.

Client relations were affected by the reforms of 1860’s, which brought appellation (*kassatsiia*) to Russian law on the basis of its misinterpretation. However, the right of a private person to ask for compensation on the basis of damage inflicted upon him by the decision of a state administrator was very limited. Even more importantly, questions relating the to the peasants, were reserved for the jurisdiction of traditional law and local (*volost´*) court. (Taranovskii 1992: 306.) Yet, the right of the peasants to appeal their legal disputes in the *zemstvo* courts (justices of the peace, *mirovye sudy*) which
the district assemblies elected (Yaney 1973: 232), was a structural beginning for the creation of general civil rights.

Legal protection of the population and a more general idea of service were only beginning to emerge as concepts of administrative work. State building was still steered toward the management of the population for order and stability. Because the legal guarantee was weak, the population did not possess any rights as such. The Constitution of 1906 formally changed this. The elements of legal culture were two-fold. The use of appeal was institutionalized into the practices of the system. Yet, the lack of political freedoms resulted in the strengthening of security organs and arbitrary, secretive behavior inside the administration. Characteristic of the administrative culture was that these two sides were not connected directly because they represented different categories. One was dealing with authority borders, the other with the secretive world of political dissidence.

An example of the latter was the counter-reform of Alexander III (1881–1894) who wanted to act against growing political risks to the autocratic order and required a strong security administration to ensure political stability. The Tsar’s main advisor was K. P. Pobedonostsev who opposed the reforms of the previous Tsar Alexander II and distrusted political freedom and popular representation. The Emperor demanded that the civil service was a unified front against the changing society. The Ministry of Interior directed the political control and the counter revolutionary work through its locally working security police force (okhrana) which was separated from the governors and governor generals and made into an independent unit. (Florinsky 1969, Pushkarev 1985, Shlemin & Fadeev 1993.)

Because of the difficulties faced in the changing of political ideology of administration into one allowing representation of group interests, the legal means of building a citizenry became all the more important. Legal means also served the development of an administrative hierarchy and institution building.

Appellation, for instance, had become an important instrument in the formation of local-center relations. Local appeals were decided by the Senate which acted as the Supreme court. The formal authority of the Senate as an administrative court was not specified by any one law in the Code of Laws. Instead its role was stated separately in specific cases which led to its jurisdiction being described by a multitude of legal regulations. The
authority of the Senate grew with the ministerial government. (Yaney 1973: 259.)

Senate members included former governors, generals and civil servants without legal training. The most important group of complaints involved taxation. Complaints could be made by both private citizens, local government bodies or the governor. The *zemstvo* bodies were very active in appellation cases, over half of the cases were initiated by them by the end of the 19th century. But *zemstvo* decisions were also appealed which affected the relationship between local state bureaucracy and the self-government organs. The former saw a growing need to follow up *zemstvo* activities. The number of private complaints before the Senate were highest in 1901 (94% of all tax complaints) after which the governors started to veto *zemstvo* taxes more frequently. (Fallows 1982: 185–190.)

For local-center relations the success of the local self-government organs in the Senate rulings is interesting. Between 1890 and 1904 the local government organs won over two-thirds of appeal cases which they initiated and brought to the Senate. In contrast, local state administration officials won in less than half of their cases. The most successful was the central state administration which won in almost all the cases it initiated. Thomas Fallows has presented three interpretations for these results. First is the liberal claim in which the *zemstvo* victories were seen as proof of the capricious ruling style of the state administration. The second is to see *zemstvo* success in the Senate as a proof of the governor’s style of discretion (*proizvol*). The third is to see the appeal successes as showing that self-government organs did indeed have their own authority and were not as persecuted as they saw themselves. Maybe even more important is the fact that private citizens also enjoyed some institutional protection against capriciousness. The governors often took the side of private parties against local self-government organs. Fallows has concluded that this eroded the typical dichotomy between official power (*vlast’*) and society (*obshchestvennost’*). (Fallows 1982: 189–190.)

The citizens and the organs of local administration still another avenue with which to effect things, namely the prosecutors. The Judicial Reform of 1864 changed the position of procurators (prosecutors) which had an alternating role in the administrative system of Russia throughout the centuries. The prosecutor’s office appeared in Russia during Peter the Great’s reign as a borrowed European institution. As the ministerial system of government was introduced to Russia in 1802, the Prosecutor General’s post
was united with the Ministry of Justice and his position fundamentally changed. The prosecutor’s office exercised supervision over the courts and local administrative bodies. Before the 1860’s reforms, the prosecutor’s office was seen as an ineffective organization due to both its autocratic centralism and its own organizational weakness. It was not an integrated system of harmonious policy but an organization subordinated to a minister and without any legislation to define its structure and activities. Its wide and numerous functions made its work unrealistic. (Kazantsev 1997: 44–51.)

The 1864 reforms sought to make the prosecutor’s office most of all a prosecuting organ which was not responsible for the supervision of general administrative legality in Russia. In 1859–1860 new public trials were introduced along with the right to a counsel for the accused, presumption of innocence, defense Bar and new pre-trial investigations. The 1862 new Court law continued the reform of the prosecutor’s office and a debate over what type of legal supervision the government needed in Russia. The prosecutor’s office was one of the most loyal supporters of the autocratic regime and there were fears it would use its authority to protect autocratic legality over the rule of law. (Kazantsev 1997: 54–59.) The prosecutors’ attitude was understandable in the light of their position. Although they had court positions, they were administratively directly subordinate to the Ministry of Justice. (Levin-Stankevich 1996: 235.)

In the 1864 law the organization of the prosecutor’s office was based on one-man management and educational requirements were set. The prosecutor’s office did indeed become a central tool for combating revolutionary movements in Russia. It treated law from the viewpoint of struggle against unwanted political elements and effective general supervision of administration was secondary. The idea that general supervision would have resulted in growing legality did not materialize. Instead dysfunctions from neglect and outright lawlessness continued. (Kazantsev 1997: 54–59.)

The hierarchy of norms did not change as a result of the different administrative changes at the end of the 19th century. The rulings of the State Council which were confirmed by the Tsar should have been the foremost source of authority in the country and taken precedence over other decisions. A minister’s order should have been taken to the State Council before it took the force of law. In actual fact, the Tsar himself decided whether his ministers made laws without consulting the State Council first. Orders of the Emperor had the force of law, even in cases
when they contradicted existing legislation. The legality of this balancing act was found in the wish that the Emperor did not confirm a ministerial decision before it was taken to the State Council, and that he did not interfere with the Council’s decision making. (Yaney 1973: 261.)

During the reign of Alexander III in 1885, a decree was passed that proclaimed all acts of the Emperor to have equal force of law despite the way they were enacted. A law was thus any imperial order which the Emperor had signed, or a State Council decision confirmed by him. Besides this a concept of a “temporary law” which meant those orders of the Tsar which had rules not yet written into other laws. A minister acting on the Tsar’s instructions possessed the formal authority to issue decrees which had the same force as laws. In these cases, the formal source of the authority was not a law but the Emperor’s command. A difference between an administrative order and a law was hard to distinguish because neither administrative officials nor judges in courts had the right to pass judgement on the validity and judicial strength of tsar-approved laws. Nor did the Senate have the right to stop these laws. The Judicial Code from 1864 allowed courts to decide cases on the basis of contradictions between laws. This rule was preserved in the Code till 1905. (Yaney 1973: 264.) The need for strong central control of political and social risk eroded those legal restraints which the top government decision making body had previously possessed. In fact, a type of legal arbitrariness was institutionalized with the introduction of the new 1885 decree.

Levin-Stankevich has concluded that when the government failed to create a legal officialdom which satisfied its view of legal culture, it altered the work environment of officials in the “judicial counter reforms”. Crimes which were considered political were removed from the jury trial and administrative actions could bypass the court system altogether. (Levin-Stankevich 1996: 238.)

From the point of view of administrative law, the October Manifest in 1905 and the first Constitution of Russia in 1906 meant a clear distinction from a past which demanded comprehensive legislative reform. These were the principles of basic parliamentarism and popular legal control of the administration of government. (Manifesto of 17 October 1905.)

The Constitution defined civil rights and provided the basis for legal protection against arbitrary administrative acts. Private property, inviolability of home and protection from arbitrary arrests and investigations were among the listed rights. Criminal cases could not be tried except through
the due course of the law. Freedom of speech, organization (although restricted by more specific laws), religion and movement were guaranteed. (Russian Fundamental Law 1906: article II.)

Borisova has shown, how the limits of these legal changes were clear in the codification of new laws into the Codex of Laws. Particularly after the 1906 Constitution, this was a continuous source of criticism among legal scholars and administrators as well. In terms of strengthening the constitutionalism of the monarchy, it was problematic that there was not a legal directive for the understanding of the new laws in the context of existing legislation, and that laws which were included in the Codex of laws became altered in the codification process. (Borisova 2001: 39.)

It is possible to divide the authority of the Emperor after 1906 into three categories. First was the right of legislation in which he possessed a wide authority, particularly in the economical sphere to pass administrative regulations alone. Second was the right of judicial review which in principle also belonged to the ruler but was in fact administered through officials. The third was the position the ruler had as the head of administration. (Ståhlberg 1916: 12–13.) The legislative authority of the Supreme power, the Tsar, was not limited. Nor was the hierarchy of norms altered. It remained vague and gave the Emperor wide discretion.

The core of legality in Russia was a combination of the rule of law and autocracy, a connection which was not all together clear even in the Constitution. On one hand, properly enacted law was declared as the sole basis of all government. Elected state Duma and State Council in which at least half of the members were elected took part in the legislative process. Laws were not legal unless published and received locally. The decrees and directives issued by the Emperor for the state administration had to be in conformity with the existing law. (Russian Fundamental Law 1906: articles III-IV.)

On the other hand, the Emperor possessed supreme power given by God in its totality throughout the entire state. At the highest administrative level this power was direct, on subordinate levels he delegated authority to subordinate branches and officials whose acted according to his orders and with authority determined by him. The scope of a state officials’ activity was decided by him on the basis of the needs of the state. His decrees were not subject to publication if they were issued in accordance with the Constitution. (Russian Fundamental Law 1906: articles I, III.) In this sense, the autocratic legal culture at the top of the state was unchanged.
Law was used in the Russian state building in the traditional way to strengthen its authority and bind citizens into its structures. For the citizenry the most important factor was the connection law played in the formation of its own self-worth. This development had been taking place in all social groups, including the rural areas where in the local (volost’) courts a type of citizenship was being born (see Jane Burbank’s article 1997).

Similar to the developments in the teaching profession, lawyers as a profession had become a liberal force. Many lawyers were motivated by career and professional reasons, and the “state careerists” conformed to the legal interpretations of the Ministry of Justice. Yet, the legal culture of the profession had become a political ideology. In a practical manner this was advanced, for instance, by the modest legal aid services since the 1870’s in St. Petersburg and Moscow. The rule of law culture became a part of the foundation for the Russian legal profession. (Levin-Stankevich 1996: 239–243.)

Legal culture thus developed together with the political maturation of the state. Paradoxically the law which was supposed to strengthen the state, provided the means for the development of independent civil thinking, the opportunity for the appearance of protected rights and the creation of rule of law practices. In the autocratic system this paradox resulted in insuperable conflict.

3.3 The Administrative Culture After 1906: Risk Administration Elements in Town Administrations

The political ideology of administrative change in the late 19th century and very early 20th century concentrated on finding a balance between local initiatives and state necessities. Main reformist ideas in this process tried to find suitable limits to the discretion of officials, the modernization of state structures at all levels and the creation of an administrative culture in which legality dominated.

Ideologically the main purposes of administrative change in Russian towns from 1870 (zemstvo reform and town administration reform) until the 1917 revolution were the following:

- Local level authority would mainly be based on state theory which saw the local administration as performing state functions.
• Strengthening of the state by making governing of the provinces easier through decentralization.
• Using civil servants as a tool in the modernization of administration.
• Legality in which the law had a specified meaning in administrative relations. The state of a strong security administration was supplemented by a concept of shared power, formalized in the Constitution of 1906.

The effects of the structural changes resulted in cultural change mainly in four different forms: First, an evolution of state practices particularly in the legal field, which affected the local level culture. Second, the social evolution of estate structures into occupational, economic, political and ethnic groups in the Russian towns. The formation of new types of citizen groups with a different attitude toward the government profoundly changed the social environment of administration. The third form of change was the institutionalization of town government authority and the fourth was the delegation of state tasks, which resulted in new practical demands at the local level.

The transition of administrative culture produced new risks. This was mostly due to an inflexible administrative market (comp. Kordonskii´s use of the concept “administrative market” in the analysis of Soviet and present day Russian administration in 2000). The market was risk prone when change occurred in any of the three parts of government: central government (ministerial and gubernatorial), local self-government (Duma and administration headed by the mayor) and the estates. Inflexibility stemmed from the autocratic ruling culture at the top of the state, which did not allow political changes and in which the formal ties between the three parts of the administrative market were not clear or specified directly by law. In these factors there were no clear changes during the studied period, not even after the 1906 Constitution.

The relationship between law and state up to and after the acceptance of the 1906 Constitution defined Russia as a predominantly bureaucratic national state structure in which the Sovereign had an unchanged official position. The Tsar was not responsible for the people and his authority was wide. Culturally he represented continuity and stability which justified the high power distance between him and the people he ruled. This power distance was replicated in the office cultures around Russia where administrative authority was in practice personal.
Yaney (1973) has contended that the autocratic rule at the top of the state penetrated the whole cultural system. The background to the legal-administrative relationship which both the center-local relationship and superior-subordinate relationship in imperial Russia had, was the extra-legal position of the ruler. The hierarchy which existed, although it was structurally quite elaborate (particularly in the state level), remained a system of mostly personal relationships.

The Emperor retained a three dimensional role as the head of the state. He was the highest legislative authority as well as judicial reviewer. In addition he was the head of the state administration through which judicial review was mainly carried out. (Ståhlberg 1916: 12–13.) The Emperor’s authority was direct in the state administration but delegated in the lower levels. The state administration and the governors in the provinces received their respective authorities from the sovereign who decided its scope on the basis of “state needs”. Decrees stating the decisions of the sovereign were used in closed circulation since they did not have to be published. Laws were formally direct orders of the ruler and legislative authority depended on his personal discretion.

Yaney (1973) has pointed out that although the ruler could impose his will on the system arbitrarily, he had no way of knowing what the end result would be. The subordinates (in the absence of legal rules) had no reliable source of information about how their superiors should make decisions and behave. Thus they relied on the superior’s power. The more powerful the superior, the more valuable he was as a source of help and power to his subordinates. (Yaney 1973: 24–26.)

It is important to note that before the 19th century reforms the legal norms of Russia prohibited any civil servant (slugi) to use discretionally power (i.e. to decide matters based on his own evaluation). A major factor was the lack of formal education among officials. The servants of the Emperor were his personal representatives and behaved accordingly. In addition, only a few administrators had an education in law. (Taranovskii 1992: 303–304.) In this sense, the 19th century reforms did create a slightly stronger authority base but, again, its actual meaning was mediated by the decision making procedures which underpinned the autocratic character of the state.

At the practical level autocratic decision making had a multitude of side-effects which were in conflict with the strengthening of law-based and more democratic administration. Weissman (1981) has described how all the
above mentioned elements meant that the center was contributing to the administrative process a large amount of written orders to guide and control the decision making below. In its turn, the lower level was adapting to this by learning to write such reports to the top which it felt were expected of it. The structure at the bottom was weak in staff and diffuse in its power base. Those officials who worked for local administrations were overburdened with all kinds of routine tasks which were piling up, taking their attention away from the main interest of the work. Weissman argues that the administrative culture was marked by slowness, delays and corruption, of which the first two were explained by the fact that in the administrative process the smallest daily issue required approval from the center. Lower rank officials were almost entirely dependant upon their supervisors and the social order emphasized the utmost servility to those in higher rank and social standing. (Weissman 1981: 23–24, 26).

Laws and regulations were used as substitutes for professionalization in personnel. The lack of clear outlines for the autocracy itself meant that regulated social communication was most important in the decision making process. The level of administration was less important than situational and political factors (comp. Mustonen 1998). The lower level administrators were expected to respect supervisor autocracy and avoid taking initiatives themselves. Their low educational level, which was not significantly improved in the 19th century, added to the weakness of quality.

Shepelev has pointed out that the administrative culture was criticized for having both the greatest and least amount of control at the same time. It was seen that the lower level administrations served formally under the command of the central administration, but in fact turned away from any responsibility by “covering themselves with orders coming from above”. For the central administration the real problem was that all different ministries and central administrations had their vertical lines which produced the same effects in addition to having no contact between themselves in the administrative process. (Shepelev 1999: 87.)

A “natural” side-effect of these dependencies was bribery. Yaney has called bribery not only a form of submission but more essentially a method of negotiation and self-assertion in which the subordinate could make use of the superior’s power. Bribery, in the absence of legal rules upon which everyone depended for their behavior, was a harmonizing and stabilizing factor. Bribery resulted in expected administrative outcomes. (Yaney 1973: 26.)
The new demands for legality which the 1906 Constitution formally instituted were in conflict with the elements of culture connected with personnel. Bribery, as a means of getting results and sustaining stability, conflicted with the intended role of civil servants in modernizing administration. Elite recruitment in which a personal patron was necessary surpassed legal formality. In this sense, no real change took place in the latter part of the 19th century in spite of some criticism which was directed at the system by contemporaries. Promotion systems which built the backbone of the state service, also affected the way the local level administrators viewed themselves as public decision makers. The connection between titles and actual responsibility was rather weak. Loyalty and submissiveness were regarded higher than, for instance, “legal consciousness”. In reality, administrative guarantee (a type of mutual understanding) protected the administrators from having responsibility.

The administrative market in the towns was made of four influencing groups which also structured the new administrative culture. Official decision making lines were ministerial, provincial and local government. All ministries had their provincial agents which exerted central authority over local matters. The Ministry of Interior was the strongest central policy decision maker effecting the local level. Provinces were headed by the governors whose job was to plan, supervise and coordinate all task execution in their respective geographical area.

The town government line was made up of the four year Duma, its executive board and the mayor who was accepted by the Ministry of Interior. The town administrators were at first not considered state officials but after the 1890’s the centralization needs changed their formal position. The estates continued to have their own rights of influence after the 1906 Constitution. The legal boundaries between the bureaucratic bodies of ministerial and provincial authorities, however, were not clear. Similarly, from a state building point of view, the bureaucratic bodies, estates and local self-government bodies had no clear rules about their interaction. The Senate worked as the Supreme arbitrator in cases of disputes. Appellation thus became an important practical tool in the institutionalization of local-center relations. On the whole, the administrative market was prone to great risks if any part of the structure changed.

In terms of delegating tasks, after the turn of the century the local administrative culture was affected by the fact that localities could not have their own programs or coordinate their efforts together. Their
economic rights were restricted. The executive boards dealt mostly with property development and maintenance. Personnel policy questions were not local after centralization began. There was a strong link between the mayor and the governor of which the latter worked as the arbitrator of local matters at the request of the former. Double control of local decision making by both the governor and the Administration of zemstvos and town affairs continued till 1917. Even though the local level was authoritatively made into an extension of the state administration, its narrow jurisdiction led to a lack of coherence with the state. The reaction to this side-effect was political control in the form of governor’s right to pass orders to town governments.

From a legal point of view, the officially dominating role of central organs meant several things. First of all, in the absence of local representation in the supervision of local administration and the difficulties of independent judicial review, arbitrary action was easy to take. Corruption flourished. “An administrative guarantee” protected the civil servants from being taken to court without the approval of their administrative superiors. Since administrative inspection was neither public nor judicial, it was taken care of by the state bureaucracy itself. This resulted in the central bureaucracy in Saint-Petersburg trying to control administrative functions with a constant flow of directives and circulars. These dealt with the most routine decisions such as hunting licenses and opening of theaters, which had to be registered and reported back to the ministries in the capital for approval. (Weissman 1981:25.)

Developing professionalism and civil society worked as a mediating force in the local administration. As a side-effect of delegating tasks to local administrations, different professional groups such as statisticians could work more independently and modernize the practices of administration work. The central authorities, while important, played a lesser role compared to professional rules and local situations. The local administration work of the 19th century and before 1917 could be equally seen as a multitude of social and professional actors and power levels forming a market for different types and levels of administrative decision making. The local level was also populated and greatly affected by several different types of civil society groups which influenced the local administration in their own way, and to a different extent. These groups included for instance commerce organizations, students, newspaper staff, farming societies, religious societies, groups of national minorities, professional associations and
charity organizations. Opposition in the country grew in parallel to the activities of these groups. (Kimbell 1992: 263.)

Teachers formed a very visible and important such group in the towns and villages. With their All-Russian Union of teachers they were a force in the liberal movement. Teacher activity grew from practical demands of the work. The teachers in 19th century Russia had low formal qualifications, were often isolated in the countryside and met a deprived school environment when starting their work. At the turn of the century, pay could be equal to that of an unskilled laborer. Further more their work was strictly subordinate to the school board, state inspectors, zemstvo employers and other officials in rural towns. Even so, the post 1864 reforms meant a massive change in society – for instance Scott J. Seregny has pointed out, for instance, that there was not a wide commitment to general public education by the zemstvo institutions. The peasant communities themselves carried a major part of the load. The zemstvo did not find adequately prepared teachers and teacher training consumed a considerable part of their educational budget. By 1880 around 60 teacher training schools had been established in Russia. (Seregny 1996: 169–173.)

Seregny states that a major function of the provincial administration was to guard the frontier separating urban society from the rural one. Teachers crossed that border line, making it necessary to control their activities. In 1875 teachers’ courses were placed under official control while the zemstvo financed them. Teachers’ associations were banned in 1885. Yet at the same time, the government’s control was insufficient in the vast land since one inspector could be responsible for as many as 100 schools. (Seregny 1996: 174–175.) In this way, the teachers became a social force which changed the power distance between the uneducated masses and the decision makers of the society.

Teaching became an important issue as a result of famine and cholera epidemics in the 1890’s. The reactions of ordinary people in these times convinced the government that education needed more attention which resulted in the growth of the school network. Education became a national issue, but not an easy one. The Tsar’s view remained one of caution and conservatism. (Seregny 1996: 177, 182.)

In time, even as the formal controls of the state were in place, the social changes in society made it increasingly difficult for it to act. The changes which most notably took their form in industrialization and agrarian difficulties of outdated farming systems had many effects upon the local
level. They undermined both the central bureaucracy and the estates which had been used as a structural tool for enlisting public participation in local affairs within the social and political order of the state. (Weissman 1981:20, 22, 27.) The tsarist administration came to resemble the Soviet Union a hundred years later in its formal omnipotence but daily inability to enact needed action.

Marc Raeff has concluded that communication between the state and society started to break, leading to the government’s inability to secure adequate information on what was going on in the country. The effects of the 1892 famine were to a large part a result of this state of affairs. The 1905 events gave greater scope for the middle and lower levels, which started to improve. But it did not change the center. Raeff sees the revolution as a direct end result. (Raeff 1966: 35–37.)

The most significant changes reflecting the social evolution of towns took place within the estate structures. The new inhabitants of towns and cities formed new political and economic groups which not only required services, but also presented a risk to the whole system. There was also a type of growing social crisis at the top of the ladder. The aristocracy, through its historical background as a landed service nobility, associated itself with the state elite’s goals. The social system around the Tsar was important to it both economically and socially. For administration this connection had historically meant the creation of a social culture inside it, in which formal rules and norms were equal in importance to personal debts, family and mutual favoritism.

In the post-constitutional administrative culture, the estate structures did not support the prevailing order as before. Some estate officials even participated in the political opposition and some of the nobility joined the growing progressive movement. In the case of the peasants, the dissatisfaction took a more direct form, for instance in criminality. The diffusion of liberal anti-bureaucratic attitudes among the elite were reinforced by parallel sentiments among conservatives. (Weissman 1981:30, 36.)

The Constitution of 1906 could be said to have formalized those legal rights of legal protection which had begun to develop after the 1864 political and legal reforms. Appellation was one of the most successfully institutionalized practices of the 19th century. At the level of practices, appellation became an actively used method of correcting administrative mistakes. More importantly, it could be used by both individuals and organizations. Appellation served as a means to institutionalize jurisdiction
limits of different levels of administration in certain areas, such as taxation. Through the use of the Senate as the Supreme Court, a type of legal consciousness developed. For the general development of legality, appellation had a significance. For the rights of citizens, it had a limited, yet noteworthy meaning. In the absence of political rights, appellation could only be used in “purely administrative” issues in which there was a breach of jurisdiction or miscalculation in decision making. A most important such area was taxation.

Local courts helped bind the population to state structures and developed the idea of a citizenry. Although the court system was differentiated, it provided an avenue for solving problems via the help of law. In this sense too, a legal culture penetrated the administrative system of Russia’s provinces.

Yet, for the individual, the state had two categories of legal protection. First was the administrative sphere, in which locally made decisions could be appealed in the Senate and in which there existed some legal protection. The second was the political sphere, in which the ruler and his administration made decisions and controlled development and in which an individual did not possess any rights as such. The role of the prosecutor in the latter became culturally dominant by the end of the 19th century and up to the revolution, as its own formal position underwent change. The prosecutor assumed the role of a politically loyal ally to the central authority.

Yaney has contended that the bureaucratic government was active and did not wait for law to emerge from court decisions. The officials did not act only when asked, instead they aspired to identify state “necessities” and create plans which could be executed by government agencies. Law was something that would come in the process of reform programs which carried abstract conceptions of necessity for the good of the society. In contrast to the senatorial government which had assumed that the state embodies an established law, the Russian bureaucracy of the 19th century developed out of a realization that the state had to create law in accordance with its necessities. (Yaney 1973:30.)

The administration went through a change from a purely personal-subordination hierarchy to a more bureaucratic state organization. But the features of the early Russian administration in the provinces did not change that much. As the basis of loyalty, the Tsar was supplemented by the newer concept of state, which enacted programs upon its citizens. The goodwill and wisdom of the state as an institution and as an abstract concept became the political ideology upon which practical policies were based.
Earlier studies (for instance Hosking 1972 and Shepelev 1999) have concluded that the administrative culture was burdened with risks as a result of the autocratic rule. Hosking, for instance, came to the conclusion that at the turn of the century the local level in tsarist Russia was one of diffuse authority but with formally intensified control from the center, and one in which leadership was placed upon many actors but with an incomplete legal base (Hosking 1972).

The ethical connotation of authority as independently based on and regulated by religion, did not exist in Russia. Also missing before the first Constitution was the idea of the sovereign individual as not just an object of the authority but a participant in the process of defining that authority. Power, then, was individualistic in its justification and corporative in its execution. In terms of the modern day rule of law, this meant an absence of controls over decision making. Even after the Constitution, this essential feature of the system remained.

The autocratic, non-democratic political situation did not give the town government the opportunity to develop at the speed needed for social demand. In political discussions, the main concentration was on the state-local relations, not on the social issues growing in the towns, particularly in the poorer parts. Consolidation of limited functions occurred through the establishment of local administrative organs which organized a minimum of different services. Economically, however, the administrations were weak and their rights restricted. Socially they hardly represented the interests of the less fortunate peasants coming into towns, and were thus unable to prevent or slow down the political developments leading to the revolution.

The changes in estate structures due to industrialization and the development of town culture (media and political awareness) caused the most serious trouble for the preservation of public order. This demanded massive effort from the local administration, for which it did not have the means to respond. The town administration before the revolution performed the function of the state in the provinces and gave an avenue for the interests of those occupational groups which emerged as important for the economy of the towns in the period of industrialization. At the structural level, the local level acquired an organization which, in itself, was already quite advanced but lacked those legislative and economic powers demanded by the new challenges. Thus the transitional purpose of making the provinces more easily governed was met only partially.
To summarize, this chapter has analyzed the creation of a new local administration in the autocratic structures of the imperial Russian state. The structuration process created a town administration culture which had its own limited and non-political authority base. This authority was mediated by the decision making procedures which underpinned the autocratic character of the state. Local actors could, within their own restricted sphere (particularly professional), effect changes. Appellation and the development of the judiciary were administratively important. The local level changed socially, economically and politically while the center did not.

The weakness of the administrative authority (both the organizational and civil servants’), however, created dysfunctions (bureaucratism, multiplication of paper work) and risks (poor feedback and an authoritarian, personal decision making style). The lack of a clear separation of powers between the representational, executive and judicial created most of the side-effects in the transition. These were in conflict with the strengthening of law-based administration and more democratic, effective government. The next chapter will show how these features of local administration continued to exist in the new system after 1917.
4 The Transition of Administrative Culture, 1917–1938

This chapter describes the new Socialist administrative ideology after 1917; the structural changes in which law and the bureaucratization of the party were important; the creation of Socialist institutions and personnel policies; and the subsequent totalitarian local administration in the 1930’s. The analyzed period has been limited to the year 1938, although the consolidation of some of the studied administrative elements took an even longer time. The chosen period does, however, show the risks and side-effects of the first two revolutionary decades which affected the foundation of the Soviet administration.

I show how the concepts of the socialist ideology were put into practice through the building of Soviet institutions. Important elements in the state building process were the creation of uniform command structures for policy implementation and information gathering, new personnel policies and the institutionalization of a Soviet legal culture. At the end of this chapter, I analyze why the resulting local administration culture differed from the original purposes of change.

4.1 The Political Ideology of Administrative Change: Society Becomes Administration

To understand the creation of the Soviet state administration in the light of the new administrative ideology, I separate three ground purposes of the revolution upon which the creation of administrative change was built. The first of these ground purposes was the relationship between state and
citizen. The earlier basis of the state as the provider of order between different social groups while being legally subordinated to the personal interests of the autocrat, was replaced in the revolution by the continuation of the provisional government’s idea of state-society relationship. The great rupture was Lenin’s concentration on the idea of the state as the representative of all society (Lenin 1968: 154). Structurally, Lenin saw the zemstvos as essential parts of tsarist administrative culture which made them incompatible with the new ideology. (Vucinich 1960: 20.)

As Russian society at the time of the revolution did not yet correspond with the class structure of a socialist state, one of the central tasks of revolutionary change became “the fight against oppressors” and the neutralization of the middle class by the dictatorship of the proletariat, which constituted the second ground purpose. Essential to understanding the political theory of both administrative change and principles of guidance, was the fact that they were both relative to different historical moments rather than constant fixed concepts in the organization of action. This is why Lenin’s own writings show different positions in different concrete situations. Descriptive of his thinking was the combination of historical realism in the analysis of a concrete moment and a utopian type of dreaming. (Susiluoto 1979: 59, 62.)

As the starting point of cultural transition was the utopian principle of “From each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs” the more practical organizational goal Lenin introduced in his writings became the activation of the masses for the improvement of their own social life. (Lenin 1968: 217.) For this purpose, Lenin repeatedly concentrated on the question of how to popularize administration to achieve the needed cultural change. As the goal simultaneously needed to be total control (in protection of the majority’s rights, as they were interpreted by the leadership) and the eventual disappearance of all classes from society, the leadership of the proletariat needed for its authority a state with a centralized machinery of repressive violence. (Lenin 1968: 161–168.) The idea of a centrally led country constituted the third ground purpose of the transition.

V. Makarenko (1989) has analyzed the revolutionary process in terms of its effects on the development of bureaucracy in the Soviet state and found a strong connection between what he calls “the bureaucratic tendencies of the revolution” and the political choices of the Bolshevik leadership. (Makarenko 1989:120.) For Lenin the administrative ideology was above all a matter of ownership, from which all other elements followed. Thus,
structural matters were not as essential as the people who worked in them. The old culture of repressive state machinery (chinovniki) was different from the socialist regulative and economic ideal culture of government. (Rigby 1979: 12–13.) The old structures could be retained if only the capitalists controlling them were thrown away.

The administrative ideology of change which began to emerge in Lenin’s writings and in the concrete decisions made in the early years needs yet to be looked at more concretely in terms of their organizational effects. Administratively the ground purposes of the revolution meant a dual development in building the new state and the new socialist life style through administrative regulation. These can be dealt with here under two headings, as follows:

1) Active enforcement of proletarian dictatorship in which administration and law were used as instruments for education and the elimination of the opposition

The purpose of centralization was thus connected to a more concrete problem of guidance and control. The human “material” which at the time of the revolution was available to govern the country, did not meet the practical requirements of administration. Since resources were scarce, Lenin saw it necessary to concentrate knowledge at the top of the administrative system. (Susiluoto 1979: 68.) Centralization, which was essentially a practical requirement, needed the concept of proletarian dictatorship for it to be in harmony with the idea of socialist democratic development.

The value of an individual did not exist autonomously but as a part of the collective in which this individual was useful for the general good of the majority. Later on, the general good was to be interpreted solely by the party. For Lenin, individualism in the capitalist sense inevitably meant the rise of opportunistic and oppressive persons who used others for their personal financial gain and thus eroded the foundation of real democracy. Any sign of such lack of discipline should thus have been rejected and swiftly prevented.

Lenin introduced the idea of major change at the social level as a level from which the society would then advance to the desired life style. In this process, the state left by the earlier governments was needed as a suppressive machinery to advance the rights of the economically disadvantaged majority. Yet it was no longer seen as a state in its normal sense. It was a transitional state: a process advancing apparatus, which was supposed to
evidently die away in its old forms. (Lenin 1964.) The socialist economy was to give birth to a socially evolutionary state where the process of administration and the tasks administered would have a newly defined relationship. Administration, as a separate state institution, did not exist. It was created by the peasant population as they took responsibility for tasks needed to provide certain standards for the whole population.

For Lenin, class struggle and state building were linked together through the elaboration of the transitional process itself. In this sense, political education and continuous control of cultural reorientation were particularly meaningful. Lenin pointed out how confusion becomes evident in all proletarian revolutions, particularly in the Russian case, where the country, in his opinion, was backward and petty bourgeois by nature. This, for Lenin, meant the need for control so that soviet members would be neither parliamentarians nor bureaucrats and would retain their link with practical work. Finding the chain’s weakest link at any given moment and solving the problem became the issue of practical government work. The more this implementation work needed individual dictatorship, the more necessary it became to strengthen popular control from beneath so that there would be no possibility of bureaucratism within Soviet power. (Lenin 1968: 463–465.)

The view of tsarist “bureaucratism” became one of those concepts which were used to explain and ideologically legitimate the differences in the administrative cultures of the old and new leadership. The image of administration as a class based privilege with extraordinary powers was to be changed into something serving the new state and its purposes.

For this, Lenin elaborated as to how it was necessary to immediately rebuild the civil service in order to diminish its meaning and to one day be rid of it all together. In his opinion, capitalism had created a “simple democracy” (of which the equal pay was an example) by perfecting mass production, factories, railroads, the post office and so on, to such a level that the tasks of the old state had become simple jobs of cataloging, book keeping and inspection which every literary person could handle. Thus all previous leadership positions could be replace with a new system of workers, supervisors and accountants. At the same time, the anarchistic notion of “no control” was, for Lenin, the same as postponement of the revolution because people were not ready to be without oppression, control, bookkeepers and supervisors. The system required iron discipline in which the state’s personnel would be servants of the proletarian system, executioners of orders, responsible, modestly salaried and easily dismissed. This would
be a “natural order”, without the qualities of salary bondage, and would ultimately make the rotated simple control and accounting tasks habits of the people. Administrative tasks would thus cease to be special tasks. The status which used to be attached to such positions and the remnants of the old “leadership” role of administrator should be wiped out. The abolition of all forms of rivalry for higher posts was necessary and it meant that the respectful, though not very highly paid, service could not be a stepping stone for a position in the banking and business community as is case with the capitalist societies. (Lenin 1968: 174, 178–179, 201.)

Accounting and control were stressed by Lenin as the most important elements for the organization of the first stage of the communist society where all people become employees of the state. When the majority of people start to practice this type of control over state functions (their work assignments), control which is distributed on an individual basis but owes its authority to the collective level of communist economic and political control, it becomes universal and unavoidable in society. The whole society becomes one office, where there is equality in pay and work. The discipline of the factory was not a goal in itself but a stepping stone to further progress. Since the all-state wide control was meant to become unavoidable, any detours could be swiftly punished. This was to force adaptation to the simple rules and norms of societal life which were soon to become habits. When the tasks of the state are simplified to the tasks of accounting and control by the workers themselves, the state ceases to be a political state and the public functions loose their political nature by becoming mere bureaucratic actions. At the end of this evolution, the idealized communist state would have meant a situation in which people use internalized traditions and guidelines on a voluntary basis without coercion (Lenin 1968: 219–220.)

In this sense the line between state and society was to be abolished, and the two were to become one at both an ideological and practical level. Administration was not supposed to exist as a separate unit in the chain of power centers but as a means for the overall organization of the new state where there was a fusion of structures and social system, unlike in the capitalist societies. Again, the administration was, in other words, to become the society.

Similar to the “antibureaucratic” attitude, Lenin did not much care for parliamentarianism as a method for the popular will of expression. In his opinion, it united democracy (which was ultimately not for the needs of the people) and bureaucracy (which was against the people). In the language of
The new ideology, proletarian democratism was meant to root out all signs of bureaucracy (associated with the social culture of the past) in order to bring to effect a democracy for the people. (Lenin 1968: 226.) Democracy was to exist most of all in the form of changes to life as the all-state wide system of administrative control over work processes started to produce results.

A government was supposed to be based on the specific requirements of the majority of people which consisted of poorly educated or illiterate peasants and factory workers who survived 19th century poverty. The class struggle concept meant discarding the idea that the interests of these masses could be protected by the good will of the more well to do classes in parliamentary elections. Further more, democratic development meant the disciplinary training of the masses who at the outset might not be fully aware of the benefits of this direction. The general good was thus central to the moral legitimation of the new way of life and made possible all the needed measures to protect it. The masses were seen in Lenin´s writings, more or less as recipients of the new doctrine who needed to be involved in the system for their own good. Accordingly, there was no place for free civil society in this formation, since the government included in itself the elements which were needed to both educate the masses and control their work. The government which directed the state was to adequately represent the society.

Logically, instead of concentration on the state-local level relations as such, the idea was “total administration” which would include all aspects of the new life style. More so, the political goal was to involve all people in the decision making and daily running of the state which, in this relation, became legitimately theirs. The required control protected the long term interests of those wanting to see the state being free from individualistic economical and social goals. The new administrators thus required, first had to understand these principles and take a new type of responsibility for the first time in their life. They were expected to seize the power under the guidance of the political vanguard. Earlier exclusion from decision making was to be replaced with a new politically correct self-discipline and status in society.

At the practical level, introduction of the new ideology first meant concentrating on rapidly getting rid of the effects of the old social system. One of the first practical acts of this class struggle for the Bolshevik government, was the differentiation of attitude toward social organizations.
Everything which was interpreted as being contra revolutionary was to be cut of from the society even though the bourgeois cultural system itself was to be used. (Korzhikhina 1995:10.)

In Lenin’s writings relating to the re-education of society was the concept of “elastic organization” which initially replaced both capitalist law and contracts to manage the major change. Elasticity meant most of all disciplinary action which could and should be forced upon people in the form of a dictatorship. Again Lenin saw it as fundamentally naive to suppose that the transition from capitalism to socialism would be possible without coercion and dictatorship. Crushing opposition was necessary for its superiority in knowledge, wealth and organization. Confusion, shifting positions and uncertainty were natural results of the transitions. Ideological and practical control in this situation were to be implemented through the courts, in which the education of obedience was most effectively done. (Lenin 1968: 455–457.)

Legal thinking evolved from the early “purely ideological” (such as Rejsner) thinking toward a more institutionally oriented version (Kivinen 1977: 6). In 1927 P.I Stuchka, the first President of the USSR Supreme Court, build an analogy between “religious ideologies and bourgeois law” as essentially tools for previous class oppression. In 1927 Stuchka considered that communism specifically meant the victory of socialism over any law, not the establishment of some type of socialist version of it. The abolition of classes who were antagonist in their interests essentially meant the death of law. (Berman 1963: 26–29.) His ideas were in line with E. B. Pashukanis’ views who, as the architect of the first socialist theory of law, saw the idea of a social contract underlying a political order which was based on the alleged harmony of equal individuals. Law, by nature, is contractual and individual and thus makes talk about “proletarian” law impossible. In terms of the manifest ideological goals of the time, these theoreticians saw the coming of communism as a withering away of law in general. (Comp. Berman 1963: 26–29.)

Justice was officially defined as a system of social relations which coincided with the interests of the dominating class and which is upheld by organized violence. Law was to be viewed in terms of economic relations in the society. Norm was not primary to Pashukanis. He considered the legal relations in the society to be objective facts which norms reflect. Thus norms could not be separated from this level into something primary, as an abstract set of rules. (Kivinen 1977: 6, 39.)
The relationship with the legal system and interpretation of the meaning of law in general were important for administration in several ways. First of all, the possibility of external control over official decision making, something emphasized in a democratic system, was eliminated. Second, law as an authority in itself was turned into a means of ideological control and thus could not be used for the independent interpretation of decisions. Third, while courts did not function as avenues of justice, individuals had to find new organizations for resolving their conflicts.

The party which had taken the place of legal mediators gave this role to the administrative structures. Kivinen has described how the legal theory had already discarded the methodological premises of Pashukanis and began to contemplate the concept of justice itself, which included a connection between justice and a certain amount of free will. (Kivinen 1977: 7.)

To go back to the roots of this change in the ideology, it is useful to look at the initial legitimation which Lenin gave the combination of soviet democratism and individual dictatorship in the realization of the needed control of working processes. In Lenin’s opinion it was a completely rational result of the external relations of government. The amount of repression was linked with the educational level of the revolutionary class, the after effects of the civil war and the forms of resistance on the part of the bourgeois. The mass production of industry, which was to be the material basis of socialism, required tens of thousands of people at the same time and this could only be realistically achieved by surrendering those people to the will of one person. Ideally, as all were to have the same goal, this direction should have been quite pleasant but nevertheless complete. Lenin saw the historical role of the party as a leader of the population who had to be guided away from its social roles. This could be achieved by both politicization and by the total submission of the workers to the will of the soviet dictator. (Lenin 1968: 459–461.)

The political legitimation for the combination of individual dictatorship and Soviet democracy was in the nature of the new Soviet state: it represented the interests of the majority. Dictatorship in the name of this majority then was something different than bourgeois dictatorship which represented the interests of minority groups. The Soviet version was instead used for the involvement of the masses in a historical creative work. The interests of the majority were interpreted by the party which, in this sense, involved in itself both ideological and bureaucratic (administrative) features. (Makarenko 1989: 120.)
Ideologically, the repressive “methods” were not a side-effect but a means of securing control of any element which could (in theory) pose a threat to the new order. In repressions, the ideology went through a transformation from a theory of liberation of worker-peasants to a theory of a bureaucratic legitimation of dictatorship. Graeme Gill (1990) has interpreted the core principle of the political system to mean that political authorities were not accountable in any direct sense to the populace for their actions. “With history interpreted in terms of abstract class forces, notions of responsibility and accountability in an immediate and practical sense were inappropriate. […] The perceived relationship between the state and the bulk of the citizenry was an antagonist one in which notions of guilt were defined in broad social terms. This made the attribution of guilt both unpredictable and wide ranging in its effect.” (Gill 1990: 29,31.)

Vladimir Makarenko (1989) has approached the same theme in terms of the bureaucratization process of the revolution. As the party took the role of social and political organizations in the state, the main goal of repression soon became the elimination of any type of independent communication within that party. The party became an organ, the role of which was to communicate the orders of the leadership. At the same time, as marxism became state ideology, it was institutionalized as a faith in the party. Particularly in the strengthening of the Stalin regime, the ideology was interpreted to be so vague and inexact that it could be used to legitimate any political decision. (Makarenko 1989: 239.)

The connection between the party’s own control and growth objectives and the governing of the rest of the society deserves more attention because it explains many cultural developments which, at first, seem to contradict the party’s ideological visions. Party membership grew from 24,000 in 1917 to 528,354 in 1922. The rotation was high since more actually joined and took the places of those who had either died, withdrawn or had met expulsion from the ranks. In addition, many workers started their tasks in new regions to which they had moved. The institutionalization of party membership took place from 1919 to 1922, during which a general re-registration, the standardization of the party card, and a full census of party members were carried out. Central party organs tried to build order in the lower level organs and exclude political unsuitable persons with letters and instructions. (Gill 1990: 35.)

A second aspect was the practical demands made upon the lower levels by the central organs. Political purposes were non-specific and difficult to
implement as practical tasks to be carried out by the often non-educated low level party workers. The results of these difficulties at the ideological level was central authority complaints of “localism” and “groupism” leading to an emphasis on democratic centralism. (Gill 1990: 39–42.) Ideologically, local freedom was inconsistent with the need to advance proletarian dictatorship. It also posed a threat to the party itself.

Lenin worked for the redirection of power to the party in the administration – by any means necessary. For instance T. H. Rigby has contended that Lenin worked towards this end through the soviets and was, in fact, prepared to seize power against the soviets in order to maintain it. The more liberal view of “all power to the soviets”, which would have allowed different socialist parties to stay in the soviets, was discarded in the process – mostly for the sake of effectiveness. (Rigby 1979: 26.) To enhance the self-discipline of the new administrators, Lenin introduced the idea of a double bureaucracy which would control most of all the party and state systems from above. The legitimation was that the roots of the much hated “bureaucratism” were to be removed from the administrative culture in order to build communism. Double bureaucracy was also connected with personnel policies which needed to be decided. Instead of letting local forces decide all by themselves in elections, central party organs began to use appointments. (Susiluoto 1979: 71, Gill 1990: 47.) The foundation for the double decision making system was politically created from the premise that the cultural learning process of administrators required this. It was also in line with democratic centralism which was in line with Lenin’s views about organization.

At the level of theory, “bureaucratic” meant exclusion of real life social factors as the basis of decisions and a concentration on orders, obedience, the non-political and personal aspects of administration, all of which were seen as representing the old culture. In practice, the main feature in Lenin’s ideological views on bureaucracy was that they depended on the leadership’s alternating political choices. These choices depended on the situational historical demands of strengthening political power and adding to production efficiency. The political ideology of administrative change was not an issue for the masses to discuss or vote. Real outside and inside threats (e.g. “wrong” class structure, hunger, unemployment, private small entrepreneurs and landowners) seen by the Bolshevik leadership, resulted in elitist politics. The methods of terror and its consequences consolidated this way of thinking.
Elite formation was already being debated among Communists during the early transition years. One view emphasized the Russian proletariat, which was different from the more industrialized (and in this sense more revolutionarily advanced) proletariat. The new Bolshevik administration was mostly a victim of the old tsarist bureaucracy which had infiltrated the new administration through the old civil servants. The other view saw bureaucratization in the structures themselves, where the tsarist administrators were joined by the new ones to create a soviet civil service elite. The “cultural” explanation, which emphasized the unpreparedness of the Soviet working class and which was promoted by Lenin himself, won. (Sakwa 1988: 195.)

The utopian vision of a non-bureaucratic administrative culture was combined with a need to create a solid, dependable state structure. Double bureaucracy, which had built-in systems for party control and new work ethics, were combined in the writings concerning the new model of administration in which the best “material” would be collected. This model administration took the form of Workers’ and Peasants’ Inspection. The requirements for the administrators included, first of all, recommendations of trusted Communists, knowledge of the state structure, theoretical education of government and book keeping, and ability to cooperate closely with the Central control committee for the whole system to work fluently. Lenin’s vision was that the model commissariat would be a cross between an agency (i.e. academic administration) and research institution (i.e. an academy of administration). (Lenin 1964: 393–394.)

An important aspect of party work inside the administration was the underlining of theoretical and educational requirements for administrative work. Lenin supported the creation of special books about the organization of administrative work, and sending representatives with the right set of mind to study administrative issues and collect literature from Germany and England. In addition, a commission was to be set up for the creation of entrance exams for candidates willing to work in the new model administration and in the Party Central organization. (Lenin 1964: 395–396.)

The fusion of party control and administrative structures, therefore, was not just a method of political control but the basis of the ethical transformation of administrative culture. For Lenin, this transformation was the essential requirement for the success of the revolution which needed, most of all, trust between the administration and those it governed.
Ethically then, Lenin’s ideas present an ideal type administration in which the formerly disadvantaged majority of people could both have food on the table and learn new social and political roles while being organized and controlled by administrators with practical integrity and political knowledge. The methods used would be accepted as historical necessities to build the economic base of the system. Symptomatic for these broad elaborations was that they did not tie the authority of the administrators into anything else except concepts which could only be interpreted by a dictatorial head. At the ideological level, there was only a vague connection between the changing existing structures and the principles upon which administrative practices would be built. In this respect, the most concrete elements of the political ideology have to do with concepts of effectiveness and legality.

2) **Fulfilling the economic needs of the peasant class through industrialization by changing legal principles and introducing organizational models which underlined control, accountability and discipline.**

Lewin (1995) describes the Russian social system as being archaic, meaning that the peasantry, which had now in actuality become the dominant force, relapsed back to pre-capitalism. This was the result of cumulative processes started at the beginning of World War I and finished with the ending of the Civil War. For the peasant, all the political and economic upheaval had meant the destruction or weakening of any market and export-oriented sectors of agriculture, and the restoration of the rural distributive commune (*mir*). Lewin sees the common man in the vast rural landscape turning inwards, towards “a family-consumption-oriented ocean of microfundia-institutions that calculated “mouths to feed” rather than productivity and market opportunities.” This was a method of self-defense and survival but, as Lewin points out, it was also very much in contrast with the social, economical and political aims of the new regime. The peasants – even as they, instead of the urban proletariat, had in fact replaced the old elites of landowners as the actual dominant mass in the society – remained culturally distant from the ideological aims of the Bolsheviks. (Lewin 1995.)

To tackle social challenge presented by the peasant population and to bridge the gap between different economic realities of Russia, Lenin underlined the economical aspects of the revolution. He demanded a focusing of all governing functions “from the management of people to the management of material things and productive processes” as rapid
industrialization was crucial to the socialist development. (Lenin 1968: 154.) This meant, above all, the creation of an economy in which there was not a guarantee of a (peasant) individual, but a collective entity – the class through which all its members received their status. This idea of class representation meant, among other factors, that economic relations were legitimized with new types of legal concepts that break old norms of contract between actors.

In contrast with the old social theories which had attempted a mild type of perestroika within the existing order and had at their best introduced European standards of legal responsibility to the administration, the new ideology claimed to build concepts on a basis of a socialist consciousness. Economical factors were dominant, since the state was to be a provider of all needs. Society which was represented by the state, could not be socialist without the reconstruction of social networks which served the new economy. As administration became the central part of this total economy, new legal thinking was created to support contracts between actors in the new situation.

Although the State and Revolution did not give a road map to the future, Lenin was very much concerned with precision, discipline and accountability. These were central issues in the legislative work which started right at the beginning and in which the old structures were accommodated to meet the new goals. (Rigby 1979: 23,26.)

The early development of legal thinking and daily norm creation went hand in hand. Legal theories and practices were developed as the administrative programs and laws were put into action. In this sense it is hard to separate the two. Laws and administrative programs became ideological as revolutionary purposes materialized through their implementation.

Legal thinking in the socialist society was a key sustaining achieved changes. Somehow these changes needed to be legally grounded, explained and justified. Civil law which concentrated on the economic relations of actors was the foundation of new Soviet administrative law. Evgeni Pashukanis argued that the victory of a planned economy would form merely technical connections between economic organizations. The basis for the understanding for his legal theory was the relationship between the legal and political superstructures. Instead of seeing the legal as a result of the political, Pashukanis used Marx’s idea that the legal superstructure was an expression of economic relations. In the socialist society, the previous
legal nature of economic organizations would disappear. (Pashukanis 1985.)

Pashukanis criticized the use of norms as a tool for the study of objective justice in society. Since legal relations were born as a result of economic relations, norms could not exist outside of this reality. Similarly, it was impossible for the state as such to support the authority of norms, if they were mere formal statements in government laws. A connection between real social relations and law was needed, particularly since power and suppression could not be included in the legal concept of the state. Pashukanis criticized the concepts of “capitalist state”, “origin and meaning of legal norms”, and the positivist legal tradition which was based on the connection of these. (Pashukanis 1985.)

Pashukanis reflected the new basis for legal culture in his criticism of the Soviet administrative organs which relied on legal experts (often from the previous system) to find out whether something was permitted “from a legal point of view”. This led to the inspection of legislation with the presumption that an answer can be found there. The right question in Pashukanis’ mind would have been to ask whether something is permissible from a political point of view. The legal form and administrative [political] goals were inseparable. (Pashukanis 1985.)

Despite criticism of the capitalist state as a guarantor of law, the actual development of Soviet legal thinking was also connected with the creation of the new economic system. In the new political reality, the state as the supreme guarantor of legal authority was replaced by the political leadership of the party which now represented the general interest (a goal which was undoubtedly also supported by Lenin). For this reason Harold Berman, for instance, paradoxically describes Lenin’s thinking as being in line with the traditional European legal positivism which considers all laws to be commands of sovereign power. As a continuation of this cultural element, Lenin built an idea of socialist government which gave orders and punishments in the interest of the majority which it represented. (Berman 1963.)

The discussion about the use of organizational principles from the West in the building of Soviet work organizations had two themes. First was the need for rationalization and lean organization which used Taylorism in system building. The other was the control of society. Taylorism responded to the need to have order in a chaotic situation where both administration and production were in disarray, and statehood was supported mainly by the army and strict Communist party central leadership. Rationalization in
the form of Taylorism was, for Lenin, a weapon against bureaucratism. (Susiluoto 1979: 73, 76.)

Rationalization, Taylorism and moderate agricultural policies were united in the form of equilibrium theory which saw Lenin’s ideas supporting slow development toward socialism. This line was opposed by Stalin who demanded the continuation of revolutionary policies and the abandonment of social peace because of the economic situation in the country. Ten years after the revolution only 0.6% of all cultured land belonged to the state farms. Moreover, these state farms owned only 1.1% farming land compared to 98.3% of private farms. (Nove 1989.)

Rationalization strategies were considered too weak in this situation where technology was getting too old for a more refined division of labor. Stalin’s line meant the aggressive use of Western technology and production methods. At the same time, Stalin saw that the social situation required finishing the revolution rather than seeking consensus and balance. Discussants who supported transitional policies were, from Stalin’s point of view, the objective enemies of soviet power and socialism. Revolution from above meant both the building and destruction of the system at the same time. (Susiluoto 1979: 78, 94.)

Lenin’s broad concepts were taken further by Stalin for whom the general industrialization process was based on a concept of the “alliance of the proletariat with the peasant”. Because of the continued practical threat of not being able to feed the city population and the army, Stalin politically rationalized that this alliance could not be based on the satisfaction of the personal needs of the peasantry. Instead, for future development, the union was supposed to guarantee the economic needs of the peasantry as a class. For this it inevitably needed new machines and farming technology which were all provided by the working class in the industrial sector. This cooperation which Stalin named “the union of metal” was intended to bring the two classes closer to each other in order to prepare for the destruction of social class divisions. Mere change in the conditions of separate individual peasants would not affect the modes of production in the countryside, which was a change acutely needed for the building of a new social order. This itself was the justification of collectivism, for which much agitational work and strengthening of co-operatives as preliminary stages of collective structures were needed. (Stalin 1951:181.)

In practice these political ideas had two purposes. First, the strengthening of the working class at the expense of the less useful peasants and the
politically unwanted middle class. Second, the binding of this class to the needs of a socialist economy which required simultaneous ideological socialization. In these processes, ideology went through changes which had severe consequences for the development of administration.

4.2 Structural Changes: State Building Since 1917

The background to the building of the state at the local level was the work achieved by the short lived legacy of the Provisional government, which started after the February Revolution in 1917 and represented the last attempt to raise the role of self-government. For six months the government had worked on numerous changes in the law at enormous speed. It had to balance between social pressures and the influence of inherited institutions and their attitudes. A general right of voting was passed and the town governments were made more independent bodies whose members could no longer belong to state service. (Orlovsky 1989: 100–101, Gilsenko 1996.)

The main challenge was building a coherent structure at all levels without administrative parallelism and ambiguous command relationships between central ministries and the provinces. In addition the Ministry of Interior intended to replace the administrative culture of the former regime by quickly building new institutions and methods according to the popular demands of legal consciousness (pravosoznanie) which had emerged from the 19th century reforms. (Orlovsky 1989:102,105.) The zemstvos and towns governments were supposed to absorb the police and administrative authorities of the central bureaucracy. The civil governors were replaced by commissars who came from a zemstvo background and where to act as links between the street level and the government. In addition to these changes, as an attempt to separate powers, a law was passed calling for the creation of administrative courts which would have dealt with conflicts between the state, self-government institutions, individual citizens and various public organizations. (Orlovsky 1989:104, 106–112.) This would have meant the possible beginning of a profound progress in the citizen-state relationship which, along with the 1906 Constitution, could have created legal control of the administration’s work.

The October revolution stopped these processes. State building was started on an ideological basis as a result of which the Communist party
organizations acquiring the role of administration. State building consisted of at least three processes: 1. Creating formal legislative and decision making order which positioned the local level in the state system, 2. Bureaucratization of the party and tying it to the parallel centralized administrative system, 3. Building a system of information gathering/control, diversifying administrative organs and developing legal thinking. In these processes the building of a centralized government took its form. In practice, the first two processes were interlocked from the start. The third set of processes followed primarily as practical demands.

4.2.1 The Legislative Foundation of the State and the Bureaucratization of the Party

The revolutionary transition was led by the Council of the People’s Commissariats, the Sovnarkom (Sovet Narodnykh Komissarov), which took over the work of cabinet with practically absolute power. It had been formulated officially by the decree which established the body as a collegiate. (Rigby 1979: 3.) The Council worked as the early government with a high decree of spontaneity and constant changes of persons. At the local and even ministerial levels, continuity of personnel, routines and structures was, however, obvious. The Sovnarkom set about its task with the intent of making as good a use of the old structures as possible. Further more, Lenin saw it vital to use the skills and experience of the old staff to maintain the functioning of the state. Effectiveness being the primary interest of the revolutionary leadership, the keeping in motion of the old structures became its preoccupation. (Rigby 1979.)

Each commissar acted as a chairman of a commission (later boards/ kollegii) which brought an element of collective decision making into the developing ministries. The use of the term “Council of the People’s Commissars” was meant to separate the leadership from the terminology of the old government by emphasizing its revolutionary and socialist democratic appeal. The latter innovation was not an accident or a minor factor in the early days of the transition. In fact the language changes were considered a prelude to the actual changes in ways of working. (Rigby 1979: 6.)

Shumilov (1999) has constructed a case of Petrozavodsk and Karelian revolutionary local government development from 1917 on. It shows that the institutionalization of local administration in the provinces did not
happen overnight, nor was it centrally guided at all turns. (Shumilov 1999: 80.) In fact, the left wing political forces which participated in the process seemed have a rather large space for regional and local decision making within the limits of the general political orientation.

As the power in the provincial centers was passed to the Bolshevik soviets, these, in many cases, set up their own Councils of the People’s Commissars which in some cases did not even accept the authority of the leadership working in the renamed capital of Petrograd. As an example, the city of Moscow still had its own local Sovnarkom when the Soviet central government moved there in March 1918. These two structures were then assimilated after some effort. (Rigby 1979: 9.)

In Karelia, the October revolution was met with mixed feelings depending on which school of political thought a person represented. The revolution meant a radicalization of the composition of those taking part in local and regional decision making. In the Olonetsky region this group included the regional soviet, the Murmansk railroad committee and representatives of the soldiers’ committees of the Petrozavodsk garrison. Power in Petrograd was given to the Military-revolutionary committee of the Petrograd soviet and the Karelian regional decision makers followed the center by stating their solidarity to the new government. At the same time, it announced that it would initiate the establishment of authority in the localities according to a plan which took the form of a “Decree on the organization of state power in the Olonetsky region”. (Shumilov 1999: 84–85.)

Risks presented themselves mainly in three forms. First was the reluctance from the part of many old civil servants to work for the new leadership, which the Bolsheviks saw as sabotage. The second had to do with the organization of control bodies outside the normal bureaucracy or soviets.

Rigby has described the establishment of the new Soviet central bureaucracy through three stages. First, the people’s commissars with the help of only a handful of assistants set up their offices in the Smolny (administrative building in Petrograd), from which they build contacts with their respective ministries. Second, the commissars moved into their ministerial locations while leaving their staff in the Smolny. Lastly the commissariat staff moved to the ministries and these two structures, one old and historic, the other new and revolutionary, began to merge. The officials of the old ministries rejected their legitimacy and either simply refused to work, or failed deliberately to implement decisions and prevented information from reaching the commissars. (Rigby 1979: 40, 44–45.)
The primary reaction of the Bolshevik leadership to the risks involved in this situation was an attempt to quickly establish control over the finances of the state by working with those former imperial state officials of the Treasury Department who were cooperative. These administrators worked out budgeting procedures which financed the work of the Sovnarkom and the commissariats. (Rigby 1979: 45.) Getting financing quickly in order was naturally important for the credibility of Bolshevik authority.

After the financial order had been established, the Soviet government could start handling the resistance to the changes. Along with the information war which was waged on all fronts (work places, offices and in the media), the new leadership made decisions which lowered the salaries of the top officials and raised those in the lower ranks. The commissars themselves received 500 rubles a month which was roughly the equal of the salary earned by a skilled worker at the time. (Rigby 1979: 44.)

The city Duma of Petrograd and particularly its Committee of Public Safety was an active point of resistance which continued to exist along with the new soviet. They paid the salaries of imperial time officials a month or two in advance to safeguard them from the threat of sacking by the Bolshevik government. When the new leadership abolished The Petrograd Duma and either sacked or arrested actively resistant senior officials, it also effectively undermined the junior level resistance. Lenin´s dispersal of the Constituent Assembly in December 1917 was the last straw to the imperial officials who had no option but to accept the transition of political power. (Rigby 1979: 44, 46.)

A third risk involved in the early days was the lack of clear decision making hierarchy in the provinces. The local level enjoyed considerable autonomy in the beginning which also meant that operational procedures were weakly regularized and jurisdictions unclear. This posed a serious immediate risk to the party´s independence and strength. Although most Duma and zemstvo organizations disappeared, the party faced challenge from the soviets which acquired roles in decision making. This paradox is explained by the fact that many party members filed into the soviets to fulfill the “all power to the soviets” idea, or as an attempt to staff them with party members. Other local organizations such as military-revolutionary councils, local Cheka, committees of the poor and state bodies complicated the picture. On top of all, the party´s authority was not well received by all members of the population, particularly in the rural areas. (Gill 1990: 33–34.)
In Karelia, the Olonetsky regional soviet of soldier and peasant representatives emerged in 1917 as the authoritative new representative body. In addition, in the town of Petrozavodsk worked the executive committee of the workers and officials of the Murmansk railroad, as well as the executive committee of different non-governmental town organizations, co-operatives and the town duma and zemstvo. The executive committee of the latter group functioned in connection with the regional soviet. The committees of soldiers established their rule in the Petrozavodsk garrison and guard for the Murmansk railroad. (Shumilov 1999: 80–82.)

The Karelian Olonetsky regional soviet tried to answer the immediate risks with the above mentioned decree which stated that all power which had previously belonged to the regional commissar was transferred to the soviet. The soviet could give obligatory decisions to maintain civil order, security and economic development, and to use the locally garrisoned military to achieve these ends. It had the right to arrest without a court order and detain for a period of one month people who were considered dangerous to the state building process. It could also release earlier civil servants and replace them with personnel chosen by the soviet. The institutionalization of Bolshevik authority in the Karelian example seems to have taken place quite fast after 1917. According to Shumilov’s assessment, it also created a self-government organ at first which was, within its political composition, a democratic elected body. Discussion was allowed and staff could be changed, all of which increased its authority among the population and real power in the localities. (Shumilov 1999: 85, 92.)

But the state building effort at the center soon affected the localities. In the Constitution of 1918, the changes from autonomous soviets to a party led central hierarchy and policy planning were evident. The new town level was given a coordinator´s role in the system of state authority. The soviets were elected by open ballot at work places. They had their origins in towns and naval units, from which they progressed to the rural areas. (Rigby 1979: 160.)

The local soviets executed the decision of higher soviets and state administration organs and were given the right to decide matters of purely local importance for their given territory. Territorially the state was divided into several administrative levels of village (volost´), districts (uezd), province (guberniia) and regional (oblast´) levels which made up the republics. In these regional levels were the territorial Congresses of Soviets which controlled the local soviets under their jurisdiction. City soviets were
represented both at the province and oblast levels and in case of the small towns of less than 10,000 at the district level. All congresses elected their executive committees which were accountable to them. (Constitution of 1918, paragraph 10: section 53, 55.)

Local soviets were composed on the basis of one deputy per 1,000 inhabitants for the term of three months and were required to meet at least once a week. Day to day work was organized by the Executive committee whose members were chosen among the Soviet deputies on the basis of one member per 50 deputies. (Constitution of 1918, paragraph 11: 57–59.) The budgetary Law incorporated in the Constitution, gave the local soviets a right to appeal for credits which were allotted by the appropriate People’s Commissariat out of State Treasury Funds. Budgets at the local level were supposed to be drawn every six months for the approval of higher regional congresses. The final decision maker over local budgets was then the All-Russian Central executive committee and the Council of People’s Commissars. (Constitution of 1918.)

The 1918 directive from the Commissariat of Internal Affairs gave a specific order that the soviets carry out all the decisions of the central power and adopt measures to notify the population of changes. Included in their tasks were also the carrying out confiscations, imposition of fines, effecting arrests, disbanding social organizations and reporting to the center on all important local events. (The People’s Commissariat of Internal Affairs 1918 in McAuley 1979: 184.)

Economic problems penetrated the integration of the new culture at all levels. In Karelia, for instance, the soviets at first had to start working without any central government financing. This made them resort to levying emergency taxes and payments, and compulsory orders, all to the grievance of the already suffering people. The early confusion and violence, including the civil war, took several years. It was not until 1923 that the Karelian autonomic socialist republic was officially established. (Shumilov 1999: 92.)

The new local administration was organized on a territorial, rather than self-government basis. It was composed of a locally elected representative body and an operative commissariat administration at the regional and local levels. Decision making was to be administratively holistic. Ideally, both the local level economic and social information gathering by the soviets, and the commissariat task/service specific execution of centrally gathered and processed information, met in the structures. In this way, the foundation of institutional totalitarism was established.
The new 1918 Constitution of the RSFSR united Soviet democracy and individual dictatorship in a new hierarchial structure which had, as its practical head of state authority the All-Russian Central Executive Committee. It comprised all authority: legislative, executive and judicial. (Constitution of 1918, paragraph 7: section 31.). The All-Russian Central Executive Committee examined and approved all draft decrees and other proposals, and issued its own decrees. It also appointed the Council of the People’s Commissars for the general administration of the country. The administration-government, the Council of the People’s Commissariats, consisted of 18 line administrations in which the Commissariat consulted a board of advisors but made personal decisions. (Constitution of 1918, paragraph 8: section 43, 45.)

The interlocking of different state functions in the same people was sealed by section 36 of the Constitution. This directed that the members of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee either work in the various departments of the People’s Commissariats or carry out special commissions of the committee. In this way, the members of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee assumed the role of politicians (legislators), judges and administrators of operational planning and execution.

The components of the territorially organized administrative totalitarianism were mediated via the following 1924 and 1936 fundamental laws. The main structure of the Soviet government in the 1930’s is shown in the annex C which is how I illustrate the structural arrangements during the studied period. This illustration also shows how the main structures had changed compared to the tsarist period.

The 1924 Constitution of the USSR proclaimed as the supreme authority the Congress of Soviets, which was composed of the Federal Soviet and the Soviet of Nationalities. Delegates were chosen among city and town soviets according to a proportionality of 1 delegate to 25,000 electors and among oblast Congresses of Soviets according to a proportionality of 1 delegate to 125,000 inhabitants. Elections were held in the provincial Congresses of Soviets. Since the Congress was legally required to meet once a year, its Central Executive Committee (CEC) acted as the legislative motor of the society. Between its sessions (normally three times a year) the legislative, executive and general administrative authority was constitutionally in the hands of its 21 member Presidium. The Central Executive Committee ordered the legislative and administrative work and defined the sphere of activity of its Presidium and the Council of the People’s Commissariats.
In this role, the CEC acted as the government and legislator at the same time.

Executive authority of the state was arranged through the Council of the People’s Commissars which was the administrative organ of the Central Executive Committee. At the union level it included 10 line commissariats. Their republican level was based on the commissariat’s sector of affairs. Those which dealt with purely external matters (Foreign Affairs, Foreign Commerce, Ways and Communications, Postal and Telegraph services, Military and Naval Affairs) had their delegates at the republican level directly subordinated to the respective Commissars at the central level. Internal matters, however, were organized on a territorial basis in which each commissariat had its People’s commissar of the Republic. Commissars at the central level worked under the chairmanship of the commissar in a collegiate whose members were chosen by the Council of the People’s Commissars. Decision making authority was constitutionally personal within the limits of the commissariat. (The Soviet Constitution of 1924, paragraph VIII: sections 49–57.)

Structural diversification was based on different types of control needs which meant that certain commissariats existed only at the republican level. The Commissariat for Justice, Public Health and Social Welfare did not have a counterpart at the center. At the same time, Commissariats for Supplies, Finances, Labor and the Inspectorate of Workers and Peasants of the member republics executed the orders of the Central Executive Committee while being hierarchically subordinate to the republican level. (The Soviet Constitution of 1924, paragraph X : sections 67, 68.)

Legislatively, the 1924 Constitution meant a highly complex system of control relations but lacked clear constitutional jurisdictions. On the one hand, there existed the formal role of the Congress of Soviets as the supreme legislator, as all legislation (all decrees, codes and acts) was approved by the Council of Soviets and Council of Nationalities brought to them by the Presidium of the CEC, the Council of People’s Commissars, different Commissariats, the Central Executive committees of the republics, as well as by its own members. At the same time, the CEC also acted as the controller of all legislative work, with the right to suspend or abrogate legislation of its Presidium, the Congress of Soviets and Central Executive Committees of republics, and all other organs throughout the state. All legislation defining the general rules of political and economic life, or making substantial
changes to practices of public organs, were to be submitted for the approval of the CEC. Between its sessions, the Presidium assumed the role of both legislative and administrative leadership with the same right to suspend or abrogate the orders of the Commissariats, both at the central and republican level. Furthermore, the Presidium promulgated all legislation and approved projects of legislation from the Council of Commissariats and from different authorities across the country. The commissariats in this chain also had the right to publish legislative acts and decisions and examine lower level acts and decisions. (The Soviet Constitution of 1924.)

From the point of view of local administration, the 1924 Constitution leaves a big question mark. It in no way defines the role of the local level except as an elective organ for the Congress of Soviets of the USSR. The hierarchy and authority relations of republican and local level, were not written into the Constitution. This left the practical administrative organization of towns outside the constitutional limits, dependant on the lower level legislation and administrative commands.

By the time of Stalin’s 1936 speech on the draft Constitution, the situation had developed so, that centralization needed a solid legal basis. In the 1936 Constitution, territorial divisions of administration were kept intact for reasons of clarity and control in order to avoid what Stalin called “tireless recarving” of territories and regions. Similarly, he underlined the need to put an end to the number of legislative bodies which made laws unstable. (Stalin 2002.) This marked the official recognition of the centralization process and was consolidated as a key objective of administrative development.

The 1918 Constitution had formally placed the commissars under the authority of the party’s CEC which was itself responsible for the Congress of Soviets, representing the local level of the country. After the Sixth Congress of the Soviets (which approved the first Constitution) met in 1918, the congresses began to meet annually. In this sense, they were not parliamentary organizations, yet they had more than a mere ceremonial role. The authority, as well as the actual institutional power of the Sovnarkom, was emphasized by the fact that the CEC became primarily a place for political debates. The work of the Sovnarkom was characterized by large attendances where every People’s commissar was assisted by a board and various central agencies. Sovnarkom staff and lower level representatives of Commissariats also attended meetings, giving their reports and taking part in the discussion. (Berman 1963: 30–33, Gill 1990: 54, Rigby 1979: 161.)
In terms of the administrative ideology of change for which one basic ground purpose had been the dictatorship of the proletariat, the power of the Sovnarkom meant several things. As the other parties and non-partisan persons taking part in the decision making lost their effective say in the development of the state, the proletariat was legitimately represented only by the Communist party. The party assumed the rights of dictatorship. Thus the Sovnarkom which made the policies governed their execution through the Soviets and in the name of the proletariat. (Comp. Rigby 1979: 162.)

These developments had two consequences. First of all, the actual power of the executive (Lenin) grew in a situation which required strong control. Second, two executive bodies were created: the Small Council of People’s Commissariats (*Malyi Sovnarkom*) in 1917 and the Labor and Defense Council (STO) in 1918. The former acquired much of the real executive authority of its parent organization. It was responsible for supervising the implementation of government decisions officially made by the Commissariats and government agencies. The Labor and Defense Council took over national economic planning and control over its execution. A system of planning hierarchy responsibilities was established down to the level of enterprise. Private trade of consumer goods was prohibited along with inheritance. Ration cards for commodity distribution and general compulsory labor were installed. In 1921, a new State General Planning Commission, Gosplan, was established and attached to the STO which appointed its officials. (Berman 1963: 30–3, Gill 1990: 54.)

Immediately after the revolution, the Sovnarkom had been a constant battle ground for the Left Srs (Social Democrats), Mensheviks and Bolsheviks, who still shared power. Examples of the policy and power battles included disputes over the structure and control of local government bodies between different commissariats (Internal Affairs and Local Government). When the Left Srs withdraw from the Sovnarkom in 1917, single party rule remained the permanent element of Soviet political and administrative decision making. (Rigby 1979: 29.)

Later (from 1920 on), when the role of the party in daily decision making was more firmly institutionalized, the party began to involve itself more and more in the economic questions of the country. (Rigby 1979: 186.) The separation of economic questions into their own administrative organization, intensified the diversification (see next chapter 4.2.2.) of administrative organizations which, in time, continued to reduce the meaning of independent local decision making.
Even as the structural changes centralized major policy and legislative decision making almost from the start, the role of the party organization (also at the local level) grew as a side effect of the institutional conflict in the center between the CEC and the Sovnarkom. During the drafting of the Constitution there was a battle between those advocating local empowerment and federalism, and those who favored a strong state and discipline in one republic. The growth of local organization was connected with the use of the lower level soviets and particularly their executive committees as avenues through which the Sovnarkom executed its decisions. The provincial organs of the old ministries through which the Sovnarkom was suppose to run the country were not an effective system for this purpose. The Sovnarkom had to rely on the assistance and cooperation of the new local government organs. The CEC which led the local executive committees, could use both institutional authority and party discipline to manage things at the local level. (Rigby 1979: 168–169.)

The Civil War presented itself as a period of risk to the authority of the local soviets. During the course of the war their image changed from ineffective local organs to much needed frameworks for the “socialist legality” (see chapter 4.2.2) as a means of reconstruction. Since the threat to the Bolshevik leadership was acute, the government began to use the administrative channels, mostly those of the People’s Commissariat of Internal Affairs, to guide the local level. The soviets themselves were unable to effectively meet the challenges of the time period, and the government began to rely more on the Cheka, the Revolutionary-Military Committee and the Food Supplies Commissariat which all had direct control over their local offices. For instance, the Moscow city Soviet plenum started to gather more for ceremonial occasions and to hear reports from the Soviet leadership.(Rigby 1979: 170–173, 184, Sakwa 1988: 174.)

In this situation the central government was in effect left without a well functioning network at the local level. As a side effect of the power vacuum a door opened to local party committees in the localities. This new power became permanent even though the Presidium of the CEC started to gain prominence in the establishment of Soviet rule in the new territories and new legal acts after 1919 strengthened the soviets as a part of the channel between the center and other levels. (Rigby 1979: 184.)

The Eighth Congress of Soviets in 1920 made the Presidium membership a full-time position and broadened its formal authority. It could revoke the decisions of the Sovnarkom and mediate conflicts between central and local
government bodies. Yet, as the actual power of the Sovnarkom declined, the beneficiary was the party central organization, the Political Bureau (Politburo) and the Organizational Bureau (Orgburo) of the Central Committee which were established by the Eighth Congress. (Rigby 1979: 175–176.) Looking at the bureaucratization process of the party structures into a parallel decision making organization, it is possible to view it as a side-effect of the institutional power sharing of the top authorities. At the same time, this would undermine the most directly ideological elements involved in the building of administrative culture. Of these information, leadership and personnel stand out in particular as parameters in the development of the system.

After the revolution a new elite formation was needed. The political decision making elite included members of the central party organs which were linked with the lower level through party congress. The unplanned growth of governing organs and the fluidity of links were not just risks of the revolution but also partially preferred by the elite to avoid firm and binding boundaries. (Gill 1990: 51.)

As the recruitment of new party members did not result in the direct growth of control in the country, a parallel control organization principle was created. In part, the parallelism was a result of the transitional personnel questions. The army which had been vital for the success of Revolution became the testing ground for the new government. Since the officials of the tsarist regime were necessary, a system of control had to be developed to ensure the loyalty of the huge army apparatus. This so called “war commissar system” was under party control and provided the foundation for the practical implementation of the principle. (Susiluoto 1974: 19.)

As important was the organizational factor involved. The ideological guidance of the new state had to be resolved in a manner which would institutionalize and secure the party’s authority. The task of implementing the party’s will in concrete matters was primarily in the hands of state organs. The Central Executive Committee was to a differing degree involved in governmental decision making but at the local level the Communists in the soviets worked according to CEC and Sovnarkom legal acts and instructions. (Rigby 1979: 177–178.)

The Politburo and the Orgburo formalized, at the central level, contacts between the Party and the executive side. Added to this were the several departments which appeared under the Central Committee Secretary. These had corresponding departments at the provincial and town levels in
which the full-time party secretaries became prominent political leaders and links to the center. (Rigby 1979: 181.) The bureaucratization coincided with the growing practical pressures for more efficient work of the soviets which led to a centralization process at all levels and, as a side effect, the decline in democratic practices. In Moscow, for instance, which was as a major city with city district soviets, the city Soviet had decided already in 1918 that the districts were directly subordinated to the city executive committee. So in effect the districts were administrative organs for the city soviet. (Sakwa 1988: 176.)

The bureaucratization of the party paradoxically built the ground for the realization of Soviet socialism and individual dictatorship at the same time. From the outset the need was to build more effective connections between the center and the localities, which was done with the help of Central Committee instructors sent to the provinces. The Central Executive Committee provided funds for their salaries and in 1920 the CEC started to operate financing for party organs outside of the Commissariat of Internal Affairs. This, together with the even more significant party instructions, created a centralized system of personnel control. The Eighth Party Congress Resolution demanded strict adherence to CEC decision making about personnel in which there would be “struggle against any localism or separatism”. Bureaucracy was being tackled by demanding that all members of soviets take part in administrative work and more people be drawn into administration to avoid a bureaucratic caste being born (Sakwa 1988: 174). Further more, a system of rotation was created which the CEC regularly reassigned party workers from one field of work to another and different locations in the name of effectiveness. The personnel question was taken seriously from the beginning. In 1920 the CEC was making about 1,000 appointments per month. These were still mainly “mobilisations” but already the next year’s records had improved so that the process was more individual and accurate. (Rigby 1979: 180, 185.)

In 1919 the above example of Moscow city Soviet reorganized its work by reducing the size of its 20 collegia while in some departments and districts of the city, collegia were abolished completely. Centralization continued in the decision to manage the Soviet through a general management committee which answered only to the Presidium of the Soviet. Departments were at the same time further centralized. In the districts the heads of the executive committees of the district soviets assumed control and leadership over the work. Sakwa has contended that the one-man rule was in this way introduced
into the civilian administration before the economic administration. (Sakwa 1988: 175.)

The culmination of all these directives was the CEC 1920 specific demand that all party members in soviets and their executive committees need to subordinate their decisions to the local party centers. (Rigby 1979: 181.) This parallel control organization (which was not specified in the Constitution) set the actual legal and policy limits for administrative decision making. It was most notable in the area of personnel policy through which the daily connection was built. When the elections of party secretaries eventually lost their meaning, as well as the power of plenary sessions over executive bodies, political power became concentrated in the hands of the local party secretaries or the executive organs (Gill 1990: 37). Thus the political administration was connected with the representational administration very early on in the transition process.

This was already noticed officially by the 3rd general meeting of soviets in May 1925 which criticized the soviets’ role as being that of governmental agencies registering already final decisions and the non stop addition of members into the executive committees. The motions brought about in the meetings of soviets were mostly informatory or regulatory type accounts of activities. The cultural role of the soviets in the course of state development evolved from providing power for the working people through its leading layer to providing power through party-state functionaries after the 1930’s. (Korzhikhina 1992.)

Personnel policy was united with party political control in the elaborate nomenklatura system which was officially established in 1923 (Sungurov 1998: 48). In this system, those state posts both in administrative organs and social organizations which were considered meaningful enough were filled by candidates who had been previously selected, recommended and confirmed by a party committee from the district committee (town committee) to the Central committee. (Korzhikhina 1995: 25.)

The list of official posts in the nomenklatura was not fixed. It was examined every year and the number of official posts it included changed annually. There were in fact two main lists (no 1 and no 2). The first was for decisions made solely for the purpose of regulating the Politburo of the party Central committee. In addition it included elected posts for which candidates were confirmed by the Central committee. The second list consisted of post which required the confirmation of a special organizational inspection department of the Central committee. Lists of names for a third
group not belonging to either of the previous lists were to be prepared according to confirmation of the same department of Central committee. This list appeared from 1925 on and it was called “agency nomenklatura”. (Korzikhina 1995: 25, Sungurov 1998: 48.) In 1930, a handbook of the nomenklatura was issued. It included a detailed characterization of the duties of the civil servants. (Edeen 1960: 286.)

The most important effect of the nomenklatura structure was that it was a closed system. The general public was officially not informed about it. The responsibilities of functionaries and their privileges were not public information. From 1932 on, the lists of office posts and persons having these positions became a state secret. (Sungurov 1998: 48.)

In addition to the nomenklatura, the general personnel policy in the Soviet Union also created new employment reward policies which were consolidated in laws and directives. Originally these were meant to reflect the transitional nature of the system by changing and replacing personnel. The creation of a new system of recruitment, advancement and payment was, of course, one of the essential tools as well as goals of the socialist government. The policies were enacted in four different areas: salary, housing, education and titles. The first one to change was the system of salaries and associated financial benefits. As Hélène Carrére d’Encausse (1980) has pointed out, the model in matters concerning salary and other benefits was the Paris commune where blue collar workers received better salaries than public functionaries. In 1917 (Nov. 18th) a decree fixed a ceiling for the salary of managers and officials. Only one room per person was allowed. (Carrére d’Encausse 1980: 18.)

The initial equality was soon replaced, bit by bit, with new orders which created a new system of ranks and advantages connected with them. The starting point in the creation of new reward system was the food-rationing measures which were already used in 1917. Insufficient goods were distributed according to social and utilitarian criteria in which the worker had the first place. Utilitarian needs soon added different types of specialist to the group of favored. Doctors and nurses were granted special food rations in 1919. As the administration needed professionals and competent workers, it was necessary to increase their salary and other incentives. In 1920 blue- and white-collar workers involved in dangerous activities, and non-manual workers with exceptional qualifications received similar rewards. (Carrère d’Encausse 1980:20.) The parallel control principle which created a body of party functionaries contributed to this development.
Rigby has pointed out that “the capacity to reward loyal service by promotion and to reassign ‘awkward’ Communists to less sensitive positions did more than anything else to transform the party itself into a passive instrument of a disciplined officialdom and politically disarm internal party critics of the ruling oligarchy.” In 1920 the CEC instructed that local staff of central government agencies could not be transferred to another area without its approval. Internal transfers inside an administrative area required the approval of its party committee. Junior staff were appointed by the Central Committee Records and Assignment Department, while senior posts were filled by the Secretariat or the Orgburo. Disputes over appointments could be appealed to higher levels. (Rigby 1979: 185.) In Moscow, the party control of appointments in the representational administration and in the soviet began as early as 1918. Here it was decided by the Moscow party committee that all responsible posts in the city and district soviets were to be made with a party committee, and that agendas needed to be pre-examined by the committee (Sakwa 1988: 184).

The centralization raised a great deal of discussion during the first years after the revolution. There was criticism over the interference of the center in local soviet work, as well as about the division of labor which the tsarist specialist were seen to represent. “Bureaucratism” was also discussed in the press which printed accounts of administrative frustration. In Moscow an example was the issuing of travel permits to its inhabitants which required queuing to get needed documents from different departments of the Commission for the Evacuation of Moscow. (Sakwa 1988: 192.)

The case of Moscow is interesting in the sense that in the capital the signs of new state building were most evident. By 1918 there were 84,000 people working in the local offices and by May 1919 the number had increased to 98,000. Office workers made up 31 percent of the employed. The district soviet staff increased simultaneously. The growth of administrative workers meant practical problems in terms of housing, for instance. In 1920 a plan was made to transfer 10,000 of the 200,000 Moscow office workers to Petrograd. (Sakwa 1988: 191–193.) This plan was not realized but it is telling of the side-effects of risk planning.

The administrative workers did not only grow in numbers. Internal differentiation soon began within this large group, both as a modification of the historical rank system and rewards attached to it. The administrative benefit system served to consolidate loyalty through long term incentives.
Hélène Carrère d’Encausse has detected four social groups which had already been formed by the early 1920’s as a result of new elite development. The specialists were openly rewarded because of their socialist status. Party, state and police officials had controlled salaries based on comparative worker salaries but were compensated with distribution of food, housing and transportation. The army had a better than average pay, a good pension system, educational privileges, special stores and housing. The creative intelligentsia could achieve housing, special food rations, travel opportunities and prizes, along with substantial sums of money. (Carrère d’Encausse 1980: 23.)

In the 30’s a hierarchy of labor emerged in which bonuses were granted to particular factories to reward efficiency, output or savings. The highest paid received the largest bonuses. In the administrative spheres, a web of closed stores was established which multiplied and diversified with the growth of the bureaucracy. In some cases these stores were truly secret benefits whose location was known only to the those with permits to use them. At other time, ordinary shops had a special counter in which orders could be placed by the privileged without having to queue. In 1930, a new type of store was created, a foreign currency store which also served those who had access to traveling and foreign contacts. For political functionaries, a type of bonus system was also developed in the form of envelopes of money from the 20’s on. This enabled them to shop in Soviet luxury stores which were outside the rationing system. (Carrère d’Encausse 1980: 30–31.)

Housing was another source of differentiation in the social system of the society. The rents of the privileged (army, police, state and party officials) were equal or lower than those of the workers even though these groups had private apartments. The workers on the other hand lived often in kommunalkas where they had one private room and shared kitchen and toilet facilities with other inhabitants. From 1932 on, free lodging was granted to those who had given the state exceptional service. (Carrère d’Encausse 1980: 33.)

The third aspect of rewarding citizens was access to education. In 1918 a decree proclaimed the right to general education and firstly set a quota system to advance admission of workers to their own institutions (Rabfak – a preparatory course leading to higher education) while entering university level education was made difficult for other elements of society. Soon it became apparent that education was an essential privilege for those who were
politically most reliable and suitable for general public work. In the 20’s a system of quotas gave party organizations, the Komsomol and the unions the right to advance their members’ higher education. In 1926, the children of the so called creative intelligentsia (academicians, writers, artists, lawyers, doctors, researchers and so on) were given a quota of places in the universities of the Russian Federal Republic. (Carrère d’ Encausse 1980: 25.)

In addition to these elements of rewards, a fourth one, more symbolic but at the same time closely connected with the previously mentioned ones, was formed. This was the creation of socialist titles which replaced the tsarist symbols and ranks. The first of such titles was the Hero of Labor (1927) which brought to its owner retirement pay, housing and exemption from taxes. A more easily obtained title was the Red Banner of Labor (1928) which gave less concrete benefits and was often awarded to entire factories. In the 1930’s titles of Hero of the Soviet Union, Hero of Socialist Labor to the Order of Lenin and the Red Banner were added. In the army existed the Order of the Red Star. Benefits to these orders were hierarchial and diversified. (Carrère d’ Encausse 1980: 37.)

In his 1936 speech to the 8th Congress of the Soviets, Stalin had touched upon the issue of a working intelligentsia. He described it as having never been a class, but a stratum which recruits its members from peasant and working classes. In addition he stressed that even in case the recruited persons did not have these backgrounds, the intelligentsia would remain a stratum and not a class in the socialist sense of the word. (Stalin 2002.) With this type of a reasoning, the policies which created incentives in forms of privileges were legitimized for not being antagonistic to specific class interests. The political legitimation for administrative action which in fact changed the original revolutionary ideals was thus institutionalized as a part of the discourse of the society. In this discourse, the elite and its leader told the majority how the interpretive context had changed.

The structural changes were mediated by the administration at all levels of the system toward a professionally specialized, politically guided (in parallel as a double administration), socially homogenized, yet very hierarchical system. The hierarchical nature of the system in all its major aspects (economic planning system, leadership, personnel policies, rule making) was a side-effect of the control and effective guidance problem which was central to the political change ideology of administration. The results of this mediation process can be seen in the new culture of administration formed during the institutionalization stage of transition.
4.2.2 Information Gathering, Control, Socialist Law and the Diversification of Institutions

One of the main social goals of the revolution had been to transform the peasant population into either industrial workers or collective farm workers whose production would feed the urban dwellers. The countryside went through a major transformation during the civil war when an earlier influx of towns people, fleeing the hunger and unemployment, entered the countryside disturbing its social traditions and order. Moscow, for instance, had lost 40 percent of its 1917 population by the year 1920. One consequence felt in the rural communities was the break up of the extended family. The younger generation tried to continue farming under the new conditions but the number of failures grew. This prompted a migration to the cities which in the twenties were struggling with housing and employment problems. The migration of former peasants to towns also changed the town social hierarchies. Newcomers living on the outskirts of the towns were inferior to the more urban skilled workers. (Hoffmann 1998: 114–199.) This was the situation into which the new administration needed to be fitted.

In the new administrative ideology, controlling land use and industrialization to modernize the country were connected within administration in two ways. First of all, land was socialized and its use needed to be reorganized for efficiency. This required the controlling of work processes and results. Economical control was highly political work and it required trusted organizers. Second, industrialization meant that a growing group of people were rooted out from the village and provincial town environments in which they had been born and brought into bigger cities in which the condition for their survival needed to be quickly arranged. Third, as money did not have its previous position in the society, the state had to arrange a wide range of services for its citizens. All these developments required efficient administration which was specialized into new areas. These goals had several implications for the development of administrative culture.

Information gathering coincided with the need to control its content in the public. The new language was the language of the collectivization. Socialist writers were required to understand the socialist content of party decisions and the pronouncements of comrade Stalin. The aim of course was to create a manner of speech which was nonthreatening to state authority. (Gorham 2000: 149.) Censorship of any written public writing
was established as a state administrative function in 1922 in the organization of Head administration for literature and publishing (Glavnoe upravlenie po delam literatury i izdatel’stva) (Pietiläinen 1994: 31).

The new Head administration was under the People’s Commissariat of Education and its local organs under the provincial departments of education. The main ideological purpose was to find and stop all agitation against the new state, the revealing of military secrets and to stop the “dissemination of false information” and material having a pornographic character. (Regulations of the Glavlit 1922 in Sakwa 1999: 135.)

For the administration then, a new environment for accumulating, processing and executing information was being created. The chosen policies were most acutely directed to the stabilization of political control. A clash of cultures was not allowed and was to be avoided by the elimination of any signs of acculturation.

The practical needs of the revolution led to a new interpretation of local level democracy. From the early 1920’s on, developing the state took the form of building of an administrative-command system. This was the practical application of soviet-style democracy on the executive side to provide for class economic needs. The main social reason for the need of stricter guidance was the educational and political level of the population and “democracy of meetings”, which both led to an inability to make progress in legislative work and accept party decisions. As was described earlier, the civil war further undermined democracy and lowered the activity of the soviets. Politically, the one party principle which took effect in the early 1920’s, effectively killed the self-government idea which was originally incorporated in them. (Korzikhina 1995:17–18.)

The building of the administrative-command system was connected to a new system of information gathering. This was first used to prevent opposition forces from gaining more power, and then as an organization of routine social, economic and political information gathering upon which strategic political planning was based. The building of this information gathering system started officially in 1921 with an order from the head of the secret police. According to this order all local and county secret police organs were obliged to report on the political developments in their own area. (“Sovershennno sekretno”, Liubianka-Stalin o polozenii v strane, tom 1, chast 1: 40, 2001.)

Essential to the system was that it was given to internal security forces (secret police GPU, then KGB, presently FSB) which set up their own
links to all local communities. The other feature was that this system was parallel but at the same time separate from the developing administrative information procedure, which was a more “open” and routine decision making process in terms of its documentation and reporting. The meaning of political information gathering resided in the fact that it gave the leadership a rather accurate idea about what people thought, i.e. what the sentiments in the provinces in fact were. In this sense, political information gathering replaced open political discourse even within the party as a means to find out what reactions and ideas lay in different parts of the country. “Top secret” (sovershenno sekretno) reports constituted a vital part of policy development which, in this way, also rendered it partially outside the control of official representative organs and even administrative bodies.

The building of an administrative command system resulted in considerable growth of the apparatus itself in terms of new organs during the 20’s and 30’s. This was done in two separate but parallel ways which can be called multiplication and diversification. The first concerned adding the new people’s commissariats (narodnye kommissariaty, narkomaty) and their all-federal structures into the state apparatus by breaking down old structures and building two or three new ones in its place. This development took place most of all in the field of the national economy. The second development concerned the social-cultural administration of the country. In these fields there was a simultaneous effort to centralize previously lower level administrative organs and reduce them to highly specialized but more easily controlled units. The all-union administration of scientific institutions (1926), higher education (1932), health care (1936) and arts (1936), among others, was established during this period. All together 60 different ministerial level all-union organs were established between 1920–1940. (Korzhikhina 1995: 22, 382–417.)

State level development at the early stages of the transition meant building a new governing culture partially based on the old structures. Those commissariats which had a predecessor in the previous system continued at first within their former structures. The new one, such as commissariat of Public Health had to be built from the start. State governing organs of the time could be categorized into four groups:

1. professional industry units (otraslevye) which were government branch agencies of their specific commissariats. Examples were
Forest administration (Commissariat of Agriculture), Sea transportation administration and Railway administration (Commissariat of Transport).

2. functional (furktsional’nye) units which represented a multitude of different organizations. Examples were financial, planning, technical and legal departments.

3. product specific (po vidam produktsii) units, of which examples were Head administrations of Salt and Tea in the Commissariat of Food Supply (BCHX).

4. general management/service (obshchie obsluzhivaiushchie) units which appeared in all government organizations in large numbers. These included for example general administration, statistical and library departments of administrative organizations. (Korzhikhina 1995: 36.)

Typical of the system’s internal logic (i.e. a multilevel structure and narrowly specialized responsibilities) is the example of the Commissariat of Transportation which included the Central administration of rail roads. The central administration had the Department of machinery, which had a department unit of locomotives. Inside of the department unit was the unit’s division of transportation. The republican and local level administrative organs followed the same pattern in their organizational development. (Korzhikhina 1995:37.)

The third development was the functional separation of different bureaucratic fields into political, representational and economical, the latter becoming the core of the administrative system. The local level was obviously affected by these structural changes of the central government. Besides the Cheka, in December 1917 the National Economic Counsil (NEC – Vserossiiskii Soviet Narodnogo Khoziaistva/VSNKh) was established. Its tasks included the preparation of norms and plans for economic life in the country, co-ordination of the local and central regulating organs (committees on fuel, metals, transport, food supply et.c.) and the integration of workers’ control movement into the industry which ensured that the worker organizations which participated in the running of industry exercised their power according to the Sovnarkom policies. The decisions of the new organ were binding on local soviets which were to act as its agents. (CEC Chairman Sverdov and Sovnarkom Chairman Ulianov [Lenin] in 1917 in McAuley 1975: 231, Rigby 1979: 50–51.)
The economic administration was first organized according to a regional principle in which the National Economic Council headed a structure of different regional and local economic councils. The majority of enterprises were subordinated to the local organs. The need to have more sectoral coordination led to a creation of trusts between enterprises of the same field. When the meaning of the trusts formed by big and centrally led enterprises grew, the need for sectoral administration inside the economics administration grew. The economic people´s commissariats, created from 1932 on, institutionalized this change. (Tolonen 1976: 339–340.)

The criticism within the various socialist factions during these processes was mostly directed to the developing system´s own defects and not towards the culture of the past. Power was seen to have moved too far from the local soviets to the center which gave birth to conflicts between the soviets and the commissariats. The answer was the intensification of party control. An important practical tool for both growing party guidance and mobilization of citizens in state affairs was the People´s Commissariat of State Control (\textit{Goskontrol´}) which had been established in 1918. It was a reformed former Tsarist office of State Control. In the city of Moscow, a city department of state control was formed in the same year by the presidium of the city Soviet. The inspection was carried out mainly through the city district soviets which had traditionally good links with the factories. The worker inspection was meant to be a way to combat bureaucratism. (Sakwa 1988: 196–197.) It was meant to reduce the actual power of officialdom in work places by exposing it to outside examination and popular will. At the same time the intention was to secure the grass roots influence of the party.

Stalin as the commissar for the Goskontrol, drew up plans to involve more public participation in the ministry´s work in 1919. Yet concerns about a possible opposition being born in the work place inspection structures partially led to a reorganization of worker control in 1920. Control organs were integrated into a People´s Commissariat of Workers´ and Peasants´ Inspection (\textit{Rabkrin}). The worker inspection members were to be elected and local Rabkrin departments were to be formed under the city district \textit{(raion)} soviets and subordinate to the soviet. Its duty was to investigate all administrative and economic bodies at the local level, with the exception of the Cheka. Most inspectors were workers and the Rabkrin structure was a way of advancement into state and party bodies for many. In this way, as Richard Sakwa has pointed out, the battle
against bureaucratism was eclipsed by the very need to staff the inspection bureaucracy itself. (Sakwa 1988: 198–199.)

From mid 20’s on the idea of control within the administrative command system was implemented in the major growth of the executive side of state apparatus (note, for example, the growth of the CEC apparatus described earlier in chapter 4.2.1), particularly that part concerned with the compulsory administration: People’s Commissariat of Internal Affairs (Narodnyi Komissariat Vnutrennikh Del – NKVD), different types of control organizations (financial, health, planning and so on). All these control organizations were centralized and operated throughout the Soviet Union, independent of the soviets. Administrative control was carried out by the People’s Committee of Internal Affairs of the Soviet Union, established in 1934. (Korzhihina 1995: 22–23.)

The second reaction by the Bolshevik government to the risks of resistance and inefficiency was the creation of “security-political control” organizations to strengthen Bolshevik hold of the country. The structure, which combined both in the beginning of the transition period, was the Military-Revolutionary Committee (MRC – Voenno-revoliutsionnyi komitet) which had captured power in the capital. It can be described as a government inside the new government because of its wide role in the control and guidance of the new Soviet administration. (Rigby 1979: 14.)

The Military-Revolutionary Committee was important to the creation of the Soviet administration culture because it represented a political control organization operating outside of the legally authoritative main structures. In this sense it was the first formation of power through which the later developed principle of party/administration union emerged. As Rigby has documented, it contained of groups of commissars and representatives of other institutions whose first problem was to win authority from the minority socialists in the Central Executive Committee and secure the loyalty of supporters to its own instructions. Military and other power connections were used to ensure that the commands of the MRC were listened to. In principle the commissars of the MRC were supposed to stay out of the jurisdiction of the ministries. In reality though, the MRC gave them instruction about countering sabotage and the recruitment of personnel. (Rigby 1979: 15–16.)

The MRC was also involved in more general management of the country since it took part in the distribution of fuel, winter footwear and clothing. An important part of its role was the control of the press by supervising
their writing and taking necessary action. In Petrograd the MRC involved itself in local government decision making by, for example, issuing permits to live in the capital and travel by train. (Rigby 1979: 17.)

Lenin had supported an idea in which local decision making served in the role of a voluntary supporter of the unity of the state. Administrative unity quickly replaced this goal. Lenin quotes Engels who thought that perfect local self-government happens through administrators who are elected in a general election and this meant the abolishment of all state appointed local and county positions. (Lenin 1968, 197.) As previously mentioned, the Soviets at the local level were in fact very active in different matters at first, without even waiting for instructions from the central government. Only foreign affairs were beyond their decision making. (Hazard 1968: 100–101.) An important example is that of the military-revolutionary committees set up in provincial towns and administrative districts. These were important for the creation of stronger Bolshevik presence in the provinces. The example which the Petrograd MRC set was important for the inspiration and coordination of these bodies. (Rigby 1979: 17.)

For the lower level, a major concern was that of the demands from above, which were non-specific and ideological. Their practical fulfillment was left open, since purposes themselves were more important for the leadership than translation to procedures. (Gill 1990: 37.) The improvisation, structural fluidity and ad hoc adaptation to different situations by the MRC bodies led to new organizational risks. When the more established governmental organizations started to work in a more organized and efficient manner, parallel organization and duplication in decision making also began to raise criticism. The structures of Military-revolutionary committees were abolished on December 5th, 1917. (Rigby 1979: 20–21.)

The remaining acute problems of possible counter-revolution and resistance opened the door to Dzerzhinskii’s proposal for a special organ concentrating on combating counter-revolution. A result was the birth of the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission for Combating Counter-Revolution, Speculation and Sabotage (the VeCheka/ Vserossiiskaia Chrezvychainaia Komissiia po Bor’be s Kontr-revoliutsiei, Spekuliatsiei i Sabotazhem). The Military-Revolutionary Committees had served their role which Rigby has defined as “a structural coupling device linking two successive political systems”. (Rigby 1979: 20–21.)

The duties of the VeCheka were impressive. It had to investigate and nullify all possible counter-revolutionary acts and attempt of sabotage,
conduct preliminary investigations and bring the suspects to Revolutionary Tribunals. The Commission was divided into sections of information, organization of work, and fighting. Practical measures which were dictated by Lenin in his order, included publication of the names of the enemies of the people, confiscation of cards and imprisonment. (Lenin 1917 in McAuley 1979: 182.)

The VeCheka became a controlling organ over the local Chekas which for instance in Moscow was divided into district Chekas. An institutional border was being erected when the Moscow city Cheka was instructed to concentrate on the battle within organizations, against bribery, banditry and other economic crimes. The revolutionary tribunals took over the counter-revolutionary work and sentencing of people. (Sakwa 1988: 172–173.)

The institutionalization of counter-revolutionary measures in the Cheka soon led to a Sovnarkom decision to use terror as a governing policy. People’s Commissar of Justice Kursky gave an order in 1918 in which concentration camps, executions of White Guard members and other adversaries and publication of names were to be used. As a result, the number of arrested persons in the same year was 47,348, and 80,662 the following year. Between 1918–1919, 42% of all arrested persons were freed without consequence, nearly 11% were sent to forced labor, 28% to prisons and nearly 8% to concentration camps. Between 1918–1919, 7,068 persons were executed for counter-revolution, 632 for crime of office, 217 for speculation and 1,204 for crime. (People’s Commissar of Justice Kursky 1918 and Cheka weekly bulletin 1920 in McAuley 1979: 186–187.)

In the early developments, the bureaucratization of the party work (i.e. the need to involve and infiltrate the administration to make it work for the new purposes), institutionalization of the new political order inside the old structures (i.e. changes in personnel and decision making style) and control of risks (i.e. resistance by political opponents, counter-revolutionary plans) involved in the transition, all came together. The Cheka in this sense can be seen as a side-effect of the revolution itself. It can be understood as inevitable in the conditions of civil war, yet its creation was also a political child of the transitional MRC.

The growing system required reliance on inspection as a method of control. Inspection required a network of personal agents, instructors and caretakers. They were used as a source of authority in different parts of the country in the solving of practical problems. This was a practice adopted by the Bolshevik government as an inheritance from tsarist times. In the
Ministry of Interior organization, a special cadre of volunteers worked on the organization of political leadership for the new local institutions.

New Economic Policy (NEP) replaced the early policies on law and economics. The testing ground for the practical implementation of the ideology came in the form of the first five year plan which was formally adopted in 1929. The main feature of planning and government policy became speed. The targets of the first five year plan affected system building by setting limits too high. Labor productivity, costs and yields had ambitious targets if the national income was to be sharply increased. The planners were at the same time under high political pressure, fearing punitive measures, if they did not comply with the idealistic goals. Bukharin, Rykov and Tomsky were examples of names who dared to openly criticize the ambitious version and personally suggested a more modest plan along with a two-year plan for agriculture. (Lewin 1995: 95–99.)

The first five year plan coincided with the development of Stalinist leadership. Stalin’s ideas of slowly reforming the peasantry, its psychology and production in the spirit of collectivism which was for him a prerequisite for the destruction of classes, were in line with the Leninist ideals of contra-individualism. Four issues come together in 1928 in his writings about industrialization of the country and the right wing within the Communist party: contra-individualism, legal relativism, the grain problem and rapid technological evolution of the whole society. Neither any of these issues alone, nor the general governing logic developing in connection with them, can be understood without considering them together in the context used by Stalin in his pronounced political goal. Instead of a separate policy on any particular issue, the governing logic linked ideas together in a seemingly inescapable manner. The basic cultural tendency behind the rationalization is heavily concentrated on power and on the force needed to secure it. This is often done without the explicit referral to either of the elements. The rationalization used by Stalin in his writing about the situation of agriculture offers a prime example of this logic.

At the level of state building the major change took place when the administration turned from acting as the keeper of order to that of total economical provider with no alternatives. For the relationship with the citizens this meant that control took on a different type of form. While the Tsar’s administration could be characterized as taking the form of local police, the new local administration took the form of economic controller/provider, a role which was secured by political inspection. The Soviet
administration at the local level in this sense, took on a role of all powerful decision maker from whom there was no escape. Escape would have meant exclusion from society.

The practical relationship of political decision making and law had been in development since the early days of the revolution. The speech which Stalin gave in 1936 can be seen as the culmination of a process of legitimation of political decision making and administrative action on legal grounds. Administration and law were used as instruments of education and elimination of opposition in several ways. Ideologically, melting together the concept of class struggle and state building through their relationship with law was paramount. Law as an independent area of state lost this meaning. Legal rhetoric was instead used in the building of dictatorship.

Originally, the first issue concerning law were connected with property rights. In Lenin’s view it was not possible to see that people, immediately on being freed from capitalism, would learn to work for the society without any legal norms. Moreover, this was not even economically possible. In this situation the capitalist norms would not have been replaced and the state would continue to be needed as a protector of socialized property ownership which guaranteed equality in work and in the distribution of products. Before the higher stage of communist society could be reached, the strictest kind of control of work and consumption from the part of society and state were needed. It was important that this control should be executed by the armed workers’ state and not by a state of civil servants. (Lenin 1968: 213–215.)

Firstly, the early state building brought along the use of provisional order organizations both at the central and municipal levels. Some had been paramilitary organizations for revolution, others helped the local government in practical political-economic tasks such as confiscation of surplus from private farmers. Others still participated in civil war in aid of the military. Among these organizations, was a practice of naming authorities and commissars of central organs with provisional powers for special and temporary tasks. For the specific purpose of strengthening the Soviet power, these authorities acted in place of ordinary, constitutionally based organizations. (Korzhikhina 1995:38.)

In practice this led to the decree of Court in 1917 which abruptly proclaimed the end of courts, the prosecutor’s offices and the advocacy and the installment of a new organization of revolutionary justice (Bowring 2000). The first years of this experimentation meant the coexistence of old
laws and revolutionary lawyers with new decrees and institutions. The decisions reached at the courts and tribunals were dependent on the arbitrary “revolutionary legal consciousness” when laws did not exist, otherwise they were politically incorrect or in conflict with each other. This period of legal nihilism led to the factual breakdown of the legal system.

The new legal policy was connected to localism through the establishment of a system for settling disputes without state intervention in cases of no larger danger to the community. The organization in which the idea was to be tested was the People’s Court (Act of 1918) which tried all other cases except political ones. The selection of judges was made from a list of nominees prepared by the city executive committees, and confirmed by a general meeting of the borough soviet. In villages, nominations were made by executive committees of village soviets and actual selection by the higher county soviet executive committee. Important for the legal culture was the denial of professional advocacy as an inalienable right of the individual. Particularly harmful for the protection of individual rights was the possibility of denying the presence of attorney in preliminary investigations if the court felt that his presence might hinder the finding of true facts. (Hazard 1960: 9, 51.)

Secondly, moral and legal relativism was, in this practical measure, equated with the principle of dialecticism which meant looking at practical choices in terms of the conditions set by time and place. The connection between the developments in the rural Russia and in theoretical and practical formulations of Soviet law in the 20’s can be drawn between the reasons Stalin, in the same July 1928 writing, gave to the use of the so called “special measures” which had been used to forcibly collect grain from the countryside. Stalin’s dialectical reasoning was based on the huge deficiency in the grain stocks which would have resulted in serious national economic crisis, hunger in the army and in the cities. In Stalin’s assessment, the Bolshevik government could neither use market manipulation to bring down the “kulak’s prices”, nor did it have the foreign currency reserves needed to buy grain from outside. Both situations might have prevented the repressive measures which – expressly underlined by Stalin – should be avoided in the future by taking care of the principle issues. (Stalin 1951: 191–192.)

The combination of decentralized legislative authority and growing centralization of political power – which legitimized random use of coercive force against the population – led to the erosion of trust between state and
citizenry. Most poignantly it effected the justice system – which in
democratic societies is the last independent control against administrative
power. This control ceased to exist. The status of a law was also quite prone
to bureau regulations and even party decisions (from the Politburo to
regional committees). It was thus impossible to talk about the priority of
laws in such a flood of different types of legislative acts. (Korzhikhina
1995: 1.)

The political needs of the leadership in directing social development led
to the internal war against elements inside society which were considered
detrimental to the success of revolution. As a result, legal procedures were
 politicized and norms simplified. Eugene Huskey has named the period
from 1928–1932 “naked instrumentalism” in which law was embraced
when it was needed in the campaigns of collectivization, industrialization
or social re-education. When law was not in line with the leadership’s goals,
it was eliminated. In the administration this led to confusion in which
officials looked for political signals and used revolutionary instincts in place
of legal norms. (Huskey 1992.)

The collectivization of agriculture began in 1929. The implication of this
was the brutal dispossession of peasants as an administrative process. The
26 million productive household units which had existed in 1929 were
replaced with 235,000 collective farms by 1937. This enabled the feeding of
towns where the new working class was growing on the surplus derived
from the changed structures. More importantly, the violence crushed any
possible criticism and counter-revolutionary activity in the vast countryside.
Power was established in the urban centers where the population rose from
28.1 million in 1929 to 63.1 million in 1940. Terror was used not as tool of
social change but as a deliberate method of governance. (Lane 1996: 41.)

The Supreme Court of Russian Federation of Soviet Socialist Republics
was created in 1922 by the Decree “On the Judicial System”. This was
followed by the adoption of Civil and Criminal codes. People’s judges were
elected and could be dismissed by the local authorities. (Bowring 2000 :72.)
By the mid-1930’s the restoration of legal structures was taking place and a
1932 decree on revolutionary legality was passed. It was symptomatic of the
structural weakness which had appeared in the devolution of legal order
and decision making. There was a need to fight localism and departmentalism
in favor of central control. The state again had an interest in using the law
as a consolidation of its authority both at home and abroad. Theoretically,
law in the state building process received new meaning in the ideas of
A. Vyshinski, who saw the effective use and perfection of capitalist science and culture (including law) as responsibilities. (Huskey 1992.)

The development of the role and functions of the prosecutor’s office is telling of the structuration process which took place in one organization between 1917 and the end of the 1930’s. The prosecutor’s office was first abolished in 1917 and its functions were replaced with the earlier mentioned new legal organizations. By 1922 the Bolshevik government had decided to re-establish the prosecutor’s office and it was given wide authority besides purely prosecutorial functions. The prosecutor’s office was made independent of local and regional authorities and it was to supervise administration and citizenry. In 1928 the prosecutor’s office took care of an impressive list of matters: the review and appeal of civil and criminal cases, the supervision of prisons, prisoner complaints, parole and release, supervision of the police and secret police, juvenile commissions and of the courts. In addition, the prosecutor’s office supervised the administration’s work and enterprises at all levels. In the 1930’s this list was supplemented with the task of investigating the execution of party policies which preceded its involvement in the repression which commenced at the close of the 1930’s. (Smith 1997: 350.)

The courts were made subordinate to administrative-party organs and many questions continued to be decided outside of the court system. During the peak of the repression period, the three institution collective (the so called troek) made up of the first secretary of the party committee in question, the head of the state security organ NKVD and the prosecutor’s office, was used to enact rulings, including capital punishment. (Sungurov 1998: 73.)

One of the most interesting aspects of the work of the prosecutor’s office was its involvement in the economic decision making within the administrative market. As a supervisor of legality it took part in matters which were purely organizational such as advising factories about production or farms about grain harvest. (Smith 1997: 350.) The work of the prosecutor’s office, in other words, extended far beyond legal matters alone or what might be seen as the boundaries of the legal profession. Also the triple role of a participant in both investigation and prosecution while at the same time supervising the courts, made the prosecutor’s office the heart of the legal culture and a powerful influence in the administrative market.

The mediation of ongoing political and economic changes in the country were formalized in the Constitution of 1936. The report of Stalin to the 8th Congress of the Soviets in November the same year gives an idea of how the
fundamental law was to be viewed in the Soviet Union as a basis of administrative state building. Stalin brought up two issues.

Firstly, the transitional character of the state was emphasized by the statement that the fundamental law was a proclamation of those things which (according to the leadership) had already been achieved, not a program which was to set the goals for the future. Stalin underlined that the qualities of a future state of full communism could not be included in the fundamental law, only those features of the society which had materially been changed. Secondly, he stated that the Constitution was not a code of laws and does not preclude routine legislative work on the part of the legislative bodies. (Stalin 2002.) This formulation for the meaning of the Constitution is interesting for the development of legal thinking in the Soviet Union. As law itself was transitional, and its application instrumental, there could be no fixed legal standards for the assessment of future developments. As the Constitution was to be seen as a proclamation of already achieved changes and not a document enlisting basic principles of the society, then it could not be directly used as a standard for future development. The main use became a comparison of future developments with the already documented changes to check whether the state had kept its proclaimed standards.

During the reign of Stalin, the interpretive lens through which the Constitution could be read was institutionalized via various legal, administrative and political methods. The most striking case is the freedoms of citizens which are listed in the articles 124–126 of the Constitution. Formally, from the point of view of the political change ideology, the interpretive context meant most of all the class based interest analysis of all situations. In practice, according to the Constitution, “the interest of the working people” were represented by the highest political organs in accordance with the idea of a centralized democracy. Article 49 stated that the presidium of the Supreme Soviet, which had exclusive legislative power, interpreted the laws of the USSR in operation. This right was compounded by the double hierarchy of the party system, the actual relationship of which with state organs was not stated in the Constitution. The only mention of the one party system was in article 141 which stated the Communist party as the only party organization allowed to nominate candidates in elections. (1936 Constitution of the USSR.)

Moreover, democratic liberties were seen as being guaranteed with the economic rights of the majority of people. According to the political change
ideology, democracy was in essence the material resources given to people by the state. This meant at the formal and practical level a new relationship between the administration and the administered. The concept of law was a fundamental element in this change. It legitimized the idea of administration as an economy serving the needs of the peasantry (and workers) as a class. The concept of individual rights as something inalienable to their holders did not belong to this thinking.

From the administration’s perspective, repression served at least two purposes in the development of state building. First, it was legitimized by the intention to speed up the colossal demographic and economic changes needed for modernization and socialist economy. The internal migration moved former peasants to towns and cities, bringing with them new social requirements. This transition of social life also exposed them to other factors important to the new state building project: symbolics and propaganda. (Makarenko 1989: 128.)

Second, repression was meant to create an atmosphere of monopoly over ideological interpretation. This monopoly was held by the party and then by Stalin himself. Looking at the transition from a party held monopoly to a one man dictatorship offers a chance to understand some elements of the Soviet administrative culture of the time.

Repression of the party elite began with the assassination of Kirov, after which the two major cities of Moscow and Leningrad became the targets of the “cleaning” of party hierarchies. The most extensive terror was used in 1937. Public court sessions began to be used as a means of removing political opponents for educational purposes. (Makarenko 1989: 232.)

The state imposed terror on party members was carried out by the prosecutors’ investigators who had free hands in the methods used against those suspected. Repression was organized according to plans in which control numbers were given to oblast and lower level executive committees. The identification of those who became suspected and accused was generally random and the system had an internal disloyalty in which there was no guarantee of anyone’s personal safety. (Makarenko 1989: 233–234.)

Repression served state building by making the ideology of administrative change non-political. Through the massive intimidation of party members, opposition and independent political activity became impossible. The party as a platform for the growth of democratic culture in the new society was ruined. Its members became alienated from each other in a meaningful political sense, which served their integration into the state machinery. At
the same time, Stalin himself remained officially the head of the party, and not the state apparatus. Legitimation of the regime was possible since the political ideology, as the only source of authority and now interpreted by one man, became concentrated on crushing the opposition and strengthening the leader’s power.

4.3 The Administrative Culture in the 1930’s: Political Totalitarianism in All-State Planning of Local Administration

Three processes can be discerned in the revolutionary administrative transition from the point of view of the local administration. First, the organizational-bureaucratic process (“rational reasons”) in which demands arising from objective tasks guided the building of new structures. The main objective reason was the vastness of the country which required a big administration to replace the market economy in providing services for the population. This meant both specialization and centralization at the same time. New hierarchies were needed to implement administrative policies across the country.

Second, the political-ideological process (“irrational reasons”) in which power concerns produced different types of control and repression mechanisms. Lenin’s socialism was both vague organizationally and strict in terms of political control. In reality, the separation between the “rational” organizational-bureaucratic and the “irrational” political-ideological processes is artificial. Some of the organizational-bureaucratic choices were in fact made according to control needs which were at least partially political. Risks were mostly created because at the bottom of the thinking was a deep suspicion of any spontaneous political or social decision making which would have led to undesirable administrative developments.

The third process could be a called historical-authority process. In Russia, officialdom had come from the throne which was represented by the central government. Federalist ambitions or traditions did not exist since Russia had been a monolithic state (comp. Rowney 1989: 77). Logically, forcing order violently on people was justified. Trust which is central to a rule of law state, was secondary to the interests of the new transitional socialist
state. Authority continued to be personal and dictatorial. Final authority – even at local level – was above and beyond the law.

Separating these processes helps to understand the erosion of the meaning of local soviets and the worker-peasant activism which took place quite soon after the initial structural arrangements. As has been shown in this work earlier, the local level presented both a possibility and a huge risk for the new Soviet leadership. Local activism was first needed to spread the revolution to the provinces, but soon it also needed to be guided in an effective manner to control these same geographical areas.

The ideological purposes of administrative change were channelled through three avenues. First of these had to do with the changes of the administrative market as a result of new decision making hierarchies. This development included changes aimed at creating uniform command structures for implementation and information gathering. The second development had to do with the personnel’s educational background, general preparedness and consolidation of loyalty. The third was the institutionalization of Soviet legal culture. In this development there were changes which used administration and law as instruments for education and elimination of the opposition, and changes in legal principles and with organizational models underlining control, accountability and discipline.

These developments together resulted in the integration of the party, executive administration and economical institutions. A result was the bureaucratization of political thinking (comp. Makarenko 1989) in which both the “irrational” and “rational” came together. Makarenko has shown that in Stalin´s reign this psychology meant that any policy was taken as the action of the highest leadership and not as a result of objective factors or tendencies and relations in the society (Makarenko 1989: 84, 88). But the bureaucratic thinking was also “rational” as a result of the sheer need for effective leadership and execution of orders. Sakwa (1988) has contended that the original ideology of Lenin meant a commune state through which the workers (in other words the soviets) could control elements of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Bureaucratization, however, meant that political power was in the party apparatus, the military-economic system was separated from the soviets, and laws fractured the soviets internally. (Sakwa 1988: 165.)

Changes in the structures meant the organization of administrative work on a territorial basis. Inside territories a unified structure of decision making hierarchy was built in all areas of the new state. A parallel control organization
was created in which the administrative market at the local level was divided into political-administrative (soviet-administration) and party structures. The local administrative structures were, in time, multiplied and diversified through the growth of the sectoral/ministerial administration which had its own local agencies. Institutionally this created a complicated local system in which the party’s political dominance was intensified.

The economy changed from developing town trade to a system of total economy. The administration did not exist as a part of the state but encompassed it. The transitional state was not an arbitrator of different social and economic interests or mere provider of order. It became the economy by sucking in all functions which had earlier been provided by individuals and organizations in capitalist markets. Because the socialist government emphasized economic growth, “non-political” led to the concentration on numbers as goals. Meeting the requirements of existing plans and making higher quantity plans became the primary goal of administrative initiatives. In this sense, the goals and tasks of administration went through a major change. A by-product was the lack of concentration on service itself. The client remained unimportant with neither legal nor practical protection.

Economic planning and the role of the local level administration became legally connected through property rights. Harold Berman has shown that property rights existed not so much to protect ownership but to protect and direct the administration of the property on behalf of the socialist economy. Administration in this sense was less than full ownership but more than the giving of orders. (Berman 1963.) The administration channelled economic control positions which became the venue for receiving rights in the society.

At the same time, economic decisions needed to be supervised closely by the party structures. The party both guided and made the final decision in the administrative market. For this, a double bureaucratic organization was needed. Double bureaucracy became connected with the concept of Soviet democratism.

The double bureaucratic structure which the Soviet system created was a clear change from anything that had existed in the old tsarist administrative culture. It was mainly directed to enabling the guidance of a total economy in which the administration served as the society. The party took the role of political and practical decision making at all levels of hierarchy. The soviets and the town executive committees were de-politicized in this manner.
Because of the one-party parallel decision making, the political specialists became strong and weakened other platforms for political decision making.

The structural changes led to new external relations. If in the tsarist system the town administrations had consisted of the town people representing different occupational groups, the most important external relationship was now that with the party representatives. Formally the party included in itself different types of occupational and social groups, but the distinctions could only be technical matters involving “pure” (non-political, non-economical) organizational facts. This, in fact, is reminiscent of the “non-political” mandate of the tsarist town governments. Actual policy remained outside the decision making at the lowest level.

Relations between the citizenry and administrators changed. The politically controlled and legally alternating decision making meant transferring those individual client rights which had began to develop in the tsarist culture to Bolshevik organizations. Formally, all organizations and individuals were meant to have a same identity of interest. The individual in this process was dependent on the changing policies of authorities whose actions were not based on reliable law. The tradition of resignation of the population before the powerful administration (shielded and used by the party, the new elite) and distrust of the courts, continued without interruption after the revolution.

Initially, avoiding a closed, hierarchical and elite-run administration was one of the key issues of state building for Lenin. “Bureaucratic” became one of those concepts which were attached to the old administration which represented a vaguely defined combination of titles, ranks, privileges and cultural distance to the ordinary people. Rowney (1989) points out how the link to the new culture was done by filling the vacant posts mainly from people of the lower classes who began to assume new roles in office work. The revolutionary administration was in this sense at once both old and new. (Rowney 1989: 12.) The change was not easy for those having for the first time real decision making power, yet were being politically guided by a warring party.

The most striking case of mediation took place in the field of law. Berman describes Lenin’s thinking as being in line with the traditional European legal positivism which considers all laws to be commands of sovereign power. As a continuation of this cultural element, Lenin built an idea of socialist government which gave orders and punishments in the interest of
the majority – the proletariat which it represented. (Berman 1963: 25.) The legitimation of political decision making and administrative action with law created the authority of the dictatorship. This logic of legal culture was descriptive of the state-individual dichotomy of the new order. Where estates had previously regulated the possibilities for individuals, the new social culture of socialist communality saw the individual as secondary to the social interests of the organization. The position of lawyers had changed from independent practitioners to “assistants of judges”. A lawyer’s interests should have been fully subordinated to the state policy in whatever way was necessary. The same relationship was to be extended to other purely administrative bodies which also settled different types of disputes. (Hazard 1960: 46.)

Administrative rules and commands replaced civil law, and citizens in growing numbers sought help in bureaucratic agencies instead of courts. In a risk society, the army and secret police dominated criminal law. Special revolutionary tribunals handled crimes against the new state and its property on the basis of individual qualities of cases and by the earlier mentioned revolutionary consciousness. Defendant’s rights were nearly eliminated by the end of 1919. Culturally the revolution had achieved a form of legal anarchy dominated by the secret police. (Huskey 1992: 24–25, Berman 1963: 31.)

In the transition process, law was used to change the economic system, which replaced capitalist law concepts of ownership. Legal nihilism of street corner justice was replaced by analysis of appropriate legal theories which would support economic relations. Dictatorship was, however, a side-effect of not only the legal thinking of the early days. It was also a result of the party bureaucratization process which changed the commune state (comp. Sakwa 1988) to a one-party administrative system. In this sense, the tsarist practice of autocratic power above the law was continued in the Bolshevik administration.

Even as law was used to sustain the state, this relationship was in fact rather weak from the point of view of the structuration process. The reason for this was the role of the party which was above law and inside the state as an inalienable organism affecting everything. The party had first broken the connection of law and state with legal nihilism and repression which was administrative and “illegal” at the same time. Then it had rebuilt the connection by positivist legalism in which the letter of the law was interpreted in a mechanistic manner. Civil law concentrated on new
economic relations. Legal reform and political administrative goals became inseparable.

Emergency regulation was used in consolidation of the command-economic system. It included a collection of principles and methods of governance based on massive repression which were both court ordered and extralegal. The state of emergency became “a way of life” the main justification for which was the need for rapid industrialization. The state of emergency was created through the use of politically and economically motivated legislative interpretation in administrative decision making. The peak of the legislation particularly favorable to arbitrary and repressive decision making was 1930–1932. In that period party decisions were made concerning the collectivization and liquidation of farm owner peasants. Included were also the decrees of the Central committee about general farming tax (1930) and the taxation of farm owning peasants (1930). In 1932, the Criminal code was changed to include harsher punishments for crimes which were considered risks to economic development. The term “enemy of people” appeared, and the development culminated in the 1934 Central committee law on terrorist acts. The inquiry into such crimes could not proceed longer than 10 days, the hearing was conducted without the parties present, all rights of appeal and petitions for clemency were denied and sentences were carried out immediately. (Korzikhina 1995: 19–20.)

These developments meant transferring those individual client rights which had began to develop in the tsarist culture to the new Soviet institutions. The individual in this process was dependent on the policies of authorities whose actions were not based on reliable law. The resignation of the population before the administration (now shielded and used by the party, the new elite) and distrust of the courts became fixed.

From the point of view of the rule of law, the soviet legal tradition created different norms of selective implementation and formalism. This formalism was born as a side-effect of the state-society relationship in which final mediators were not independent legal institutions. Law had lost its authority over the party which was beyond legal control. In this way the previous situation where the law depended upon the ruler’s personal discretion continued. Before the revolution this personal legality had been delegated to the appropriate local officials of the Tsar. In the Soviet system personal (dictatorial) legality was delegated to the party officials. This cannot, however, be considered a failure of the legal reform since its aims were the opposite of the liberal-democratic ideal, which stresses the separation of
powers. The devolution of law into an instrument of both administrative mechanism and political control supported the creation of a state which represented the society.

Law was a secondary tool for the maintenance of social order. The primary tool was repression and the threat of it. The law did not exist, as such, in the same way that freedom was not possible on an individual basis outside the needs of the revolution. There was no moral foundation for law which would have been above the state’s needs. Law served the primary, “spiritual” tool for state building which occurred in the bureaucratization of the party. The party’s legitimation came from the revolutionary texts where it had been given the status of an advance of socialist development toward communism. In this sense it was quite understandable that courts were used as a means of political control. This was compounded by the fact that the prosecutor’s office which investigated, prosecuted and generally supervised the administrative decision making, including economical matters, also guided the courts. The prosecutor’s office in this manner became more than just the heart of the legal system. Its authority was extended to political-organizational matters to help steer the country into rapid economical growth.

The party could not rely on open parliamentary legislative processes. Instead, a vanguard of “elders” protected the inheritance (i.e. the communist future) of the population. Coerciveness for the good of the society took the place of democratic legitimation. Administration needed personnel willing to adopt limited but still critical official roles for the legitimation of the new structures. For this reason, liberal personnel policies were not possible. At an organizational level, seniority and authority which had been the cornerstones of tsarist administration were no longer connected to each other (see Rowney 1989: 29). New types of recruitment, advancement and reward policies were required. During the Stalin era, fragility of positions and upward mobility became central to the administrative culture. New avenues opened up to loyal persons. At the same time, democratic political control of personnel policies was not possible, as rules depended on the supreme authority.

Recruiting people from previously excluded groups into the decision making apparatus was not the same as the decentralization of actual information gathering. Lenin wanted citizens to take turns at local offices but he wanted the central government to decide the principles on which tasks rested. In transition civil servants from the old system were needed
even though Lenin tried to replace them as fast as new personnel could be trained. Transition happened most thoroughly in the exchange of power positions and role of different social classes inside the Russian society. (Hazard 196: 98–99, Rowney 1989: 12.) A new “suitable background” appeared and those with wrong credentials saw their world and their possibilities to function in the new society disappear. At the same time, though, a large number of persons of worker and peasant origin were raised to leading posts (Edeen 1960: 284).

Repression was used as an administrative method for the consolidation of political order in three waves: 1929–1933 during which “a revolution from above” was implemented in order to destroy the kulak society; 1937–1938 when an attempt to destroy all possible opposition to Stalin’s personal power was in motion; and in the 1940’s and 1950’s when the administrative-command system was consolidated in the administrative culture of the state. (Korzikhina 1995: 21.) Terror was not a side method of propaganda and discipline gone over board, it was a method of state building. But it can be considered as a side-effect of administrative control needs.

Stalinism was the culmination of the bureaucratic and political control tendencies inside the administration. In Stalinism, political dictatorship was transformed into a bureaucratic culture in which a general obligation to inform, categories of enemies, harmful behavior against the state and a de-politicized party decision making process were consolidated as the ground “rules” which guided policy more than objective statements in laws. A side-effect was the substitution of open social discussion with secrecy. It is debatable whether the transition failed in its original purposes in this sense or not. The romantic view of grass roots activism was already disregarded by Lenin. However, the worst sides of tsarist bureaucratism, which was the object of criticism by the Bolsheviks, was not eradicated by the transition.

Stalin’s administrative policy was not arbitrary in its political justification for the use of repression in state building. There was no principle objection to either the use of these methods, nor on the avoidance of their use. Special measures according to Stalin could and should be used in conditions when there “are no other useful means to maneuver. Special measures are needless and harmful in other conditions, in which we have other, flexible actions for maneuvers in the markets.” (Stalin 1951.) In addition Stalin used Lenin’s writing which had underlined the need to protect the poorest section of the peasantry against its enemies with practicality instead of general phrases.
Stalin’s reasoning can be connected with the “elastic organization” concept developed by Lenin in the revolutionary years. The removal of the means of production from the owner class into the hands of the state which represented the society was not the same as equality. In Lenin’s assessment the capitalist society’s equal justice meant the use of the same measurements for different types of people who were not equal or similar in their needs. Problems of distribution and justice would also appear in the beginning of the communist state as long as distribution was based on work. (Stalin 1951: 211–212.)

Repression was interestingly connected with other areas in the institutionalization of administrative culture. As Carrère d’Encausse has pointed out, essential to Stalinist administration was the fragility of positions and privileges. The purges began in 1928 and continued till the end of the 1930’s. Stalin abolished the immunity of the party. The side-effect of the purges was the constant renewal of managers and officials at all levels which assured upward mobility in the society and in the administrative hierarchies. (Carrère d’Encausse 1980: 39.) In this way, those loyal to the leadership could assume new roles and more forward in their personal lives. At the same time stability, which is essential to a rule of law society, was lacking. The political system became highly personalized.

The control of development in all the major state building elements: administration structures, law and legal thinking and personnel policies, required language purification. This was essential to the legitimation of the repressive administration. It was by no means a simple task in the social environment of the 1920’s when the educational level of the population was still low. It was the task of the revolution to make “them” “us”. The state had to dominate discussion in the society by creating an image of stable and comprehensive language which represented credible authority. Maxim Gorgy echoed these needs in his discussions about the national language of the new Soviet state, which would reflect the Stalinist doctrine of “socialism in one country”. He wished for the “people of Russian villages and towns to be transformed into a new tribe of literate, reasonable, hearty people”. The writer linked style of language with politics representing the authority of the state. In other words there was “a direct correlation between literacy in language and ideological literacy”. Similarly, regional and class speech differences (portrayed in literature) were expressions of populism which separated peasants from that which they should be. (Gorham 2000: 133–147.)
Language effected laws and administrative decisions. Law remained a weak instrument, since it was interpreted through orders from different levels of decision making and wider policies which could be written into law were not open to discussion at the administrative organization level. This effect was compounded by the general flow of information, which was restricted and agitative. The new language was distant from the population because it required learning new types of expressions and avoidance of wrong ones. If in the tsarist system the peasant who became town dwellers did not read and write, the socialist citizen could only read and write what the political situation allowed. Censorship continued to keep administration beyond the real control of the citizens.

For administrative culture and the development of the professional ethos of the new soviet administrators, particularly those who were in direct contact with the population, language purification was not of minor importance. It constituted a major part in the socialization of the society. It also meant, that the information upon which the daily work was based, became limited in its content and the personal power of administrators to use information in the development of their work was difficult. The language purification process, as a larger cultural development, helped to consolidate the command-economy administration. Language protected the administration from open criticism.

In terms of its over all communication style, the Soviet administration went through a change from a revolutionary communication to a bureaucratic one. In revolutionary or totalitarian communication, total control and “communalization” of communication are attempted and as a result, accuracy of transmission, speed, the impact upon the recipient and feedback are deliberately denigrated. In the bureaucratic communication, the administration is more open but highly structured and vertically organized. Communication serves as a socialization function to replace terror. Structured communications along formal channels, guided by the elite, provide workers with the details needed in their tasks. Informal communication and habits are tolerated to a certain degree as unavoidable. (Comp. Sternheimer 1983: 135.)

Together with language purification different codes for secrecy expanded and mushroomed both in the official structures and in the society generally. Secrecy was evident in citizen behavior as well as in the organizational behavior inside the different sectors of administration. Categories for state secrets and agency secrets (administrative secrets of a particular organi-
zation) developed with consequences for decision making authority and actual power (Makarenko 1989). At the same time, this need for restricted behavior in the manifestation of information required a system of non-public information gathering which enhanced the authority and power of intelligence organizations and served to widen their scope of activity. The centrally led intelligence work in the localities was a major part of policy decision making (see “Soovershenno Sekretno” 2001, tom 1, chast 1–2). Language also effectively separated different levels of administration from each other.

Formalism had many direct consequences in the client-administrator relationship. First of all the client, as a person, did not have individual rights. He had these most of all as a member of a social group, whether this be work place, trade union, party organization or professional group. The social organization which he belonged to protected his material well-being and thus, according to the pattern of thought; his rights as a Soviet citizen. The administrator on the other hand, was most of all responsible to the plan which he had to fulfill. At the same time the hierarchy inside organizations, the diversification of the work and multiplication of institutions, led to organizational cultures which relied on orders and directors deciding even small matters. The new lower level administrators in the Soviet state were dependent on the higher levels at least as much as had been their predecessors in the tsarist town administrations.

Organization building led to task diversification and multiplication which, along with the new administrative roles attached to them, required armies of specialists. Control required that no one should have too much of a decision making power. Responsibility was diluted. Specialists formed new ranks which replaced the old tsarist ones. Specialists and exceptional individuals represented the ideological purposes of the new state and where thus justifiably eligible for the high posts in the hierarchy, with the accompanying material rewards. Material rewards (housing, special food) and educational advantages continued to be incentives for being useful for the state.

When these new practices were institutionalized, particularly through the nomenklatura system, they were transformed into a fixed organization of status. As centralized control was also institutionalized through the command-economic planning and the party became an administrative “arbitration court”, the representational political organs lost power (if not formal authority) to the technocratic, specialized executive side. At the
same time policy making was centralized, formally political and executed by the ministerial channels through decisions and orders. The municipal level did not take part in it.

An administrative market (Kordonskii 2001) assumed new qualities in the socialist transition. Political (party), economical (administration of economical institutions and production) and administrative (governmental and judicial) sectors were united in the planning system, but separated in their political power which belonged mostly – although not totally – to the party structures. (Comp. Richard Sakwa 1988: 165.) Public policies became “administrative” professional issues. The judicial sector was made a branch of the administration which the party guided. The effect of the de-politicized society was that the administrative (governmental) sector used political language and symbolism in a formal manner.

One of these side-effects of the representational organs diminishing power was that hierarchical structures became strong and rational-legal authority was formally in place. At the same time, the party system took the place of traditional social systems by being outside the core of administrative structures. (Comp. Peters 1984.) This way, independent administrative authority based on law was diminished and assumed a formalistic character, one which in fact has been typical for developing countries. The second side-effect was the elimination of independent social activism. The civil society was incorporated either into the administrative structures or into the party.

Sakwa (1988) has contended that where Western writers usually see party control as the reason for the qualitative transformation of bureaucracy from servant to master, the Bolsheviks of the time saw that bureaucratism was born when the administration escaped the party will and took on a life of its own. The party tried to control both the bureaucracy of administrative processes themselves and the bureaucratization of the political process, while staying formally outside of the state administration. (Sakwa 1988: 190.) Bureaucratization hid the traditional Russian and other local orders of importance. These developments started to lay roots quite soon after the revolution in the 1920’s and effected local administration decision making for the decades to come.

At an organizational level a transition to a phenomenon called “vedomstvennost’ “or “a culture of governmental agencies” took place. It meant a development in which separate, specialized ministries (narkomats) operated both as administrative organs of government and as economic
institutions. As their resources grew and the companies and other economic institutions under their guidance multiplied, they began to nurture their own interests in the execution of plans. (Korzhikhina 1995: 23.) This created an office culture which paradoxically became contradictory to central planning, thus creating a risk for the whole system.

The command-economy resulted in a development toward technocracy in which there was a steep division of labor and authoritative power was vested in those who had knowledge about specific professional issues. As a side effect of the specialization, the specific areas of responsibility often became more limited. Technocratic expertise was combined with a new system of parallel organization in which the party and administration were unified. Thus the specialists did not have a wider control of the development in their fields. The party took a role above society, which led to its leadership in localities having authority above the law. This was the legal and social result of the parallel, extra legal control function of the party. The guardian role of the party taught the non-party organs to turn to it in all possible questions, including economic ones. Changes and initiatives concerning plans were decided in the party and not in the soviet. The Politburo gave the out the fundamental regulation in these matters. The workers in localities were educated by circulars giving them advice on the content of their work, its form and rituals. (Korzhikhina 1995: 24.) In comparison with the tsarist professionals in local communities and towns, the new Soviet specialists were tightly incorporated into the structures of the state.

Behind the administrative elite formation were social reasons which can be understood from the point of view of revolutionary change itself. As has been pointed out before, the revolution was very successful in implementing the exchange of class roles. In this, employment in the growing bureaucracy was one of the most effective ways of social advancement. (Rowney 1989: 14.) The 1920’s were a time for promotion for workers and peasants who moved directly to positions of state authority. The lack of training presented problems for new decision makers. A high turnover rate was typical since newly promoted workers replaced those who had just assumed work. In time, it became necessary for the Soviet government to reward persons whose abilities and political loyalty were necessary for the building of the administration. (Carrére d’Encausse 1980: 26.)

The building of administrative reward systems, which were needed to ensure loyalty and incentive, had several side-effects in the transformation of the administrative culture. It is also one of the most striking cases of
structural change (in this case personnel removals and promotions) which was contradictory and ineffective for transitional purposes and caused unintended effects. In this case, new long term risks arose for the administrative system in two ways.

The first creation of new long term risks was made by linking together employment position and deficit material conditions. Sungurov has concluded that the main difference between the tsarist table of ranks and the nomenklatura system was that the latter was a closed, secret system (Sungurov 1998: 48). In comparison the table of ranks was a public, legally regulated organization of positions and tasks.

The second way in which new long term risks were created was in the recruitment system. Social differentiation was intensified by developments in the field of higher education. As the party organization members were given a preference over others, this right in fact assumed a “hereditary” nature. In 1923–24, children of soldiers and army political cadres were given similar preference as workers and peasants. Next in 1926, the creative intelligentsia was given a quota of places in the universities of the Russian Federal Republic. By the 1930’s a third of students in Russian universities had a working-class or peasant background. (Carrère d’Encausse 1980:25.)

The reward practices and the nomenklatura recruitment and advancement system had several side-effects for the administrative culture. Firstly, they institutionalized a very unitary recruitment, promotion and rewards system at all levels of the country. This further strengthened, socially and psychologically, the centralization of the structures. Local decision making lost its meaning in the forms of established culture. The party itself became divided into an “inner” and an “outer” parts of which the former (Sungurov 1998: 48), the nomenklatura, was more important for power relations than geographical considerations.

Secondly, the original equality ideal was replaced with a vanguard thinking in which socialist individual heroism became an ideological symbol. According to Carrère d’Encausse’s analysis, the effectiveness which Stakhanovism had first come to represent opened a path to privileges for individuals of the working class, not to the whole class itself. The Stalinist society became one dominated by the “best” whose abilities and commitment justified their extraordinary position. (Carrère d’Encausse 1980: 39.)

Together, all of this meant that the practical conditions in fact brought out a different type of government culture to that which Lenin had envisioned. Rotations and general politically based management
(internalized habits) were replaced by institution specialization and highly regulated tasks which in their specificity and limited personal power became non-political. Past experience and organizational history were no longer useful, but instead a hindrance to rapid socialization and development. At an organizational level, seniority and authority which had been the cornerstones of tsarist administration were no longer connected to each other (see Rowney 1989: 29).

The nomenklatura system which effected both the leadership and the personnel, was an answer to both the social and political needs of this depoliticized government. It confirmed the change of social position: the formation of a new type of politically correct elite which was under the inspection and approval of the party. It also gave loyal supporters a possibility to assume a position which only the revolution could give them. New social opportunities arose for members of the peasant class.

At the same time, the nomenklatura system was a reactionary vehicle. It replaced the old rank and title hierarchy of the Tsars. Similarities in the qualities which were again required from those who wished to advance their individual careers in socialism were striking: political correctness, good connections to the elite (party) and an eye for the social game. As before when the autocratic legitimation for the Tsar’s power sustained the 19th century civil service culture, the inevitable undemocratic quality of the socialist system was explained by the need for control, organically linked with democratic centralism. Once again the majority of citizens were, in reality, left outside of the elite. The administration at the localities represented the elite who chose their leaders from among their own ranks.

To summarize, this chapter has analyzed the creation of a totalitarian administrative culture at the local level in 1917–1938. The results show that the structuration process produced an administrative culture the core of which remained essentially same compared to the tsarist system. This meant that: 1) final authority continued to be beyond and above the law (in the party); 2) local administration was non-political (concentration on quantity); 3) administrative procedures based on trust between organizations and citizens were not created (no rule of law or legal protection); 4) law remained weak (formalism); and 5) bureaucrat language and secrecy were used (separation of different administrative levels and actors from each other).

The main difference compared to the tsarist period was the creation of personnel policies (based on education) which incorporated the civil
servants tightly into the state structures. New avenues opened to previously excluded groups.

The dictatorial qualities, which could also be found in the tsarist system, were intensified because of risks to the revolution itself (civil war, great economic difficulties, political opposition). As a result, wide terror was used as a side-effect of administrative control needs. As before, the main side-effect of the system can also be attributed to the lack of separation of powers. The most important side-effect was the bureaucratization of political thinking. Power remained highly elitist, rational-legal authority was formally in place and hierarchical structures strong.

The next chapter shows how the perestroika policies tried to reform these qualities and in doing so, lay roots to the falling down of the Soviet governing system.
5 The Transition of Administrative Culture, 1986–1991

This chapter describes the perestroika ideology from the point of view of administrative change; the subsequent structural changes; and the resulting dysfunctions in the bargaining system which made up the core of local administrative culture. I will show how the perestroika policies of administrative reform were negated by the existing dysfunctions of the Soviet system and how new risks to this system were born in the process.

5.1 The Political Ideology of Administrative Change: Harmonizing Official and Unofficial Cultures

Mikhail Gorbachev became the head of the Soviet Union in a situation were the planning system had reached its cultural maturity and was showing different types of dysfunctions. Looking at the Soviet administration is a complex task from the point of view of a liberal-democratic conception of administrative systems. This is because the executive bureaucracy which is the focus of this study, made up only a portion of what can be called administration in the Soviet system. Instead, the mature Soviet system of administration can be divided into four sectors of parallel hierarchies which functioned together in a type of administrative market (Simon Kordonskii 2000). Further more this market had social, structural and functional aspects which all influenced the transition of administrative culture during the perestroika reforms.

The task of changing local administrative decision making involved more than just giving the local level a legally stronger role. The administration, in
spite of its highly regulated role as the provider of services, was in reality affected by the power struggles and bargaining of different elites which all had their stakes in the practical execution of centrally decided policy programs. The mature Soviet system proceeding the perestroika period was based on a communication system reminiscent of the pluralist model in which much information flowed within laterally related groups, providing a basis for informal coalitions. Participation was allowed in official administrative communication through regulated channels, such as complaint books and legislative inquiries. (Sternheimer 1983: 137–138.) Gordon Smith has described the method of influencing as being primarily “administrative” instead of openly political. A certain kind of “practical localism” can be seen in the way the local bureaucrats worked as influential, sometimes semi-autonomous participants in the decision making process. Their professional identity was important to them and they also represented their specific clientele. (Smith 1980.)

Between them these hierarchies or branches of decision making, which were present in all levels of the state (central, republican, regional and local) together formed the arena where decisions for each geographical area were made. For an understanding of the Soviet administrative culture it would therefore be misleading to simply talk about the city administration in terms of the work of the executive committees of the local soviets. Instead, the work of the executive committees can be understood by looking at what their functional role was in the totality of the administrative market.

Simon Kordonskii (2000) has indentified the following separate decision making branches in the governmental system of the USSR: administrative (economical, productive), political, representational and control. The administrative branch included institutions and official positions connected with industry, agriculture and services. Besides the enterprises and service producers, this branch also included (state government) branch agencies involved in the direct leadership of a particular sector of the economy, and planning agencies in charge of the coordination and planning work. The first group was the most influential because it was in many respects a direct extension of the all-union ministries and received both its directives and money from the top. Planning agencies were for the most part also in this position, but still not completely out of the reach of local soviets. (Kordonskii 2000, Sternheimer 1980: 84–85.)

The political branch included the party structure. The representational branch included the elected soviets and their executive committees, as well
as control agencies used by the executive committee to oversee the
development and execution of its decisions. This latter group and additional
agencies which serviced and coordinated the work of all others were in
local control and funded by the communities. The control branch included
administrative inspection organizations, the prosecutors and the courts.
(Kordonskii 2000, Sternheimer 1980: 84–85.)

In terms of conceptualization of this web of decision making hierarchies,
I have chosen to call all of the earlier mentioned branches together “a
government” and separate out in it sub-systems which I call administrations.
The main features of the Soviet government structure in the perestroika
period are shown in annex D which is my illustration of the system. In
annex D one can also see the changes compared to the structure in the
1930’s (shown in annex C).

I have renamed “the administrative branch” referred to by Kordonskii
“the economic administration”. In light of the running of local communities,
the production and service organizations were a central part of the local
administration. Furthermore their staff also participated in the decision
making for localities and their servicing.

The functional back bone of the whole administrative system was the
creation and execution of plans in which all sectors of administration
participated. In this central planning system, which involved all aspects of
social life, the economy was based on the center allocating funds to different
areas on the basis of its plans for equal development of richer and poorer
areas. Planning essentially meant that the system had to decide the economic
needs of the people by way of political decision making. In the economic
administration resources were allocated through central coordination by
Gosplan (the state planning organization) to ministries to fulfill their plans
which were then carried out by factories and enterprises. Technically this
meant linking each economic unit at all levels of society to one system of
accounting. In the formal structural sense, the local level was a direct
extension of the ministry in each category of questions. The main practical
aim of economic units was to achieve the yearly control numbers of the
state plan (Sutela 1983:49). This was essential both to the official rules and
unofficial administrative norms because the primary goal was not selling
products in the market or developing services suited for and decided by the
local population, but keeping to quotas.

Since the 1960’s, an expansion of the economic administration’s
independence was allowed by increasing the output volume that the
economic units could sell by themselves. In actuality the materials and products were bartered in the administrative market. The economic autonomy of enterprises was subordinated to the implementation of the plan because it still defined the real flows. Bartering in the administrative market mainly supplemented and reinforced the allocation of resources. In addition to this, the autonomy of the economic administration was determined by local personal relations in the market, particularly with the local party leadership. (Freinkman 1998: 187.)

Even as the former Soviet Union was formally federal, “localism” was mainly achieved by decisions as to which part of the country a particular sector of production, or a singular factor would be located. Different parts of the federal state served different parts of the economy which directed their general cultural development. (Jacobs 1983: 6–7, Sakwa 1990: 152.) Kirkow has pointed out that since the ministries dominated territorial planning, the industrial structure of local and regional units was one of the most important single factors determining their budget. For the turnover of tax and payment from profits in the local budget, the number, size and jurisdiction of enterprises in a certain area was vital. (Kirkow 1998: 35.)

The local budget’s income came mainly from two sources. First was the legally secured (zakreplennyi) income which came from local enterprises (including municipal services and enterprises), local taxes and payments, income tax on cooperatives and public organizations, and payments for legal services such as the notary. Second was the regulated (regulirovannyi) income which came from federal revenues, tax of the population and republican enterprise profits which were collected annually in the area of the soviet. In addition, the local level was helped to meet its obligations with subventions, categorical grants (dotatsii) for specific projects and general financing (sredstva) to cover joint programs of the center and the republics. (Kirkow 1998: 36–37.)

Expenditures of the local budgets were mostly used to finance the social and cultural sphere. Most of the money went on housing repair and public works (cleaning, parks and such). Yet the local level managed only about one-third of the housing sector in its area since, in the Russian republic, almost 3/4 belonged to ministries and enterprises. Local budget spending on territorial industry and agriculture was only 5 and 10% respectively. At the same time, a large part of the social and cultural services were also financed by work organizations. (Kirkow 1998: 37.)
The Soviet local government, as a part of the representative administration of the planning system, meant the soviet which was made up of two organs. The first was the elected soviet (council) of deputies and the second the executive committee which worked as the head of the municipal administration. The most important task for the local soviets was supervising, monitoring and reporting responsibilities through deputies, standing committees and finance departments. Control over the non-subordinate enterprises in the area was mostly formal and varied with the soviet, the power of the sectoral ministry in question, and the issues at hand. Local soviets managed retail trade, dining, entertainment and other educational and cultural facilities. Services included road repair, medical care and day care. Area and labor planning, and a wide range of services were, however, also the responsibility of the local enterprises which led to authority conflict in coordination. In fact, the implementation of decisions was left to the executive committee and the party organization. (Kirkow 1998: 40.)

The chairman of the executive committee, who acted as a mayor, had the highest authority. Behind him were the first vice-chairman, other vice-chairmen and the head of the executive committee administration, who were full-time city employees. Executive committees included key municipal department heads, along with representatives of the city party committee, and important non-city agencies. According to the Soviet law, the session of the soviet had the right to decide the most important questions such as the city budget, adoption of the plans for the city-run enterprises, issuing ordinances, election of the executive committee, and approve its nominations for heads of departments. Between sessions, however, the executive committees governed the municipality by implementing the law, directing departments that operated municipal enterprises, allocating land, guiding sub-committees of the city soviet and by receiving complaints from citizens. Besides these bodies for decision making there were also numerous standing commissions of the soviets, electoral commissions, street and house committees and so on, which mobilized the citizens of a certain area. (Kordonskii 2000: 46, Taubman 1973: 35–36, Sakwa 1990:153.)

In principle the system of soviets meant the involvement of a large group of citizens in the state’s decision making via a structure of elected councils and their executive committees. The principle of dual subordination meant that all departments of executive committees which ran the daily administrative tasks for their area, were accountable to both their respective soviet and to the higher executive committees and ministries which had the right to
set aside the decisions of the lower organs. For instance, the local budget was formulated by the local department of finance of the municipal government. Under dual subordination though, this department was also controlled by the Ministry of Finance. (Sakwa 1990: 153, Hammer 1986: 137.)

The role of town executive committees was limited by the fact that the economic administration was so important to the organization of practical welfare. In many towns, large factories had the responsibility of taking care of the local welfare services. Towns were built for the factory and survived with it as it was usually the employer for a great deal of families. As Harri Melin (1998) has pointed out, factory managers were important local leaders who had power even over the production and allocation of apartments and holidays (Melin 1998: 142). This had a strong impact on the cultural consciousness of people in the area. Belonging to a community was made stronger by this dependency both financially and socially.

The local executive committees coordinated the functional departments of enterprises and organizations, controlled their work, and financed it when these organizations were under their subordination. For actual power, the executive committees needed the cooperation of the branch enterprise directors to negotiate the amount and distribution of resources in their administrative area. The position of the executive committees in the administrative market was structurally weak. Although it was also an economic body which took care of immediate socio-economic matters, it did not possess the effective means to demand anything. (Kordonskii 2000: 79, Kuznetsov 1998: 193.)

In effect, instead of being the leaders of the totality of local administration, the executive committees were players in the local administrative market in which a specific “arbitration system” balanced the needs of the different administrations. The ceremonial role of the Soviet in this market is natural in the sense that it did not really possess an authoritatively strong place in the arbitration process. Yet this arbitration activity could well be defined as the core of the mature Soviet administrative culture. Theodor Friedgut’s case study of emigre Soviet citizens’ perceptions of their local government, which was published in 1983, corresponds with this picture. The mayor was the key public official who was used for approving and appealing for citizens’ requests. The Soviet members were in fact seen as representing most of the qualities which were required from a good Soviet representative. Citizens turned to executive committee members and to heads of departments with requests concerning mostly housing, services, pensions
and work. In addition, complaints were made against the bureaucrats themselves. Yet there was also a sense of the local representatives being inefficient as a source of problem solving, preferring friends and family instead. (Friedgut 1983: 112–124.)

The usefulness or ineffectiveness of the representative administration was closely linked with the role of the Communist party in the local level. The party, which was the political administration, had the same structure at all levels of territorial government: first a party congress which chose among its delegates a committee (or assembly) and which represented all members of a certain geographical area. The committee delegated its authority to an executive board (buro), which was headed by the first secretary of the area secretariat of the Communist party. He was followed by other secretaries of the party, heads of party administration in the area, their vice-heads and the party instructors of the geographical area. The party coordinated relations between all the other administrations in the municipality while the executive committee of the soviet oversaw the actual daily execution of decisions. In other words, the party created the policy and the executive committee was in charge of its practical execution. (Kordonskii 2000, Hammer 1986.) In this sense, the sometimes expressed idea that the soviet government did not have a policy making process, or make policy in the first place, is not quite accurate.

Both the town party committee, the Gorkom (gorodskoi komitet) and the executive committee of the town soviet had a place in the planning of long term actions. Furthermore, the party had an important role in the management of the economic administration through party members who worked in factories and service organizations regardless of the formal subordination. Through these links the party enforced national policies at the local level (i.e. party intervention, podmena, with local state functions) (Kirkow 1998: 39). This link was not merely practical. It followed a fundamental principle of territorial-production systems which, along with the concept of democratic centralism, created the basis for functional organization. (Kordonskii 2000: 47, Hammer 1986: 81.)

The territorial-production system principle meant that each party member belonged to a primary party organization associated with a workplace. This organization, which usually met once a month and whose average size was around 40 members, linked the party to the rest of society. The primary organization had several functions. First of all it was engaged in ideological work which depended on the workplace in question. Second,
it served as a channel for political information with the help of members specializing in its distribution (*politinformatory*). Third, it monitored the workplace to prevent authority leakage. In other words a situation where the management started using organizational resources and goals for other than their original purposes. Fourth, it elected the town party congress which then chose the town party committee. (Hammer 1986: 81–83.)

The official communication between different levels of administration was almost completely in the hands of the party. This included both vertical communication between different levels of power and the horizontal communication between the subjects of each level. The Communist party’s political power and control had a strange reverse effect of “depolitization”. When all organs of decision making and civil activity had the same identity and interest, there could be no real social or political differences. Conflicts were seen as technical and departmental, administrative or “bureaucratic”. Much of the actual decision making was out of the direct control of the local level such as all-union enterprises, research institutions, much of heavy industry, defence establishments and the railways. The municipal government was also restricted in the sense that it could not raise taxes. (Sternheimer 1983: 155, Sokolov 1995.)

The party used a considerable amount of synergy as a basis for its decision making and control power, without being formally inside the other bureaucracies. It is also possible to say that the party was the super administration which delegated tasks to other institutions. Each workplace had its leaders of workers among those who were party members. These communists were also typically elected members of the representational administration. In this sense, the work place level can be considered as the lowest functional step in the party nomenklatura. (Kordonskii 2000: 75.)

The merger of the political and economical was structurally the clearest in the case of those factories which had the status of republican or all-state organizations. There the workplace party organization was integrated into factory organization as a part of the sectoral (in this case economic) administration. It represented the territorial aspect of the management. In the cases of the most important economic agencies at the local level the verticality was the strongest. These dealt with matters of finance, construction (especially housing) and planning. Decisions were in fact made by non-elected officials from higher territorial level. (Smith 1980: 86.)

Functionally, the local and the center were united at the central level in two ways. First, in the paid professional staff agency serving the party
Politburo, which operated through the primary party organizations. The central bureaucracy of the Politburo supervised all of the Soviet government, just the same as the local and regional did in their respective areas. It was a controlling and guidance organization which was not to take the place of executive institutions. Most of all, its role was to gather and process information to give the leadership an informed view on the developments in the country. It also gave directives downward to the party members. (Hammer 1986: 89.)

The second functional connection took place in the bureaucracy of the Central Committee which meant about twenty administrative organs or departments. Each department supervised one or more ministries, government agencies or public organizations. This supervision included control of appointments through the nomenklatura system of official name list-appointments by different level party committees and collecting information through primary organizations about their parent organization. A placement both in the sectoral and territorial administrations could only be achieved by people who met the party requirements for cadres. The competition for open posts was always in the hands of the party organizations. (Kordonskii 2000: 77.) In this manner the Soviet bureaucrat was a client of the nomenklatura system which provided an effective channel for the party to control all important ideas all the way to the local level (Arvidsson 1992: 12). The party’s organizational work department, for instance, was responsible for the appointments at territorial levels, the Komsomol and the trade unions. (Hammer 1986: 92–93.) In this way the basis of personnel policy in the administration was outside of general law.

Analogous political and general administrative (economic and representative) systems existed at each level of the administration. The party system was headed by a first secretary who had from 2–4 vice-secretaries for ideological, organizational, industrial and farming issues. Similar to the structure of the executive committees, the party elected 1–2 department heads of city party committee who were in charge of ideological and organizational matters. In addition the city committee included a representative of the district organization and line members of the party. (Sungurov 1998: 61.)

The secretaries of town level party organizations oversaw the integration of economic operations in the industries through line directors. The opinions of the town party secretaries were taken into account by the executive committees at the regional level to appoint the management of
any factory or service organization. This meant that all decision about personnel policy were in fact made at the regional level. This third level of party hierarchy was formed by the functionaries of the regional party organizations. The nomenklatura of the regional level also included the directors of the economical administration. (Kordonskii 2000: 76, Hammer 1986: 84.)

In fact the administrative market itself was divided into yet smaller parts of power holders who had better channels for effecting the end result than others. Sungurov (1998) has shown how the party functioned in the parallel double administration space to produce an alternative or complementing report from different parts of the country to the Communist party Central Committee. Although the economic administration collected information for the creation of the five year plans through the line ministries and processed it in the Gosplan, the Communist party Central Committee departments had their own proposals and analysis which considered the interests of the party nomenklatura and regional power groups. The territorial (oblast and republic) planning followed the same pattern: economic reports and suggestions came from the executive committee heads of the elected organs to the Gosplan, and reports from the oblast party committee heads to the party’s Central Committee. (Sungurov 1998: 49.) In this way, the hierarchy inside the political administration itself influenced the decision making concerning all of society. The inner party and the outer party (Sungurov 1998) represented the political and the economical sides of administration with the former having the most power at all levels.

The key center for bargaining at the local level was in fact the oblast level of the party organization (comp. for instance Nystén-Haarala 2001:70). At this level, there existed three bodies: the congress (assembly), the committee and the party buro. The town level elected delegates to this level. The regional committee which was thus formed by these delegates elected the regional party committee, the obkom (oblast’noi komitet), which was headed by the regional party buro of about ten members. Included in this organization were the first secretary of the regional party organization and the chairman of the regional executive committee. The buro was critical to the administrative market because it had the authority to supervise all activities of the region. This was a considerably larger responsibility than the regional executive committee had. The party leaders mediated many of the competing institutional conflicts of interest since influential heads of
key regional administrations and organizations were, as a rule, represented in the oblast party committee (obkom). Gordon Smith uses the terms “elite pluralism”, “bureaucratic pluralism” and “participatory bureaucracy” to describe this phenomenon. The buro was in fact responsible for the mobilization of regional resources to fulfill the target figures set in the central plan. (Hammer 1986: 84, Smith 1980: 8–9.)

The administrative market in which the execution of the plan took place made the city planning a political process in which many municipal planners could effectively influence neither the non-city sector nor their own. Compartmentalization and centralization hardened competition. As a side effect of the budget process, co-operation for soviet and non-soviet agencies was difficult. The main administrative issue in this market became access to resources and the ability to distribute them. Formally, this depended on the status of actors within the official structures of authority. In the market, however, the actual power of different actors also depended on a variety of factors which contributed to their actual status. Thus, for instance, the resources of the economic administration were distributed by the factory directors, along with local executive committee heads, workers of party committee and higher branch organizations. (Kordonskii 2000: 71, Kivinen 1998: 124, Taubman 1973: 18.)

According to Stephen Sternheimer´s case study the knowledge required for the success of bargaining by economic operators in the market depended upon the knowledge of alternative allocation patterns available to one’s superiors, independent contacts with suppliers and the span of control which the superior body had. Inaccurate information was deliberately sent upward. The plan was seen as setting unrealistic deadlines, unable to coordinate demand and sources for materials, and unable to allocate adequate premises and workloads. Rigid planning style, and not the administrative structures themselves, were seen as causing the problems. (Sternheimer 1983: 140–142.)

At the local level, Simon Kordonskii has distinguished five actor groups who had their specific social position within the hierarchy of influence. These were workers and holders of similar status (for instance junior researchers and line administration officials), line directors, functional specialists, vice-directors of organizations and directors of local organizations (who belonged to the nomenklatura of the Communist party in their area). The functional groups were universal because relations between different groups were similar in spite of the field of activity (for example...
agriculture or science). The administrative importance, however, did
depend on the line of activity in the sense that the status of the military-
industrial sector workers was much higher than that of the workers in an
provincial organization subordinated to a republican ministry of culture,
for instance. (Kordonskii 2000: 72, Kivinen 1998: 126.) The local and
regional administrative markets had a significant meaning for the creation
of budgets, since the political power of the political administration at these
levels and their relations with the industry managers with higher
subordination, played a role in the way the local budget was structured.
(Kirkow 1998: 35.)

In practice “local” in this decision making culture meant, on the one
hand the highly personalized (but unofficial) power of well positioned
individuals who represented the interest of their organizations as influential
semi-autonomous power-brokers. On the other hand, the social rules of the
game meant the use of the local party connection to get the needed results
in decisions of local importance. For instance, the city could ask the party
committee to help if it needed something and higher administrative bodies
deprecated the request. (Piskotin 1993:74.) The main structuring of power
shares was mostly done inside the party itself. One of the main problems for
the local party here, was its lack of influence on the ministries which
managed municipally located enterprises. (Kirkow 1998: 40.)

Sungurov (1998) has described how the vertical hierarchy in the party
nomenklatura system was such that a party instructor or the secretary of
the regional committee could, in fact, give orders to the director of a factory
within his jurisdiction. In case he clearly breached his limits, the factory
director could in turn use the hierarchy of his line economic administration
to reach the department of Central Party Committee, which could influence
the local party official. (Sungurov 1998: 62.)

The local level was a coordinator of the implementation of legislation
given to it by higher state organs. According to the Constitution (which
had supreme legal force in letter) laws came from the Supreme Soviet. The
Council of Ministers (the government) could issue decisions and decrees
which were based on laws and supported their implementation. These
legal acts were binding throughout the USSR. (The Constitution of the
USSR 1977: articles 15, 16.) In addition to this, the Council of Ministries
issued joint decrees with the Communist party central committee (van
der Berg 1992: 153). The 1977 Constitution does not recognize such acts
explicitly. In this way, in fact, legislative acts which directly affected the
whole executive bureaucracy were issued outside of the official legislative process.

The political administration was important for the actual norm hierarchy of the state. The main foundations of daily legal authority were the instruction of the Central Committee and the Council of Ministers who also issued joint decrees (*postanovlenie*). Of these the latter acted as the legally legitimate source, while the party ensured its execution. Actual laws which the representative organs of the country passed were of minor importance or merely decorative. The decisions of concrete administrative organs in the different administrations of the state were more important than laws. Limits of jurisdiction, actual tasks and the expertise requirement of administrators were set by the instructions of the coordinating political bureaucracy. The party instructions were, in this manner, sub-laws of the state of which many were non-public and access to them depended on the level of an administrator. (Sungurov 1998:62–63, 66.)

Party membership required that party members followed the orders of the local party office, even when they contradicted state or organizational policy. This type of control was the most intense in case of the control branch (the courts and the prosecutor’s office). Yet, at the same time as the party made the policies of other organizations, or at least had the final say in their content, it did not carry them out. This gave the party an ideological upper hand in case of administrative dysfunctions. The other administrations were, in fact, quite often criticized in the Soviet press and by the political leadership for being “bureaucratic” and stalling the development of society. Inertia, lack of initiative and waste could be attacked, because the party was never at fault. (Kordonskii 2000: 47, Hammer 1986: 118.)

A career in political administration was particularly tempting for persons of a more humble background, such as the youth of worker or peasant families whose opportunities to enter prestigious universities and have successful careers were otherwise more restricted. In this sense, the party offered a channel for upward mobility, although a less stable one than in the representational administration, for instance. The Soviet ministries, for example, were professional organizations where employees easily spent their whole working careers. In contrast, the first secretaries of oblasts were intentionally transferred from one place to another to avoid them representing regional or local interests. The fact that the regional party leaders were also members of the Communist party’s Central Committee affected their sense of identity. Their status was that
as the “eyes of Moscow” on the region which they represented. (Hammer 1986: 98, 138–139.)

Besides the prestige the position bestowed an individual in the system, his or her placement in the inter-organizational hierarchy meant more concrete benefits. The real level of a wage was not dependent on the quality or quantity of work but on the norms set by the agreement of employment. The legal benefits accorded to the workforce were distributed and monitored by specialists of cadre policy in the work organizations, such as work force departments, planning departments, departments of work and salary. The functionaries in these departments decided who, in what order and to what extent, received apartments, vacations, bonuses, discounts and so on. The main areas of their work were administrative orders and instructions which determined the rules for decision making. (Kordonskii 2000: 72.)

In addition to this, a person’s living standard depended on the opportunity to unofficially use the organization’s resources. “Natural” space for corruption and favoritism was created and its importance grew because of a deficits of goods. Most basic services were produced outside of the price system for direct consumption which, in the Western sense, made them a substitute for direct welfare. Housing was allocated to employees of enterprises and holiday resorts could be visited according to the quotas in their plans. This type of economic administrative distribution system meant that money did not have the same position that it had in Western societies. (Lane 1992: 30.) Economic matters which were directly connected with the basic social well being of the population had become administrative. The citizens, in turn, considered them to be the state’s responsibility.

Informal ways to elicit better input from one’s subordinates were seen an important factor in Stephen Sternheimer’s case study. Greater cooperation and effort could be expected in exchange for extra vacation days, extra paid free time, unreported salary bonuses and so on. (Sternheimer 1983: 143.) In this sense, those having any type of decision making power in the system also depended on the informal practices. Further more, in contrast to the typical Western situation, the prime motive was, in many cases, a fear of failure rather than a desire to enrich oneself (Sternheimer 1983: 155).

The informal, yet institutionalized practices of the Soviet administration were connected with the blat-phennomenon of mutual assistance captured by the popular expression “the shops are empty but the fridges are full” (see Ledeneva 2000:322). Here, an important unofficial role in the arbitration of
goods and services was played by middlemen (*blatnye*) who could be secretaries of directors or secretaries of party organizations, for instance. These were individuals who possessed knowledge of what people to use in different situations to achieve a desired goal. They could point out the conditions in which exchange of material benefits or statuses could be done satisfactorily for all parties concerned. Conflicts between different groups in the hierarchy were solved by the leadership from a higher level of administration. In this way, the leadership also took upon itself the role of an outside higher arbitrator who could decide which actions were tolerated and which led to sanctions legal or otherwise. (Kordonskii 2000: 73.)

Ledeneva has contended that *blat* and other informal practices sustained formal institutions of the economy, while at the same time allowing the formal rules and principles to be observed as legitimate. Informal mutual assistance was a way of securing civil rights in the political and control bureaucracies. (Ledeneva 2000: 322–323.) Zinoviev has called these practices and ways of thinking “the communal behavior” which created an additional social risk. It was consciously learned as a set of social skills which allowed the person to maintain and better his position. There were many instances of trivial communal behavior but also some which determined the nature of the society. Moreover, communal behavior became natural and habitual, “innocent”. People developed a survival mechanism in which life became a system of mutual benefit and assistance and/or competition. (Zinoviev 1991: 67.)

An example of how the unofficial and the official were connected in the daily administrative work was the use of written official documents to secure the decisions and promises made in personal phone calls between members of a social network. The telephone was the key channel through which things were done in time and as wanted. Yet these business like informal networks required that decisions were legalized through documentation. Mere oral communication was not enough to secure decisions in the administration. (Sternheimer 1983: 149.)

The social system of the administrative market at the local level created a permanent dysfunction in terms of political guidance. As a response to the economic and social rigidity which the planning system had created, the administrative market paradoxically further strengthened the inertia of society. Soviet society was full of activity at the local level but much of this energy was directed to surviving and benefitting from the existing system instead of creating new forms of economical and cultural growth.
A document of the Central Committee from 1957 had listed the problems: “... In the apparatus, bureaucracy, red tape, indifference to citizens, callous attitudes, rudeness, superciliousness and procrastination in dealing with the citizens’ complaints and requests – common ills among Soviet officials – needed to be replaced by feelings of responsibility, personal modesty and concern for human beings and there must be a permanent persistent and obstinate struggle against the evils of bureaucratism.” (Hill 1983: 19.)

These hopes were in contradiction with the reality of placing ideological suitability above the quality of work. In order to keep the social balance, everyone received more or less the same salary and benefits in spite of actual contribution. (Sungurov 1998: 68.) Informal practices and ways of thought connected with them produced an atmosphere in which the responsibility connected with a formal position was not rigidly fixed. As people understood that success and plain comfortable life required more than just input in their formal job tasks, a cycle of poor work culture was created. Zinovjev has concluded that the co-operation needed meant that individuals (both administrators and others) shifted unpleasant tasks which were their responsibility on the shoulders of other. His critical view is that “the boorishness and capricious behavior of functionaries, important or otherwise, the coarseness of shop assistants, the arbitrariness of the militia (…), the endless red tape; all these are not minor defects, but the essence of the whole matter.” (Zinoviev 1991: 67, 73.)

The social system which was created in part by the effects of the nomenklatura culture, and partly by the overall legal position of the administrators, returned these effects to the routine work of the organizations. There was no symmetry between power and responsibility, which made it difficult for the officials to work independently. The concentration of authority and power in the upper hierarchies made the official’s role diffuse and rather weak. The absence of effective social control (on the part of free civil society) and strict secrecy also tended to weaken the official’s specific requirements. (Fogelklou in Bidrag till ostatsforskringen 1980:79.)

Paradoxically, lack of initiative was at least partially connected with the need for political control and the subsequent legal sanctions. The control administration had a significant impact on the reproduction of the soviet administrative culture. It included different types of institutional forms and authority limits.

Parallel to the formal control line of the economic (vedomstvennyi) and representative administrations (obshchestvennyi) there existed a special
non-state control agency in the form of a social organization whose task was to control the execution of the plan. This people’s control organization inspected possible problems in the making of products within its own jurisdiction. The jurisdiction was in reality limited by the consideration given to the interests of responsible parties belonging to the nomenklatura. The usefulness of the control organization became evident when the official administrative line was not for some reason effective or appropriate. Most persons breached administrative rules in some way and in these cases the people’s control could be called in to collect evidence which could be passed either to the party organs or to the prosecutor. (Sungurov 1998: 69.)

The core of the control administration was in many ways the office of the prosecutor, the prokuratura. The prosecutor’s office had a triple role in the mature soviet system. It acted as the investigator with the militia, prosecutor in the court and inspector of administration in its own right. The prosecutors were meant to ensure the uniformity of law in all parts of the country. They acted as the agents of central government, looking after the lower level administration. For this reason the prosecutor’s office the was not accountable to republican or regional governments. It is important to note that one of the control mechanisms of the party over other administrative structures was the use of the prosecutor’s office. Although the prosecutors had a strict vertical hierarchy this did not mean that they too were in reality under the double control of the parallel political administration. (Sungurov 1998: 71, Hammer 1986: 170.)

The prosecutors had a the upper hand in the court proceedings where the accused was not an equal partner in a legal debate. In fact the judges usually acted as partners of the prosecution (Jordan 2000: 194). The accused party’s position was also weak because the prosecutor had the right to appeal the decisions of the court in case he found them unsatisfactory. Through the party control he could affect the decision making of the judges. This led to a cycle of negative court rulings. (Sungurov 1998: 75.)

The general administrative supervision by prosecutors was met with mixed feelings because in many cases it was seen as the interference into administrative matters by directors and officials of the local bureaucracies. Yet, the close ties which the prosecutor’s office had with the party – or the close monitoring of its policies by the party – meant that it needed to be obeyed. After 1968 its activities shifted to the economic side, to theft of state property, misrepresentation of fulfilling the plan’s targets and substandard production. It was usual for prosecutors to call factory and kolkhoz
managers to voice their “concerns” over plan fulfillment at the request of the political bureaucracy. (Smith 1997: 351.)

At the economic organizational level, control was further more executed through the so called first departments of organizations which were officially responsible for professional secrecy and who also observed the general climate in the organization. The department was usually headed by a reserve officer of the state security service (gosbezopasnost’) which in this manner linked it with the intelligence gathering. (Sungurov 1998: 71.)

The practices of information use in decision making enforced the dysfunctions in all of the bureaucracies. Information about economic questions was channeled through the State Statistical Committee (Goskomstat) which collected all statistical information from the sectoral ministries and regional organizations throughout the country. All primary accounting and financial reporting by both the economic and representational administrations, deadlines for submitting them, addresses of submission and general instructions for the process were confirmed by the Goskomstat. It checked the accuracy of the received information and if a discrepancy was found between its own data and that of another agency, its own information was preferred. (Eydelman 1998: 70.)

The lack of ready and easily available technical information made elected officials helpless in many questions, particularly when professionalism and specialization became dominant cultural traits in the Brezhnev era. From the citizen’s point of view, the local representative administration culture became one of mostly tradition and mobilization with little meaning for policy guidance. The legal rights of the soviets fell below their actual powers. (Sokolov 1995: 155.) The environmental relations of executive committees thus, were routinized with little flexibility to enact changes reflecting the motions of the “outside” (citizens of no connections to the party and its nomenklatura, “the insiders”). The language of administration became one of “plan” for the citizen.

According to Hough (1990) there were two mechanisms of local administrative work which were, in principle structurally designed to ensure administrative accountability but which in practice, did not work very well. The first was a periodic response by a department head to either the soviet or its executive committee, the second a legislative inquiry by the soviet into an agency’s operations or policies. The problem of the response was that it did not show the obstacles of concrete operations of department but relied on economic statistics or profiles of general conditions, which
were rhetorical safeguards for the organizations. Most people making them were themselves members of the (party) elite (e.g. employees of administrative organs, factory directors, party officials and so on). In addition they usually dealt with production organizations such as enterprises or collective farms and not with the administration. (Hough 1990: 88–89.)

Institutionally, the language of administration was embodied in the Goskomstat. The Goskomstat had an important general role in the guidance of the top leadership because it gave them regular bulletins, topical information, analyses and reports. Quarterly and annual information was more comprehensive and included elements of analysis of the country’s socio-economic development, and criticism of the plan’s fulfillment. The focus of criticism was in these cases a ministry or agency, such as Gosplan or Gosstroi. The party and the representational administration were not criticized. (Eydelman 1998: 71.)

The non-publicness of information, which was wide in the instructions of the political administration, was duplicated in the line ministries and central administrative organs. The Goskomstat gave its information to the leadership with the classifications of “top secret” or “secret”. These contained information which could not be made open to the public. Examples of secret material were data on production and stock of strategic raw materials, performance of particular branches of nonferrous metallurgy, the chemical and petrochemical industries, and some machine-building. The information which was given to the Soviet leadership contained data about serious breaches of production and labor discipline, leading to accidents and major economic losses, grave violations of financial discipline, monetary problems and other negative information which was not open to the Soviet media to publish. Top secret and secret analysis contained information about the socio-economic situation of the country with criticism of the negative developments, or statistical information about economic facts which grew worse from year to year. (Eydelman 1998: 72.)

The main criteria for the classification system (top secret/secret/only for official use) was whether it was possible to determine with a piece of data or analysis the country’s military potential and volume of strategic resources, or uncover negative processes discrediting the socialist system. A collection of state level organizations (for instance the Ministry of Defense, KGB, Gosplan) formed a commission which determined the classification of documents. The distribution of the material was also carefully recorded in a list showing the type of material, its official classification, organizations
which had received copies, and date and number of copies sent. (Eydelman 1998: 73.)

Information was linked to the concept of freedom, just as in the present liberal-democratic thinking. This concept, however, was not based on qualities arising from individual requirements for self-expression and fulfilment. Freedom in the soviet language meant the ability of a person to function according to goals and self-interest within “objective necessities”. A free person’s responsibility was to use his knowledge and understanding for the progress of society. Progress of society meant freedom for those who followed the historical development of Soviet society and understood its ideals. There was thus no “general” freedom. (Pietiläinen 1994: 30–31.) In this type of society, the information which could be made public and its interpretation needed to be tightly controlled. This was due to the ever present danger of “generalism”, unpolitical, revisionist and unideological thinking penetrating the texts. This risk applied whether they be media, cultural, scientific or administrative information sources.

The use of information was linked to the social roles inside different administrations. Kordonskii has described three ideal types of social actors which could be found in all organizations and which did not correspond to the official social groupings of workers, peasants and administrative workers (officialdom). He states that the use of propaganda and repressive sanctions gave birth to these unofficial, folklore sub-characters of Soviet citizens. Within all official groups (classes and strata) there were people who belonged to the unofficial ideal types. In daily life people changed their roles situationally by switching language dialects from one ideal type to another. (Kordonskii 2000: 162, 164.)

The first of these groups and administratively the most powerful was the “functionaries” of the socialist system. These were people who mostly saw themselves through the space and time organization of the state. Their personal realities were structured by the economic plans and official festivities of the state which took place in proper physical spaces. There were regional and line hierarchies which separated a capital city functionary from one living in a small community on the periphery. Yet, both had a clear understanding of their place in the world. (Kordonskii 2000: 163.)

The “bourgeois” group represented the ordinary people, the everyday-man living the main stream socialist lifestyle. Work was most of all a means to a normal socialist consumption (apartment, food, clothes, holidays and
so on) and politics were to a large part outside of their reality. In contrast, the “dissidents” tried to form individual lifestyles outside the mainstream. (Kordonskii 2000: 163.)

Understanding the organizational culture depended upon the use and interpretation of the dialects of each group. The social mobility and career prospects required the ability to use dialects properly. The level of administration also affected the language and “genre” of social roles inside the administrative unit. (Kordonskii 2000: 165.) The soviet citizen in other words filtered his interpretation of situations, such as official statements or orders of the administration, through a complex array of social codes from official to street level and even the anti-social dissident level.

To understand the products of administrative culture such as official party and administrative texts, it is helpful to use Kordonskii´s classification of behavioral forms which all groups had. In other words there were functional, every-man and dissident behavior within all groups. For instance, the functional products of the “functionary” group included official documents, while letters to the press, complaints to administration, informing the KGB and party organizations were the functional products of the the “bourgeois” everyday-man. Dissident behavior by members of the “functionary” group included revealing public statements and performance, while the “bourgeois” behavior of this group included gossip and anecdotes of party and administrative life. The dissident behavior of the “dissident” group meant the “language of truth”, the concrete manifestation of which included self-made publications (samizdat). (Kordonskii 2000: 169.)

Kordonskii (2000) has described the repressive sanctions as an attempt to diminish the cleavage between the latent and the official, normative social systems in the administrative market. The methods chosen were ideologically legitimated as “a fight against the petty bourgeois attitudes” or criticism of bureaucratic officialdom. As a result dissident individuals almost completely disappeared in small and mid-level towns in the Soviet Union. (Kordonskii 2000: 168.)

If one accepts Kordonskii´s classification of social roles and corresponding dialects and behavior, then one would have to look at the meaning of different written rules, legal documents and instructions in the Soviet Union through this interpretation. Administrative work was the combination of multilayered regulation at the institutional level on one hand, and the strong separation of “official” and everyday space for interpretation on the
other. This also explains why propaganda and the fear of repressive sanctions remained so vital for control.

The analysis of the Soviet media and its requirements is illuminating also for administrative information gathering and its meaning. Officially, in Soviet society, all type of information was supposed to work together for the same goal. In particular, the press was an important source of opinion making in voicing the official programs, policies and evaluations by the leadership. Since its role in the cultural reproduction of socialism was to provide an avenue of opinion expression for the population and constructive criticism of the economical and representational administrations, it was in fact an institutional agent in the decision making process. The press served as a channel for everyday-man’s functional (officially accepted and politically correct) behavior.

The reasons for the official role of the press in the reproduction of the administrative culture were already contained within the definitions of its basic working principles. Among its main principles were party views, ideology, truthfulness, as well as mass orientation, democracy, objectivity. In the perestroika era humanism (which meant a general orientation of working toward “the good of people” and openness) was elevated in importance. (Pietiläinen 1994: 19, 27.)

In the official language, the party view was expressed in the ability of a person to “orientate in concrete conditions so that the practical fulfilment of the party line would not present its real goals in a bad light”. This naturally required that any a socially important actor such as a journalist (or an administrator) understood the concept of class struggle and the role of the communist party in it. It required “ an obligation to interpret all internal and foreign policy, economical, cultural and social phenomena from the point of view of the party”. Truthfulness was connected with the difference in interpretation of the Russian words pravda (truth) which refers to truth as the right interpretation, and with the word istina (truth) which is connected with material, objective reality. Truthfulness in soviet ideology and practice meant matter-of-fact objectivity in the handling of one’s work. Realism was a logical consequence of truthfulness. It meant that facts did not need to be only truthfully expressed but also analyzed in order “to distinguish from the present task those which can be solved only in the future.” (Pietiläinen 1994: 21–24.)

In correspondence with the principle of democratic centralism, the ability to criticize the party committee of a municipal area was reserved for
the higher administrative level party committee and its press. It was not for
the local soviet or media. Critique was meant to be constructive from the
point of view of improving the existing socialist system. Neither could it be
directed at single administrators – although it could be concerned with the
over all control of the direction of state affairs. (Pietiläinen 1994: 22, 26.)
Local ideas needed to be approved at the higher level which exercised wide
discretion. Because of the centralized restricted access to information, the
right of citizens to take part in the handling of state affairs through the press
was limited.

As in its relationship with law which was steered toward the sustainment,
consolidation and building of a nomenklatura led life, the state had a
utilitarian relationship with information. For administrative culture this
had meant that even such information which would have been vital for the
well being of citizens was not disclosed. In many cases this led to poorly
planned and executed decisions which were also costly. The central power
(which was represented in the administration throughout the country)
became the only official subject and discussant, and thus did not have
anyone to exchange information with (Pietiläinen 1994: 59).

In actuality the soviet administration consisted of layers of non-public
information: the nomenklatura system in itself, non-public party
instructions and classified line decisions of the central administration. This
system of information classification coincided with the organizational non-
written rules of the administrative market. In this system the overpowering
political administration linked different administrations to an information
storage system.

Even technically, the local level in this information storage system was
not able to rely on information which would have allowed it to actually
predict future economic developments. Besides, such activity was beyond
the role of the local bureaucracies. Although the local level actually provided
the information though the vertical line of information processing, its
potential to form a realistic general opinion about the whole country was
limited by the central policy on information.

Finally, along with the media, the court system had a very different
formal position and role than that in the liberal-democratic model. The
court system was incorporated structurally into the representative
administration. The court had a less significant direct control impact on the
creation of administrative culture than it has in liberal-democratic countries.
Sungurov has described how many civil organizational conflicts where
resolved outside of the court system within the administrative hierarchy either by the supervisor in charge, or if they involved different organizations, by the state arbitration system. The same was with cases of work disputes which were first evaluated by a special commission, and then if needed by the trade union. The court system was reserved for criminal cases, although even a part of these were decided by the militia directly. (Sungurov 1998: 73.)

Legal protection meant different things for different individuals in the Soviet system. The nomenklatura was above the court system save for the most serious crimes. The political bureaucracy acted as the investigator and court through its own control structures in these cases. The sanctions which the party used were often either party disciplinary acts or in more serious cases, transfers to another place of work. For ordinary party members, criminal cases usually meant an expulsion from the party, after which a person went through the court system without the protection of this status. The party did not wait for the court ruling on criminal cases, expulsion took place as a result of criminal prosecution itself. (Sungurov 1998: 73–74.)

The independence of the court system and workers in the legal profession at the courts, was also limited by the fact that the selection of judges and their tenure depended on party nomination and that a judge worked only for 2–4 years at a time. The candidates where officially named by the legal departments of the executive committees of the soviets in question who were also in charge of the work in the courts. At the same time, the parallel department of the political administration confirmed these candidates. In addition to these formal restraints, the life and career prospects of a judge was depended upon party decision making just like every one else’s. How fast and where he received an apartment, whether there was room for his child in the day care center close to home, and all practical daily matters depended on having good relations with the administrators within the executive and party committees of the town. (Sungurov 1998: 75.)

At the beginning of the Gorbachev led reform period during 1985–1986, the ideology of administrative change took the form of a “speeding of development” (uskorenie) the central administrative purpose of which was the elevation of the effectiveness of the socialist system. Ideologically the concepts of discipline and intensification were used as key words along with glasnost which represented “socialist pluralism” in thinking and public media. (Walker 1993: 77–78.)

Mikhail Gorbachev approached the Soviet administrative culture of with a program in which the cornerstones were the concepts of perestroika and
glasnost. The glasnost era can well be described as an attempt to revive the local level decision making culture through structural changes. In fact, the term “self-government” was rarely in use before 1985 in the Soviet Union. (Lapteva 1996: 31.)

The political ideology of administrative change concentrated on the reformation of the economic administration. The primary manifest purposes of reform were:

- Adding to the efficiency of centralized economic decision making, while at the same time ridding the center of its interference with the operative management of lower hierarchies.
- Widening the independence of economic units and their responsibility over results by making their pay depend upon results.
- Bettering the systems of pricing, financing and credits, and creating systems of incentives.
- Developing work place discipline.
- Glasnost in information.
- Democratization of the administration by adding local control and transparency.
- Securing the best combination of different hierarchies and sectoral divisions of administration.
- Reviving legal consciousness/socialist law-based society.


Essentially the purposes can be seen as a modified version of the traditional Soviet leadership’s attempt to eradicate the cleavage between real cultures (for instance Kordonskii’s ideal type behavior) and official (normative) ones. The change in the administrative ideology mostly took place in the content of the methods used. The replacement of old definitions in propaganda and relaxation of repressive sanctions in political matters were aimed to create a new atmosphere were problems could be faced through local initiative.

The economic goals were connected with the situation dominating all areas of Soviet society. The plan and the system of information collection had structurally consolidated a rational aspect to the Soviet administration. The plan however had come to have a much wider social meaning. One of its main side-effects was to nurture a sense of limited responsibility as an
accepted standard for achievement. Harri Melin (1998) has described the plan as a matter of fact law which was taken for granted by production management. The management was willing to go a long way to get their factory its bonuses for meeting the plan’s targets. (Melin 1998: 141.) The manager’s main task was ensuring financial help from the ministries and timely deliveries from suppliers. As the management did not have cash flow rights (rights to control the money going in and coming out of the business or activity), work became more administratively routine than business building. As a side-effect, maintenance and cost control did not have a high priority. (Boycko, Schleifer and Vishny 1994: 3.)

In his speech to the XXVII Party conference on 25.2.1986 Gorbachev underlined the need to give up the historical outlook on former achievements in the party program and concentrate instead on questions of quality as a key to progress. The need to meet the goals of social programs could not be met without a new outlook on the growth of the economy. This meant first of all the reconstruction of investment and structural policies. In Gorbachev’s view, attention should have been moved from the quantity of production to its quality, and from expansion of resources to their reorganization. In this attempt, the machine building industry played an important role because in it, fundamental scientific-technical ideas materialized. Automation in production was a key element in the development of efficiency. (Materialy XXVII S´ezda Kommunisticheskoi Partii Sovetskogo Soiuza 1986: 93, 24–26.)

As the primary purpose of the reform, Gorbachev raised solving the food production problem. In this field particularly he saw the need to concentrate on new ways of management, wider independence of collective farms and their corresponding new responsibilities. Prioritizing those areas of production which were crucial in funding would give opportunities to the stable development of agriculture. Raising the self-consciousness of farms over these questions would have in, Gorbachev’s ideology, been the creative adaptation of Lenin’s principle on food tax. (Materialy XXVII S´ezda Kommunisticheskoi Partii Sovetskogo Soiuza 1986: 30–32.)

Rhetorically the development of the new interpretations of doctrine introduced the concept of self-government by the people (Materialy XXVII S´ezda Kommunisticheskoi Partii Sovetskogo Soiuza 1986 : 55). This was not a minor aspect of Gorbachev’s reform thinking. The self-government by local communities was contrary to the political guidance based on democratic centralism. Centralism was meant to ensure the protection and
growth of socialist society in which all interests would be equal and harmful separatism could not lay roots in any area of the country. “Too much of localness” was deemed to be antagonistic to the general well being of people. Guidance over these rules thus emphasized the need to follow the hierarchy in every decision. The intent was to exercise power in the interest of the whole society so as to avoid “a vulgar democracy” which hid anti-social acts and demagogy. Structurally a socialist society could not mean a combination of autonomous production communes because these would have undermined the purposes of the whole socialist economy. Culturally this led to the avoidance of being “too different”, in other words seeking excessive local freedom. (Afanas´ev 1971:191–192.)

Gorbachev threw away the idea that local activeness would automatically mean risks for the Soviet state. Instead, he underlined the active role of local soviets in the decision making of daily services and criticized the center for controlling matters which it could not see from far away. He furthermore introduced the idea that the interrelations between different enterprises and the local soviet needed to be re-examined. The cooperation of the soviet, particularly its permanent commissions, and the executive committee also needed to be made more effective by demanding that the executive side took the proposals of the soviets seriously. In addition, Gorbachev suggested that different social organizations would be more intensely involved in the decision making of the soviets by activating member participation in the development of proposals. (Materialy XXVII S´ezda Kommunisticheskoi Partii Sovetskogo Soiuza 1986: 55–57.)

Yet, as Giulietto Chiesa (1995) has pointed out, it is important to notice that the transition ideology which Gorbachev initiated, was a defining moment that marked a withdrawal from the ideological explanations of the earlier times. In essence, the perestroika policies represented an attempt to de-stalinize the system for the second time – after Khrushchev – at a deeper level. (Chiesa 1995: 368, 379.) Here, however, it becomes important to make a distinction between doctrine and ideology. The doctrine, the core values of the political ideology were not to be touched. Only their ideological interpretation was to be re-examined for the needed strategic choices.

Mikhail Gorbachev´s policies were steered more toward activating the local level decision making by waking up a passive citizenship than creating “general freedom”. The flow of a new type of information and opening of discussion on many social issues not dealt with before, set in motion a
process in which there appeared not only a growing awareness of choices and undaunted behavior from ordinary Soviet citizens, but competing ideas inside the ruling elite. This led to the government seeking support from the grass roots (Pietiläinen 1994:64). For administration this meant the starting point of changes in which its role would be under constant re-evaluation even as its planning, decision making and execution of decisions were still shielded by the party’s position.

The central theme of the program of the XXVII Party Congress in 1986 which was presented by Mikhail Gorbachev, was the further development of unsatisfactorily developed socialist democracy. The work of soviets, unions, the Komsomol and different work collectives was mentioned as important for speeding up this process. Glasnost was marketed to mean the revival of the Leninist activism which denounced the earlier line of “government being a privilege of a narrow group of professionals”. Still, the doctrine of democratic centralism and the party as the leader of the society were initially kept intact. The emphasis was on ensuring that the local soviets could in fact govern their geographical area, and be interested in the results of those local enterprises which were at the same time under the direction of higher organs within the hierarchy. (Materialy XXVII S´ezda Kommunisticheskoi Partii Sovetskogo Soiuza 1986: 55–56.) This contradiction created a risk from the outset.

Glasnost was connected to the reform of the economic and later representational administrations with the party position intact. Gorbachev wished to create an atmosphere were the circulation of accurate information was possible by relaxing censorship and political control of the media, science and culture. The purpose was to increase more accurate information about the functioning of the system in the decision making organs and subject at least a part of this decision making to public evaluation. Officials would then become more accountable for their actions and ordinary citizens would have the courage to point out misconduct and shortcomings. The citizen, in other words, would have a new sense of dignity in the society. (Walker 1993: 110–111.)

The nomenklatura was in essence the inner party – the people who were in a position to make decisions and advance through the system. This elite was in a paradoxical situation. While it received a secured position and much better future opportunities than those who were not chosen to the lists of appointments, it was also much more controlled. Yet the party was instrumental in everyone’s life, regardless of membership. Receiving a trip
abroad, decisions about apartments, decorations, and many other issues
demanded an assessment from the person’s work place which was signed
by the organization leadership, party secretary and union leader. (Sungurov
1998: 46.) Glasnost created a risk of negative information leakage about this
system while perestroika started to destabilize the economical bargaining
in the administrative market.

Glasnost was an attack on the secretive and protective information
atmosphere in the government. Yet it was strategically included in the
definition of pravda (truth in the functional sense as right interpretation).
Glasnost was officially interpreted to be the new basic norm of Soviet life
which included not only publicness and accessibility of information, but
the quantity of well-informed citizens. The activeness of the soviets in
informing a wide group of people of important matters was stressed. The
political justification of for the distribution of information was the definition
of pravda, another basic tenant of the Communist ideology. Yet this time, it
became closer than before to the actual objective truth (istina) by underlining
the functional necessity to know about threats to people’s daily lives.
(Bezuglov & Kriazhkov 1988: 7,10.)

The other tenant which was officially underlined in the political
legitimation of glasnost in administrative decision making, was the Soviet
Constitution. The right to be informed was found to be protected by the
Constitution and, furthermore, it was seen as contributing a legal basis for
the further development of glasnost. The generality of the constitutional
text was now interpreted to support other laws widening the citizens’ activity.
(Bezuglov & Kriazhkov 1988: 37.)

Since 1987/89, the political ideology started to emphasize features which
Rachel Walker has named “the political revolution from above” (Walker
1993). These ideas were ignited at the 19th Party Conference in June 1988
where a political program of change was adopted formally. In essence it was
full frontal ideological attack against the administrative command system
as it existed in the Soviet Union. A new aspect in Gorbachev’s political
thinking was the idea of learning from the practice of other countries which
had liberal-democratic traditions. This meant advancing the rule of law,
introducing a system of checks and balances and holding competitive
elections to secure accountability and prevent the abuse of power. A new
concept of “socialist law-based state” was founded. The aim was a social
contract in which individuals rights were respected and the administration-
party was under legal control (Shelley 1992: 68). For the administration, the
new modification of the reform ideology had economic, institutional and legal purposes.

The concept of a law-based state assumed that there could be independence of control organizations in the system of an administrative market. The hierarchy of decision makers to which this new idea was most essential included the chairman of the committee for people’s control, the oblast prosecutor and the chairman of the regional court, heads of inspection subordinate to the republican level, and the heads of inspection subordinate to the regional level (including municipal inspectorates and courts). (Kordonskii 2000: 41.)

The administrative law practices in the Soviet Union had several problems regarding rule of law administration. The first example was the hierarchy of norms which depended on the “market rules” of the bureaucracies at the local and regional levels.

The second problem was the official and functional role of the prosecutor’s office which had a multitude of important tasks. The prosecutors had in fact worked quite intensively in advancing citizens complaints against administrative actions. Complaints had been raised against decisions about housing, pensions and other social services. They also included infringements by officials of citizens’ labor rights and illegal impositions of administrative fines. Yet there were several problems associated with this institution in terms of legal protection. The first was the prosecutor’s absolute discretion to either drop or pursue the investigation of the matter. The second was that the citizens’ option to advance their rights was retrospective. Citizens were not an active party in the development of conditions which underlined their role as subjects of the state. Third, since the party was closely involved in the policy guidance of the prosecutors, citizens were not likely to seek redress in cases which resulted in open conflict with the party bureaucracy. Fourth, the prosecutor’s office was often most interested in issues which coincided with the state’s interests, particularly economic ones. Individual rights as such were not considered. (Smith 1997: 353.)

The historically burdened position of the supra-legal prosecutors and the view that political positions override law, made the introduction of the rule-of-law state as an ideological tool quite bold. As Hammer has pointed out, “the Soviet citizens [had] developed some sense that, if they obeyed the law, the law would leave them alone” (Hammer 1986: 172). The administrative market mechanisms had however, also developed a critical survival instinct which required some law breaking by way of mutual understanding. Legality
as a social goal was thus something that was contrary to the social functionality of the prevailing culture. This was not a matter of “illegality” as such, it was merely a side effect of the lack of the separation of powers.

Even as laws did exist, their interpretation could not be tested in an independent court outside the reach of the party. There was no civil society discussing the content of legislation and its implications for the population since the non-party organizations did not officially exist. Social activism, if it can be called such, was confined within the building of networks of family, friends and colleagues against daily difficulties. This further strengthened the social control of the party in terms of the administrative identity of the executive bureaucracy. For administrators this simultaneously meant a double identity of professional expertise without the independence usually attached to such positions. There was limited personal responsibility for policy issues since the workplace was not the primary place for such planning. Unintentionally, this intensified the need for monitoring and direct control.

Questions of legality collided with the administrative market in which state institutions, formal hierarchies and relations in them were mostly non-independent civil service elements which sustained one’s position in it. Instead of underlining laws and their execution in the Soviet system, it is possible to see the administrative logic as one in which actors in the administrative market operated so as to be able to redistribute the resources produced by enterprises more or less satisfactorily in order to secure the functioning of society. Structural conflicts concerning competence of different levels of actors were submitted to higher soviet and party committees, rather than to the courts. (Lapteva 1996: 319, comp. Kordonskii 2000: 79.)

Both at the rhetorical and institutional level the ideological return to “socialist roots” was imperfect. This was to be done via strengthening the role of the soviets at the local level as legislators, administrative organs of self-government and bodies overseeing the local work of state organs. Legislative power was to be transferred from the party structure (which had become administrative by nature) to the soviets and to establish relations of accountability and oversight between legislative and executive bodies. Economically, the new purposes included more industrial democracy which would empower workers to elect their management and influence decision-making. Legally, it became important to lay the foundation for the idea of the rule of law by way of constitutional change and reform of the legal system. (Walker 1993: 119-122.)
The ideological development which Gorbachev initiated reached its peak during 1989–1990 in the acceptance of freer elections at the local level. Ideologically this period can be called “the revolution from below” (Walker 1993). During this period the most significant issue became that of elections to supreme and local soviets and the effective abolition of democratic centralism. It is noteworthy that eventually the ideology of administrative change was most dramatic in terms of the political administration. The local representative administration was given special attention in the ideological reform programs. At the same time the party became the primary target of reforms because this was central for the needed political and economic changes to take place. Yet, Gorbachev did not address the party directly. He talked about the side-effects of the administrative market in relation to the economic and representative administrations and even the control administration, but the party as such was not touched. Yet it was evident that none of the wanted purposes – glasnost of opinion, rule of law in a socialist state, effective economy with incentives for work, and local control over important municipal matters – were possible without changes in the mechanisms of the party dominated administrative market.

5.2 Structural Changes: State Building Since 1986

In the economic administration perestroika attempted to streamline the heavy system. This led to several structural rearrangements: 1) Concentrating more power at the top as an attempt to make coordination more effective. This was mainly done by creating bodies which coordinated related ministries. An example was the Bureau for Machine-Building which coordinated the work of several ministries. 2) Reducing the number of ministries through mergers of related ministries and through the reducing of staff. An example was the Gosagroprom which was the result of a merger of five agricultural-industrial ministries. 3) Reducing staff at the center. For instance, the Gosplan staff was reduced from 2,650 to 1,095 between 1986 and 1988. 4) Encouraging local initiative of which an example was the passing of Law on Individual Labor Activity in 1986, which legalized small scale private activity in the service sectors. Its main effect was the start of a new thinking in this field. Streamlining the system, for instance, brought formal organizational changes, but amounted mainly to changing party
officials to new Gorbachev appointees. (Walker 1993: 77, 103, 04.) From the point of view of the purposes of the political ideology these changes were attempts to alleviate the dysfunctions of the old culture, instead of creating a new way of work.

The first strategies of perestroika included promoting individual activity in the work places by emphasizing and re-establishing professionalism and commitment. The anti-alcohol campaign and the campaign against unearned incomes used disciplinary action against drunkenness, general laziness and corruption at work. (Walker 1993: 107.)

Individual activity and ethical working behavior had been regulated by the Code of Labor. This gave the labor union committee of enterprises, administrative organizations and other public organizations the right to propose the expulsion or removal of such managers and directors who did not comply with the requirements of the labor contract but instead behaved in a bureaucratic manner and broke the Code of Labor. This right by the labor union had been exercised quite widely in the Brezhnev era. For example between 1976–1980, approximately 50,000 officials were relieved from their work. In addition, the right to propose the removal of an official was given to inspectors of working safety and to the prosecutor´s office. (Stavtseva & Nikitinski 1984: 27–29.)

In addition to possible criminal proceedings, the violation of “administrative responsibility” had meant a fine of a particular sum determined by the law. (Stavtseva & Nikitinski 1984: 29.) The Gorbachev reforms attempted to strengthen the labor market with an essentially ethical campaign since the laws and official punitive measures were not enough to rid the economy from serious risks brought to it by alcoholism and indifference. Again, the attempt was mostly to alleviate the byproducts of the administrative market in which a type of “that which one does not see, one does not know” was a part of the social harmony.

The falling living standards and popular discontents are often confused with the causes of Gorbachev´s reforms. Yet in the 1970´s and in the early 1980´ s the Soviet public generally considered their lives essentially normal. For instance, Vladimir Shlapentokh has cited both the Goskomstat statistics in 1988 and an alternative study made by G.I Khanin in 1996 which both show a growth in personal consumption between 1975–1985. (Shlapentokh 1998: 31.) The fact that the quality of products was often not satisfactory was still less important than a possibility to provide one´s home with needed equipment.
In this context the policy of speeding up development, which took the form of an ambitious five-year plan for 1986–1990, was critical for the attempt at state building. It was hoped to attack low growth and poor productivity. It inflated targets in the hope that it would activate people to try their best in their work places. A serious risk which arose as a result was that the new five year plan undermined the bargaining process essential to central planning. The most fundamental of all economic changes which affected the attainment of plan goals was the break up of the supply system. This was done by changing the rules of enterprise planning and distribution of the output, and by changing the position of the institutions which coordinated these processes, along Gossnab and sectoral ministries. (Freinkman 1998: 188.)

Gosplan, which was in charge of the administrative creation of the central plan, and Gorbachev did not agree on the contents. This was an additional burden which raised the risk of non-compliance with central commands as republics, different ministries, their departments, local factories and other organizations in the decision making chain tried to protect their interests. As a side-effect of the ambitious plan, which involved further long-term institutional changes and economic reforms introduced from 1987 on, economical dysfunctions grew. (Walker 1993:103.)

The economical decline was intertwined in the regional and local political developments in several ways. As the expansion of regional political autonomy (also a result of glasnost) was allowed, resources needed to be directed downwards to enable the party’s regional committees to coordinate matters. The stronger regional authorities and the large enterprises situated in their geographical area often formed alliances which changed the center’s position in planning and control of enterprises. The 1987 Law on State Enterprise made the directors in the economic bureaucracy even more independent by making them elected rather than appointed. (Freinkman 1998: 189.)

Freinkman (1998) has described how experienced directors in the economic administration could opportunistically exploit the under-developed legal conditions to extract profit. More importantly, the inconsistent implementation of economic reforms eroded the respect for authority. Particularly serious for public image were the state quality control, campaign against unearned income and anti-alcohol campaigns. Experiments which were intended to expand the independence of enterprises were executed without the required budget constraints. This in
turn raised the directors’ expectations and increased political pressure to have further liberalization. (Freinkman 1998: 189.)

As a result of the crises in the economy, lines and shortages were the everyday struggle of the soviet citizens. This meant that the consumption sector, vital for the popular support of perestroika, was in serious trouble. Between 1989 and 1990 the number of goods which were not delivered according to the state plan increased four times while at the same time many goods were traded for others. As a result, those areas which did not produce food (particularly the military ones) suffered the most and the local authorities started to pass their own actions in effort to protect the interests of their community. (Lane 1992: 4–50.)

While glasnost was greeted with enthusiasm and used as a means to effect political changes, radical economic changes were not welcomed. Radical economic changes would have been accepted if an immediate improvement in life was possible. This attitude was not changed by the growing economical difficulties of the perestroika period. Even in 1990 when the shortages of goods had dramatically increased, the idea of freeing all food prices was not accepted. Only about half accepted partial deregulation of food prices. Instead, a firmer general order was hoped for by many citizens. (Shlapentokh 1998: 38.)

In comparison with the streamlining of the system at the top, the legal changes which created the formal space of local representational and economic decision making were an attempt to affect the mechanisms sustaining the local administrative market. Of all the legal changes made during the perestroika time, the first truly meaningful one was enacted in April 1990 as “A Law on General Principles of Local Self-Government and Local Economy in the USSR” which for the first time guaranteed the legal position of local government in relation to municipal ownership. The concept of local self-government was founded in the lexicon of political decision making through the adoption of the law. The practical tool for this developing autonomy was to be “communal property” which guaranteed that the economic basis of municipal rule would consist of natural resources, houses and other communal property from which income could be collected. Relations with companies belonging to the jurisdiction of the municipality would be based on taxation or contracts. Local taxes could be decided by the local soviet. This meant that the localities could now, in principle, make their own budgets. In addition, foreign trade rights were given to local soviets. (Korzhikhina 1995: 363–364, Piskotin 1993: 74–79.)
Yet, the question of municipal ownership was not as simple as the change of law. The party owned and controlled many important municipal resources such as buildings and newspapers. The decision making role of the party in the affairs of the economic sector maintained it as the director of local enterprises, making it a powerful negotiator against the local soviets. In addition, the local soviets were powerless because the planning system continued to centralize economic decision making. (Walker 1993: 146.)

The rule of double subordination was in this way abolished but since, in practice, everything was still state owned, the formal powers given to the localities did not result in their growing autonomy. The center remained the actual decision maker. Not long after, a law in October 1990 reinstated the co-subordination of higher and lower levels of power. (Piskotin 1993: 74–79.)

In purely legal terms, the position of the representative administration in the municipalities was still determined by the old Constitution of 1977. In addition to this, the regulations of the Communist party accepted in March 1986 were the legally binding framework for political bureaucracy at the local level. According to this document, the Communist Party acted in the frames of the Constitution to direct politically state and social organizations and to coordinate their work. The communists working in these organizations had the duty to ensure that they fully followed their constitutional rights and duties, and attracted working people into the administration to decide different questions. The party organizations did not change soviet, labor union, cooperative or other social organizations, or allow the mixing of their duties with the party. (Ustav Kommunisticheskoi Partii Sovetskogo Soiuza 1986: 60–62.)

The revised regulations of the party were interesting for two reasons. First of all that they pointed out the supremacy of the Constitution as the basis for legality. Secondly they described the duties of party members to act as supervisors and controllers of constitutional order in state and other organizations. In purely legal terms this had always been a strange situation since the party was not mentioned in the Constitution. It was also strange in the sense that it continued a double control system: one by the party, the other by the prosecutor’s office. The policy making and monitoring power of party bureaucracy in the judicial system continued and seriously undermined the attempt to introduce rule of law principles into institutional practices.

Three laws did however contribute to the creation of a new formal decision making process and authority structure in the Soviet Union. These
were “Changes and additions to the Constitution of the USSR” and “Election of people’s representatives” in 1988 and “Post of the President of the USSR and additions to the Constitution of USSR” in 1990. As a result of these laws, a new hierarchy of decision making was created in the highest state government: president, Congress of People’s representatives of USSR, the Supreme Soviet of USSR, Council of Federation and the Committee of State Inspection. (Korzhikhina 1995: 354.)

Law making was the work of the Congress of People’s representatives which was composed of 2,250 representatives selected on the basis of a territorial system of selection. The Congress convened once a year and chose by secret ballot those who would form the Supreme Soviet. This was a two chamber full time working organ of legislative and executive power. The Soviet had a structure of commissions, each of which specialized in a sector of the economy. The composition of delegates in the 1989 Supreme Soviet was the following: 165 industrial, building, transportation and communication workers, 98 workers of farming, 151 academic workers, journalists and representatives of culture, 87 party and soviet officials. Of these 442 were men and 100 women. Along with the commissions, there were permanent committees which worked in the structure of the Supreme Soviet. The committees could be divided into sub-committees to study practical conditions concerning some issue. In all, about 800 representatives worked either in the commissions or in the committees. (Korzhikhina 1995: 356–358.)

In the end of the perestroika period, in April 1991, a Cabinet of Ministers was founded to handle the government policy making of the executive side. Heads of republics could take part in its work with a voting right. The emphasis of the work was on the economic infrastructure of the state: unitary financial, credit and monetary policy in all parts of the state, the making of the Union budget, all-union economic programs and energy and transport systems. (Korzhikhina 1995: 360.)

The central sectoral administration went through a cultural change of strategies in the sense that it was to be the main state wide structure through which a market economy was to be introduced in the Soviet Union. In this developing system of state decision making, the local government was going through a revaluation as a result of three different developments which Vladimir Gelman has named “the effects of governmental democratization, federalization and diversification”. These processes started during the period which, for the first time, allowed limited political
competition in local elections. Ideologically the Communist party gave up its constitutional role of leadership of society and replaced it with a new concept of “dominant force”. The elections were important for the creation of electoral accountability and subordination of local bodies of decision making to the public. (Gelman 1998:88.)

Along with the change away from the one mandate district election system, the laws concerning elections of people’s representatives brought other changes along with (for the first time since the 1936 Constitution) unitary time limits of five years for the work of higher and lower level organizations. In terms of development toward the separation of powers and constitutional control over decision making, the local soviets were given the authority for supervision of other state organs and officials working in them. Thus, persons who were members of the parallel local party executive committees (ispolkom), heads of state agencies, administration of party executive committees, judges, arbitrators and so on, could not be representatives in the local soviets which appointed them. (Korzhikhina 1995: 363.)

During the same period The Declaration of Sovereignty of the Russian Federation on June 2nd in 1990, had laid down the principle of the separation of powers. This meant a clear break with the Constitution of the Soviet Union and the beginning of a separate administration at all levels of the government. In particular, the head of the town administration, who was in direct control of all departments and was to be elected by the local population, became important. The confusion over new roles and power struggles over tactics made the new heads of administration targets for criticism. Different types of conflicts between the local soviet and the head were typical. (Sheremet 1993: 92–97.)

The diversification of the forms and practices of the local level had also taken place as a result of both democratization and federalization. Local soviets were showing different types of ruling systems already at the beginning of the 1990’s. There were more parliamentary or mixed systems of decision making and the regional legislative bodies had become more autonomous from the party. These developments also took different shapes in different parts of the country. (Gelman 1998: 90.)

The problem from the point of view of actual growth in representational power was that the political administration retained its position in local affairs. It was in no way in the institutional interests of the party officials and those who held nomenklatura positions to alter the foundations of
their authority. The local government, in this situation, became one of intensified conflicts between different bureaucracies all trying to effect the future of the municipality and their own social-economic interests.

The CPSU (Communist party) as a nationwide institution and the glue of the administrative market, lost the power to control and integrate the affairs of the soviets across the USSR. Factional fights inside the party itself added to the difficulties of state government. The party had become openly divided into sub-groups which advanced different policies. (Walker 1993: 151.) As a result of the different elements which changed its bargaining position in the administrative market, the party consented to removing its “leading role” from the Constitution in 1990. Ideologically and legally this changed the basis of the administrative market and left the local arena open for new formations of decision making.

The diversification of local soviet work was connected with the developments of the glasnost policy. Glasnost was important for the administration in several ways. It connected the work of administration with the local media, which was used as an information channel. The more open public debate and access to information led to the development of a legal consciousness. As a result a norm hierarchy, clear authority relations in the administrative market, the development of administrative practices and clearly sanctioned limitations as to the discretion of individual officials became important. All of these were addressed during the reform period. (For instance, Bezuglov & Kriazhkov 1988: 41–42.)

The control administration was forced to start its own reform as the right of citizens to be informed, heard and receive information concerning their cases, was an important element in the beginning developments of the rule of law. The reform attempts of the prosecutor’s office were included into the building of administrative accountability. A practical obstacle in the way of social development was the limited right of citizens to challenge administrators in court. In the 1987 law, only individual administrators could be taken to court even though in administrative practice most questions were decided collectively. A 1989 law introduced in 1990 gave citizens the right to challenge collective decisions and file complaints against both individual administrators and state organs. (Shelley 1992: 69, Jordan 2000: 204.)

The prosecutors assumed a new role as a side-effect of the authority vacuum developing at the local level since the 1990 elections. These elections had brought along new deputies who, now freer from party control, began to pass legislation and directives which sometimes contradicted state laws.
The official protests by prosecutors in these cases suspended the execution of these normative acts. The prosecutors became judges who oversaw the legality of the work of the soviets. In this paradoxical sense, the once feared and resented body became a defender of legal unity. (Smith 1997: 352)

Gorbachev’s reform of the court system aimed to make it more independent from the political and representational administrations. A 1989 “Law on the Status of Judges” extended the tenure of judges to ten years. It also made the regional level soviet the selection organ in order to make the judges less dependent on the local administrators on social benefits. The law established judicial qualification panels whose staff were chosen in principle by the judges themselves. At the same time, though, these changes did not change the dependence of judges on higher officials working in the system. (Jordan 2000: 199.) While the administrative market still tried to work on the same basic principles as before, court reform was mostly a step indicating that the existing system had dysfunctions.

Political and economical choices became one and the same in the state building of the perestroika period. The institutional challenges of reducing organizations and their staff, changing the party’s position in the administration of the country and defining boundaries of authority and discretion; the economic challenges of keeping the supply channels working while diminishing political control of local decision making; and developing economic legislation and rules, as well as the political challenge of losing control of the administrative market, were all the tasks of state building in the perestroika period. These began a cultural transition of the administrative market and created a separation of previously unified entities.

5.3 The Administrative Culture at the End of Perestroïka: Dysfunctions in Place of Politically Controlled Bureaucratic Bargaining

Perestroika meant a transition in which the administrator simultaneously the legal, ideological and material resources of work while being forced to create a new sense of direction. Normally exceptional adaptation mechanisms to political and economic instability became a standard routine of everyday life both inside and outside of the work place. The perestroika administration reacted to the risks produced by a dysfunctional system.
The attempt to bridge the gap between the manifest and latent administrative cultures resulted in changes in the power balances of the administrative market. Kordonskii has pointed out that before the perestroika time, the traditional categories of authority, ownership and power did not have a meaning in the social stratification (Kordonskii 2000: 161) of any part of the market. Perestroika presented itself as an attempt to change the social importance of the local level actor groups in the economic and representational administrations.

Glasnost made the unofficial dialects of language officially public. This meant that gossip, hear-say and myths of state realities typical of the dissident dialect were introduced in the state mass media. At the same time the political changes institutionalized the dissident personalities. (Kordonskii 2000: 12.) These started to have influence at all levels of society and in all administrations.

A result was a clash of power holders in the administrative market. Christopher Williams has identified three groups which contributed to the structural difficulties of the change: the political opposition forces in the upper echelons of the party, the bureaucratic opposition of the ministries which were losing their former role, and the opposition of the enterprise directors dealing with shortages and other practical problems. These problems were not made easier by the public’s fear of unemployment and falling living standards. (Williams 1996:10.) In Simon Kordonskii’s categories the first two would be from the “functionaries” group, while the third group could have included “ordinary people”. In addition, he sees that many members of the old soviets opposed the changes (Kordonskii 2000: 174), although they were institutionally on the gaining side.

The de-stabilization of the administrative market relations was an unintended administrative side-effect of perestroika. A risk administration culture appeared in all of the four administrations. Kordonskii has described this as a process in which the legalizing of the unofficial groups and dialects neutered the meaning the official classes had for administrative work and also rendered membership of unofficial groups unnecessary. (Kordonskii 2000: 177.) Structural changes in state building which led to the creation of a risk administration culture can be grouped into three basic categories: legal authority changes in the administrative market, changes in the supply system of economic planning, and changes between institutions and law. Social changes took place as a result of glasnost and work ethic reforms.
Risks were created because the economical growth purposes of the political ideology would have needed policies which intensified the existing capabilities of the administrative market. In this arena, the main incentive had been political necessity from which all else had followed. Necessity was forced upon other actors in the market by the party at the local and regional levels. The political changes of perestroika combined with the economical strategies that followed, broke this dependency. Since systemic change was not the original goal of the administrative changes, the reforms did not have a clear institutional direction.

In comparison with the pre-perestroika Soviet executive committees, which were a direct extension of sectoral economical administration and were guided by the political administration, the new local level administration was acquiring meaning as a legal participant in local matters. The end of the perestroika/glasnost period brought about mostly structural legal changes which, for the first time, gave formally wider political participation rights for Soviet citizens.

The executive committees of the soviets in the municipalities received a new power position in the state hierarchy as the soviets received new authority. In the legal changes and in the elections which followed, the local government assumed an importance which it had not had since the early years after the 1917 revolution. The soviets were given a chance to influence territorial development and mayors started to act as political leaders in their geographical areas. The diversification a and federalization processes at the local and regional levels broke the soviet tenet that all institutions had fully similar identities. Regional concerns began to be included in public discussions.

Yet, the position of the local government at the end of the perestroika/glasnost period was overwhelmed by uncertainty over what should in fact constitute the limits of its actions in the administrative market. The political leadership of the country had unleashed the development but was no longer in control of it. The political calculations of political direction and power balance on one hand, and the need to have some economic policy unity on the other hand made the issue of local government critical for success. The administrative problems of the Soviet economy together with diminishing financial support from the center, made problem solving often too demanding for the local level.

The uncertain authority relations were a factor in the risks which led to the dramatic events at the beginning of the 1990’s. Furthermore, the local
level did not act in a unified manner. There was institutional competition between the representational administration and political administration. The fight over the fate of the provinces was a major factor in the attempted coup of 1991. As Vladimir Gelman has shown, the reversal of the rule of double subordination created much legal confusion at the local level. This had been done in an effort to correct the situation which was evident everywhere after the local elections. The normative regulation of the decision making organs was practically non-existent and the soviets had taken over the authority of the executive organs. The new independence from the party meant tense relations with the regional party committees which lead to conflicts at the regional level. In this situation, the first elections for the president of Russia, as well as for the mayors (heads of town administrations) were held in June 1991. (Gelman 1998: 91–92.)

The slow reforms in the political administration seriously impeded the possibility for strategically balanced changes in the administrative market. The piece-meal attempts at remedying the intensified dysfunctions of the Soviet government eroded trust in the authority of the state as a provider of order and stability.

Economic realities made planning in all sectors of administration more difficult. The economic growth ideology, which had sustained the economic administration and helped sustain the whole administrative market, disappeared. Guidance of administrative work eroded as the political language and methods of pressure began to change. New information, new legal and economical rights created expectations while the worsening services in municipalities created frustration at the local administration and its officials. Political risks rose the same way as in the reform periods of 19th century Russia when the political order of the country was kept in one place for too long.

The vertical confusion of powers in the administrative markets (both local and regional) greatly affected the transition to a market economy (or the mixed economy, which was Gorbachev`s aim) by segmentation of the market and – particularly – by deterring foreign investment in Russia. Yet the independence of the local level created negative side-effects. Particularly harsh was the challenge faced by small and medium sized company towns. Their industrial enterprises were typically very large and lines of production were concentrated. When the support from the center diminished, the population was faced with complex situations. Moving away was not possible, because at the time there was no housing market. (Hanson 1993: 20–21.)
The economy of the local representational administration was having risk society (see Beck 1996 and Yanitsky 1999) characteristics. It was a semi-market, but without the market controls or competition. In addition guidance for the system was only just developing in terms of its authority and unclear to the administrators, who were situated in the municipal hierarchies. The economic changes were piece-meal instead of system wide, which led to giving new rights to institutions and areas inside the old planning system. The concept of communal property gave the municipalities a chance to have some autonomy. Decision making rights about local taxes and foreign trade raised expectations both administratively and politically. Theoretically these were radical changes from the past. In reality though, municipal budgets depended upon the planning system and the party owned and controlled many municipal resources which made autonomous economic decision making in the localities difficult, if not impossible.

It is not possible to say that the Gorbachev reforms did not try to manage the change in the basic mechanisms at the local level. More than anything else, this became the case when Gorbachev tried to introduce the rule of law ideas. Paradoxically, legality became a political tool for change. Law was again used in the reformation of the state instead of its normal role as a guarantor of its institutions. The idea that the Constitution was a measure of administrative work appeared in the Gorbachev years.

Perestroika meant a rupture in the administrative culture in terms of client relationship in a manner which had not been possible before. Glasnost set in a motion the diversification of the administration’s clientele on the basis of political, social, ethnic and other characteristics which was later reflected most vividly at the regional level in the 90’s. From the point of view of administrative law, this period encouraged the use of individual legal consciousness, although the practical area for its use was still to be born. Law became a tool for political changes, instead of being a conservative force in the service of the state (Shelley 1992: 64). In this sense, the development after the 1917 October Revolution were repeated in the reverse order. The first step in the perestroika era program was reminiscent of the first Russian Constitution of 1906 in the sense that the basic pillar of government was left in tact. In this case it was defined as a “socialist rule of law state” which aimed to create a space for human rights and a party which was legally controlled. In reality, the individual remained subordinate to the economical and political interests of the state. At the same time the widening
of political power in the local soviets meant new challenges for the administration. The prosecutors assumed new transitional roles as supervisors of legal unity within the municipalities.

The attempt to create rule of law in the socialist system as it existed in the economical conditions of Soviet Union was intertwined with the general reformation problems. First there was the avalanche of sub-laws and organizational instructions which in fact were more important than federal laws in the daily execution of policies. Second there was the immaturity of the idea that individual rights as such would have to be considered over all other considerations. This in turn would have required a solid norm hierarchy in which state laws are put before local and organizational rules. (Comp. Entin 1992: 360.)

Transitionally, rule of law ideas contradicted democratic centralism and thus the basis of the party’s existence in its former role. The reforms tried to modernize norm creation to give the local level a chance to be heard in the process. Yet, in the Soviet system, any kind of reform was possible only from the top (Pursiainen 2001: 87). Democratic centralism and new local activeness together produced new risks in the society. The answer, which was the application of rule of law ideas, was not genuinely possible in the soviet administrative market. The processes of the administrative market dominated actual decision making because law was a weak tool and the courts were confined to working under ministerial supervision. As a consequence, new risks arose in the form of institutional fighting inside the representational and political bureaucracies and between them. Legal changes thus contributed to the economic declined and *vice versa*. A cycle of transition was created. Gorbachev’s policies did not attempt, nor could they have, to change these relations at a more fundamental level.

Stephen Whitefield has written an extensive analysis of the ministerial system in the Soviet Union and its effect on the perestroika policies. He stresses the fact that the roots of the perestroika development problems lay most of all in the power of the central ministries which had depolitized the system and made other actors in the administrative market close to obsolete in terms of real power. The earlier reforms had always met with institutional cultural resistance from the ministry officials. For instance in the 1970’s the ministries could not be motivated to draw plans which would have included inter-branch considerations. On the contrary, ministerial officials learned to use the structural weaknesses of the system to their own benefit and independence. (Whitefield 1993: 80–81.)
The power of the party, in Whitefield’s view, was weak in terms of economical planning, execution of decisions at the local level and even in personnel policy. The main criteria in the assessment of one’s achievements was reaching the targets which were set by the ministry led economic system. Ministerial inefficiency in developing its own working mechanisms became evident in the lack of interest in using computers at work. Whitefield states that the operational control of state property gave the ministerial officials the rights of property owners. Inside the ministerial departments, a one man decision making culture reigned while the functional administrations sought to transfer all decisions to the top to reduce their own responsibilities. The office became a maximising unit because income (real and corrupt) depended upon finding the point of maximal gain in the public’s demand curve. (Whitefield 1993: 82–95, 105.) Whitefield’s assessment is that these structural features were a major part of the obstacle to change. On top of making the party subordinate to powerful ministries, laws were, in the hierarchy of legal acts, less meaningful than ministerial orders and instruction which were obligatory at the republican level. Ministries in Moscow and their local branches often duplicated paper work. The republican level did not have a clear position. (Whitefield 1993: 122.)

Socially, the creation of local norms was seen important for the glasnost program in the sense that the soviets could have, in principle, created rules benefitting all-union or republican levels in the future. At the same time, the local legislation could not surpass the need for a unified direction of glasnost and maximal central regulation. The risk was a serious diversification of the work of the soviets which could have passed decisions going against the existing state laws. Elements of the glasnost policy, such as principles of information and the protection of citizens’ rights from any subjective expression in this matter, would not have developed well. (Bezuglov & Kriazhkov 1988: 40–41.) Thus two vital elements of the transitional process – the need for legal unity and local initiative – frustratingly worked against one other producing new risks. Similar problems had been faced at the beginning of the 20th century by the Provisional government in its attempt to bring legislative order into Russian communities.

An example of how these processes affected professional behavior and through it affected the implementation of changes is the situation of the prosecutors in the perestroika period. While the prosecutors assumed new tasks in the supervision of unity of the municipal legality, their frustration was increasing. A survey of prosecutors in 1989 revealed that many had
wanted the KGB and the party to also be under their supervision. They also wished to have more financial resources and complained about the diminishing prestige of the institution. As an answer to the new risks which the prosecutors were feeling, many had started to create their own agendas since the party control had become more relaxed. (Smith 1997: 353.) Yet, it must be noted that the perestroika period did initiate a process toward accountability in this institution. It became a conservative tool for administrative change.

From early on, though, the real change in terms of administrative culture took place in the area of information and language. These led to the way in which laws and administrative implementation were viewed in society. The relaxed censorship brought along stories in the media which aroused discussions and activated citizens to voice their most visible local concerns. The media’s role in the development of a general legal culture was vital. As the publicity revealed cases of misconduct and discussion about them was possible, the administration was no longer able to rely on the party to shelter them from accountability. (Shelley 1992: 2.)

One of the main differences in the transition of administrative culture in the perestroika years was the appearance “localism” in terms of recognizing different types of clientele more acutely than before when the harmony of different ethnic, religious and cultural groups was officially underlined. Gorbachev’s visits to different part of the country and the popular street and work place meetings of the time underlined this effect. The varying social problems of different areas of the country could and were brought up. Even if the clients of administration were still only recipients waiting for the solution from the top leadership, they had acquired a voice. As the top political leadership gave the citizens the right for criticism, the administration was forced to face the discontent as the economic conditions became more difficult.

Perestroika created both the frustration and the channel for the expression of the mistrust of the population towards the administrative work. Included in this cultural shock was the question of occupational and salary interests. In the perestroika years, many once prestigious occupations lost their appeal because of the financial crises and central government’s inability to pay decent salaries on time. Organizationally the cultural elements of the nomenklatura, political elite decision making and symbolic communication remained. The tasks and goals of the administration did not change during perestroika. The organizational structure of the Soviet society remained the
same till the rupture of 1991. A side-effect of the side-effects took over the political process when mistrust grew and was voiced more openly as a result of glasnost.

Glasnost as a policy of public-expression and information gathering was connected with the way Soviet citizens viewed their life and the life of “others”. As a strategic policy it was meant to create a more objective discussion in which the leadership would get information about society directly from the people. Yet together with the economical and political decisions, this situation produced a particularly powerful side-effect. Kordonskii has described the perestroika period as an transition towards the legalization of dissident thinking (Kordonskii 2000). That which used to be outside of the official language and working methods, became accepted.

Perestroika included promoting individual activity by emphasizing and re-establishing professionalism and commitment in all work places. Main practical methods in achieving these ends were disciplinary actions against drunkenness, general laziness and corruption in the work place. The policies chosen to advance the reforms were the earlier described anti-alcohol campaign and campaign against unearned incomes. (Walker 1993: 107.) The anti-alcohol campaign led to a drastic falling of state incomes and economic problems in wine producing territories. In this sense it intensified the economic decline.

The anti-alcohol campaigns and the campaign against unearned incomes repeated well-intentioned administrative disciplinary actions in the Soviet tradition. Their influence on actual practices is difficult to assess. The most visible result was the more open discussion about the dysfunctions of work culture such as drunkenness, laziness and corruption. Ethical campaigns coincided with the general policy of glasnost.

The perception which people had about the surrounding society and their own personal well being in retrospect, constituted one of the fundamental factors which effected the adaptation of Soviet citizens to structural changes. Inability to take this factor into consideration led to a major risk for the leadership. A type of political fallacy had already developed in the perestroika years, which led to a feeling for a major cultural change. Overlooked was the possibility that even when the so called objective factors (macroeconomic indicators) showed different, people can be quite satisfied with their lives. This was (and to an extent continues to be) a problem, particularly in the foreign advice given to changing societies.
Even as the ideology before Gorbachev’s time had been eroding through latent criticism and complaints about daily problems at work places, the ideology in certain ways still had a powerful cultural meaning for the Soviet citizens. Soviet patriotism, the social and moral supremacy of socialism over capitalist way of life, the Communist party as the leader of society and the Soviet foreign policies enjoyed wide support. The stability and security of life for ordinary workers was considered to compensate for the luxuries of Western consumption. The lack of open discussion and information in the mass media made many Soviet citizens think that the problems they faced were specific only to their city or region. It was in fact a method of the official language to label negative aspects and occurrences as “atypical”. Even as many citizens disliked a particular local official or administrative organization for deficiencies in their lives, they usually did not start assessing the whole system based on these facts. As an example of the meaning of this attitude to life is the fact that even people who had emigrated to the USA in the late 1970’s gave surprising survey answers about their satisfaction in the Soviet Union. Of those studied in one such survey, 59 % had been satisfied with their living standards in their former country, and only 14% were very dissatisfied. (Shlapentokh 1998: 34–35.)

As in the case of the earlier, revolutionary and Stalinist post-revolutionary administration, the basis of the mature Soviet administrative culture can be divided into “rational” organizational aspects and “irrational” ideologically born political control aspects. The perestroika/glasnost period can be seen as a too short and politically ineffective time to have changed any major part of the mature social system of the Soviet administration. The practical components of its administrative culture stayed to a very large part intact. Whitefield’s study states that in fact the ministries ran the Soviet Union and did not pay much attention to party resolutions concerning their work. The ministerial power over material resources allowed them to determine the rules of the society and the position of those who were nominally in the position of supervising the administration. The party personnel in Whitefield’s assessment obtained access to the influence of the ministries through appointments. The economic power took over and dominated the political sphere to the extent that the latter was “ministerialized”. (Whitefield 1993: 123–129.)

Walker has named the last period “crises management” which took place between 1990–1991 until the collapse of the Soviet Union. Ideologically, this period was already mostly tactical maneuvering because time was
running out. It did, however, mean the establishment of the institution of executive president which changed the power structure at the top. In essence it was an attempt to re-centralize power and stop the fragmentation of the state. Also, it answered to the call by many people to have stronger government. The perestroika reforms had shown the difficulty of establishing democracy in the Soviet Union because of structural-political reasons (Pursiainen 2001: 86).

The lack of a new Constitution became more evident now, since the authority relations between different power centers and decision makers was unclear. Glasnost had meant that it was more difficult for the party bureaucracy to get away with clearly illegal activities. The popular election, the new authority position and attempts to install rule of law into the decision making system undermined the party’s ability to plant representatives in the soviets and produced a new risk in the form of growing desires for republican autonomy. (Walker 1993: 89–90, 157.)

The diversification of the forms and practices of local government is a particularly important phenomenon for the cultural aspects of local decision making. It is important to notice how fast the structural changes led to the adaptation of the local level with various forms of tactics previously not possible. In a way the perestroika period achieved its primary goal by leading to the realization that old methods of decision making and work did not function in the flood of actual problems. The grass roots of decision making were activated. The need for modernization in the way information was gathered, processed and its distribution controlled by the administration became evident in the perestroika time. The general view which the public now formed about work as a process and as a fundamental element of social life became one of disillusionment. Glasnost meant that the administration became a target for non-party controlled interest and criticism. At the same time, the administrators themselves began to change their outlook on their life and roles as civil servants.

The usefulness of the local level for the larger communities was an example of the revivalist idealism of the early glasnost years. From a more practical point of view, it can be said that the stress on state regulation was an attempt at keeping the developments in some sort of order which would not upset the central economic planning system. The local Soviet was meant to be most of all an executioner of the unified party policy and a mobilizer of the people to take a more active role in the local affairs. The practical program for the soviets included the activation of open doors meetings
between elected officials and the inhabitants at the local level and the right of the citizens to receive more information about the work of the soviets in form of a language that would be easier for them to understand. Socially, the role of the mass media was strengthened and it started to have a new type of influence on administration. The major change was the relationship of the political leadership with media which went through a visible change in the perestroika period and forced the administration to consider the possibility of public accountability outside the party system. This possibility to discuss choices publicly had a permanent effect on the way administration was viewed and the way it began to see its own work.

The economic decline meant that the daily practices of administrative organs at the local level were simply trying to adapt to reduced finances. Together with the confusing political guidance – or lack of it – from the top, this created an urgent need for local action and a severe inability to act on it. The administrative culture became that of intensified dysfunctions which the old administrative market was able to use to sustain balance of interests but in which the new situation became an obstacle to change. One of the side-effects of this was the transformation of blat relations to a more traditional form of corruption (comp. Ledeneva 2000). While the party was simply withering away, the economy was heading toward a total transformation of its basis. The administration was stranded in a political and economic vacuum with old laws and without new guidance. The culture became an ideal type of risk administration.

Ideologically, there was a shift of power balance from the political (party) to the representational (soviet) side, and formally there was a new authority position in municipal decision making. But in terms of actual power the new laws and elections gave the soviets, they mostly set the earlier partners of the administrative market against each other. As Walker (1993) has pointed out, the political and managerial inexperience of the new deputies and a lack of local political program resulted in inefficiency and incompetence. Political wrestling took the place of market negotiations as a side-effect of new local freedom.

According to Stephen Whitefield’s 1993 study, the major side-effect of the Soviet system of party bureaucratization was that the economy, represented by the ministries, took over politics all together. Ministerialized decision making in this sense would be an unwanted consequence of the party losing its power to the administration. Kirkow has also concluded that one of the main problems for the local party, was its lack of influence
on the ministries which managed municipally located enterprises (Kirkow 1998: 40). If, however, one sees the bureaucratization of the party as a goal of the Soviet system in the first place, the growth of the power of the administration is not a failure in itself. The party did not lose its political power because it economized its politics quite soon. More likely the problem then would be in the way the interests of economized party politics and the bureaucratized economy were run by the party members. The coordination of different interests was not done effectively by the party system.

I agree with Whitefield’s conclusion that in the process of building a state in which administration would no longer bridge government, society and economy, the building process was complicated by the disputes of the executive apparatus and by the response of the legislators to the economic difficulties of the transition (Whitefield 1993:258). This existing administrative market meant that the perestroika period did not affect the changes in the administrative behavior because there was not enough structural support for the birth of municipal administration in the liberal-democratic sense of the word. It did, however, intensify bureaucratic competition at the local level because the economic possibilities became unpredictable and scarce. The dysfunctions together with the right to criticize, led to gradual shifts in the power basis at the local level.

What did change drastically, however, was the attitude toward state authority as a result of the rapid economical decline and the changing policies of the political leadership. A major factor in the risk producing cycle of the perestroika years was the wasting of the loyalty of the Soviet citizens to the state as a resource for the reforms. The structures which sustained this loyalty were diminished or even destroyed which led to massive disillusionment. The disillusionment was not a result of an ideological collapse. It is probably quite safe to say that many Soviet people did not feel that their life, from their individual point of view, was bad. The state essentially had their support as along as it provided basic services in a predictable manner. During the perestroika period these services were cut down and their delivery became unreliable as a result of the break up of the supply system. The state which was the object of Soviet patriotism, lost its status. Patriotism sought new avenues in the form of localism, regionalism and separatism. The diminishing loyalty toward the state deterred economical and cultural changes. Administration became one of the main targets of criticism through which a general disbelief and wearing out was projected. Trust in the administrative changes was wasted.
To summarize, the analysis of the new culture shows that perestroika policies were reactions to the risks created by a dysfunctional Soviet system. The attempt to bridge the gap between the official (manifest) and unofficial (latent) administrative cultures resulted in changes in the power balance of the Soviet administrative market. An analogy between the 1917 revolution and perestroika can be drawn because both changed the social importance of local level actor groups in the economic and representational administrations. The success of glasnost (new client relations) was paradoxically pushing society in a direction which it was institutionally not prepared to face. In this sense, the perestroika period resembled early 20th century Russia.

The analysis of the perestroika policies shows how the de-stabilization of the administrative market relations was an unintended side-effect. A risk administration culture was created in the Soviet government. Since systemic change was not the original goal of administrative change, the reforms did not have a clear institutional direction. This led to uncertainty in authority relations which greatly affected the following transition, as the next chapter shows.
6 The Transition of Administrative Culture Since 1991

This chapter describes the development of administrative thinking since 1991; structural changes which created a new local level; and the administrative culture which has been in creation since the 1993 Constitution. The chapter includes a case study part from the Murmansk city administration, the material for which was collected in 1993 and 2000. The analysis of the new local administration culture relies on the Murmansk study as an example of the present situation.

6.1 The Political Ideology of Administrative Change: From Regionalism to Conservative Constitutionalism in Local Administration

In 1991 there existed rather loose, and quickly formed programs for the leading political forces, who were trying to place themselves on the political map of the rapidly changing state. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the party structure of Russia has eluded strict borders and steady programs. The present Russian parties are mostly a collection of coalitions where more or less similarly thinking personalities have a common figurehead. These coalitions have most of all been formed to gain popular support in immediate elections. Instead of permanent programs, the coalitions of the early 1990’s can be categorized as representing broad views towards the reformist policies taken in the early transition period.

One way of looking at the political picture after the 1991 coup attempt is to see it through the traditional slavophiles-westernizers division. The first group would include those forces which were in favor of the “eastern”
autocratic governing tradition, while the second group would include those forces in favor of Western liberal reforms in government. (Comp. Campbell 1992: 210.) In the beginning of the 1990´s ideas about the “Russian historical peculiarity” or “Russia´s own traditional way” were one side of the debate about Russia´s future as a state. Yet, these discussions were not logically connected to the way different political groups viewed administrative culture. Individuals and political groups involved in government and administration had unlikely political goals in terms of developing administration (comp. Campbell 1992).

It is possible to categorize the political coalitions of the 1990´s in several ways, both by party group lines or according to the general political ideas they represent. In general it can be said that the great majority of political groups have supported the integration toward the liberal-democratic structures of the West, in which the state and society are in separate and legally bounded areas. The main distinctions regarding their views on administrative reform concern its impact upon the strength of the state in terms of guidance, control and leadership. In this respect at least five main groups can be found (comp. this list for instance with Koval et. al 1991).

The first is “the liberal constitutional state” group, which includes some social democratic thinking. It has advocated changes from below, anti-communism, maintaining the welfare state more effectively, economic reform toward a legally controlled market, rule of law administration and anti-authoritarian leadership to take a civil society to the negotiation table.

The second group is “the neoliberal state” group (the “Gaidarian line”) which advocates shrinking the state sector and the advancement of private business instead of social welfare. The administrative reform ideas have included a major restructuring of the central apparatus, tax and export policy reforms. Included in this group were the early liberals who advocated a new constitutional basis for the country, court and prison system reforms and direct elections for president.

The third group is “the conservative authoritarian state” group. They have supported gradual and incremental reform of the earlier system from above with the help of a strong center and presidential system of government, state ownership of property being the economic priority. Logically this group has opposed the liberal-economic reforms and advocated wide state programs in all sectors of the economy, giving priority to social welfare in a mixed economy where private (mainly small scale) entrepreneurship was to be allowed. Of these coalitions, the Communist party has remained the
only nationally important force throughout the 1990’s. It had a ready model of organization and programs which were not dependent on a singular figure head. The ideas of rule of law state and civil society were officially declared the aims of state building by the party in 1990, but it remains unclear what the interpretation of these would mean in the tradition of the party.

The fourth group is “the nationalist state” group, the most notable example of which has been the Liberal-democratic party of Vladimir Zhirinovsky. It supported regional independence in the beginning of the 90’s and originally advocated a free market with the state having a coordinator’s role. It is unclear what the actual meaning of nationalism is in this line. Most of all, it can be said to represent one type of a populist movement whose practical aim is to attract attention to different issues and stay in parliament.

The fifth group, and the only group which has been in constant flux compared to the relative stability of the other four, is what I would call “the legal reformist state” group. Since the mid 1990’s the conservative legal reformist state line has been characterized by the use of a leading figurehead. Examples of these loose coalitions are “Our home is Russia” by Viktor Chernomyrdin in 1995 and “Fatherland- All Russia” by Iurii Luzhkov and Evgenii Primakov in 1999. President Putin’s campaign coalition can also be seen in this group.

The main change which happened within this group is connected with the internal political confusion of the regionalization period in Russia. President Eltsin’s initial liberal reformist policies led to a quick shift toward elitist (regionally authoritarian) political decision making in which leadership was settled among the ruling elite.

As a reaction to the political and economic risks created by the early and mid-1990’s, this group has since represented a collection of ideas, which have stressed the need for a strong state, central administrative control and legislative certainty. The political legitimation has been the strengthening of constitutional order in all parts of Russia, paradoxically sometimes by bending some of its own rules when necessary. The state’s role in the coordination of legal unity has been raised as the main administrative goal. Social concerns have again been raised, even as the economic side has received the main attention. Tax collection has become the main economic concern. In terms of economic reforms, there has been an attempt to gain back public control of economic development, even at the expense of democratic processes.
It should be noted that in the early 1991 official program papers of the then existing groupings, the actual role of the huge Soviet apparatus was only given a minor mention, or none at all. The restructuring of the state administration was touched upon only by the liberal and neoliberal groups who wished to simplify bureaucratic barriers for industry and individual entrepreneurs wishing to export products. (See Koval et al. 1991.)

What have these political ideas meant? At least they show that for the most part of the 1990’s there was not a politically thought out modernization plan for the state administration. The ideas of administrative change appeared most of all as a result of the political and economic fight and risks which were produced in this process. As Campbell has shown, in the beginning of the 1990’s the main divisive political issue among the different political blocks became the strengthening of the executive branch at all levels of the government (Campbell 1992: 211). State and administration became important, above all, as a means to order.

This practical battle for the course of administration went on in a situation where two major and parallel developments of society took place. The social, political and economic goals were in many ways conflicting. Two competing versions of social change existed: the drafting of the first Constitution and the privatization program. One of the reasons why the Constitution project can be named as a political change program is that it represented the only serious official and concerted alternative vision to privatization. The latter was a foreign model in which the government would adapt to the changed economic conditions of the society.

But the choice between the Constitution and privatization program has more meaning than that. There was a competition for political power between the government and the Duma which were trying to sort out the balance of the future state. The Constitution was the first time that the citizens took a direct part (even if only formally) in the adoption of central legislation. Thus the Constitution signifies both at the formal legal and at a symbolic level the creation of a new state – by the people. The privatization program on the other hand was a continuation of the tradition of revolution from above.

Privatization took off in the middle of the political reorganization of authority between different institutions in the Soviet time administrative market. The program became an attempt at cultural revolution in Russian history based on specific ideas as to the nature of man and the bureaucratic/political system surrounding him in a society. The proclaimed goal was to
achieve irreversible changes in these social relations in order to create a new way of living for the innately existing economic needs of the people. The basis of the economic theory was founded in the belief of radical-authoritarian change which has been opposed by the competing theories of democratic-gradual reforms. The privatization program of Russia was built not so much on an ideal type of capitalist society than on its planners’ assessment of the nature of Soviet society. This had a profound effect on the way the state was seen in the privatization policies.

The political goal of the privatization program which began in 1991 was the replacement of the economic bureaucracy with a depolitized economy. This did not only mean replacing the command system of the party with market based relations in production and services. Critically, it also meant the creation of conditions where the politicians were permanently unable to assume leadership in the Russian economy. (Boycko, Shleifer and Vishny 1995.) Explicitly, the privatization program developers did not want to proceed from the reformation of the existing bureaucracy. This was because even as they acknowledged the possibility of the appearance of effective and public spirited bureaucracies, particularly at the local level where public monitoring is direct, this in their view was a very rare event. Instead they viewed the bureaucrats in Russia as people who were filled with only one ideology – “that of enriching themselves”. (Boycko et al. 1995:56–57.) The ideological and theoretical premis of the privatization program, officially aimed at building a new foundation of society on a growing new middle class and a greatly diminished role for the government. In Russian politics, the Prime minister Egor Gaidar took it upon himself and his government to push forward the policies which would make a return to the Soviet Union difficult (comp. Bova 1999:25).

The analysis of the program and the following events by the American consultants themselves seems to indicate that the ideal was a hardened version of the British privatization policies of the 1980’s. Deeper considerations for the magnitude of the cultural, social or political adaptations needed in the economic transition where intentionally left outside and the focus was instead the selection of the basic requirements for the beginning of markets. The shock therapy was meant to effect changes before the political opposition of it could organize itself to reverse them.

The contradiction between the privatization program perceptions and the new Constitution was sharp. The Constitution had two objectives: institution-building and legal reform (Sharlet 1999:82). It set up practical
tasks for both the state and subject levels. These reflect the constitutional aim of making the Russian state a social state in which authorities should provide the citizens with different types of services, most of which can be given at the local levels. These services include the organization of citizens’ right to housing, free medical care, social protection of different citizen groups and education at different levels. (Konstitutsiia Rossiiskoi Federatsii 1993: 40–41.)

The Constitution also builds a foundation for the creation of a rule of law state which has clearly regulated separate jurisdictions for different authorities and protection of individuals’ human and civil rights, including economic rights. In principle it is noteworthy that the Constitution gives a single person the right to take authorities to court in cases of violations of these and the above mentioned social rights (Konstitutsiia Rossiiskoi Federatsii 1993). Instead of exposing the citizens to a way of living without the totalitarian state, the Constitution sets up requirements for the creation of a new type of trust between citizens and a reformist state.

Although the new Constitution laid down the legal structures of the state, constitutionalism as a principle of administrative guidance did not dominate Russian administration for some time. President Eltsin’s administrative ideology was the delegation of political and economic power to the regions in order to neutralize political opposition at the central level. The regionalization period coincided with the urgent need for major legislative reforms and structural reorganizations at all levels of society. As a consequence of this choice, a multitude of side-effects created new risks.

In the latter part of the 1990’s and particularly after President Putin took over, a type of “legalism as administrative guidance” has bloomed in the official administrative ideology. Instead of partisan political goals, there has been an attempt to assume a neutral, professional manner which underlines federal laws and hierarchy of norms in official decision making. The other notable effect has been the ways organizations finance their work. The local administration has begun to use its own initiative to find partners for projects which has effected the logic of work. At the same time, “the dictatorship of law” side of this legalism has meant concentration on control as a means of policy guidance. Regionalism has been replaced with legalism which requires political control via the centralization of policy making. Building a strong and effective sense of state has been reinforced as the central political purpose of changes. In this way, the re-enforcement of the
executive rule and centralized policy control have again become important in the administrative ideology.

In the course of the 1990’s changes, a new and institutionally very important source of administrative ideology has emerged in the form of the international treaties which Russia has joined. The most important of these include the treaty of the Council of Europe (1993) and the Cooperation with the European Union (1998). Russia’s interest in joining the World Trade Organization has also played an important part in legal and administrative change processes. Legally international agreements take precedent over national law in cases of conflict. By signing and ratifying international agreements, the ideas of rule of law, a legally protected market economy and modern administrative practices have been strengthened as purposes of change. In ratifying the above mentioned treaties, the Russian Federation has officially accepted and committed its government to work toward the unification of a common European market (e.g. dismantling of trade barriers, legal protection for enterprises and investments etc.) and a rule of law state (e.g. civil and human rights, separation of powers, independent legal system, legal protection of citizenry) and the formation of institutional authority for local government. Constitutionalism as an ideology and these goals come together as purposes of change.

For the local administration, all the above mentioned elements in the administrative ideology of change have most of all meant challenges of modernization, re-education and financing. The new purposes which have emerged in a very short period of time also provide the incentive for being able to affect local development with legal and institutional tools. Thus, at the level of transitional purposes, change of administrative culture at the municipal level is a transformation process into a more authoritative legal actor – an administration in its own right.

6.2 Structural Changes: State Building Since 1991

State building at the local level took place within three main avenues of development. Firstly, the legislative and political developments of the local and regional institutions of the representative administration after the disappearance of the political administration. Secondly, the major restructuring of the local economic administration. Thirdly, the development of the Russian law, the control administration and new international obligations.
These three avenues of development came together as the revised political ideology of administrative change which has taken shape under President Putin’s rule. Moreover Putin’s rule can be seen as a reaction to the risks posed by the side-effects of the first two administrative developments. Officially, though, the justification for the review of the political ideology of administrative change has been the protection and further advancement of the third aspect of the structural change.

Yet legislative reforms of the local administration had already started during the perestroika years. Before the adoption of the new Constitution, the Law on Local Self-Government in the RSFSR adopted in July 1991 defined the authority of the local bodies in the administrative market. The law described local power as belonging to local geographical entities, such as cities and villages. Within their limits the city soviets could adopt their own rules of local self-government, which should be registered by the state authority of the specific area, and annulled only if their contradicted existing state law. The law gave superior bodies (regional soviets and executive committees) as well as the courts the right to annul the decisions of local bodies in case these contradicted the laws of the RSFSR or its republics. (Piskotin 1993: 79–88.) As important, however, for the actual development of local level representative authority became the political developments at the regional level.

At the regional level (oblast) the loyalty of the different regions in the days of the coup to the legal center came to be a decisive factor in the future selection of leaders and staff. Boris Eltsin decided to protect the position of his government in the provinces with the decree of August 1991 (no. 75 “Of Some Questions Concerning the Functioning of the Executive Bodies in the RSFSR”) which installed a system of executive vertical authority in regional decision making. The executive functions of federal government in the regions would be led by a head of administration who was to be named by the president with the consent of the respective Soviet. A following law installed the institution of small councils in the local soviets, continually working regional and territorial (oblast and krai) bodies consisting of 1/5 of the deputies corpus. In an attempt to increase the professional effectiveness of the soviets, these new bodies assumed most of the authority the soviets had, excluding budget and staff decisions. Typical for the practical relations of the small councils with the administration was that some of the same people were found in them (Luchterhandt 1995: 32).
In these developments, the “revolutionary” local democracy was replaced by the strengthening of the executive office and the administrative inner circle which surrounded the leadership of Russian cities. The shift toward one-man rule was led by democratically elected reformers such as Eltsin himself, Gayvril Popov of Moscow and Anatolii Sobchak of St.Petersburg. The political transition to a new administration offers an interesting case study in how old vocabulary become useless in transitions and how its traditional use leads to misunderstandings and new risks. In Russia’s case, certain word pairs which dominated political and economic discussions led to international misunderstanding of what was meaningful both politically and economically. These word pairs included at least the following: reformist-pluralist, communist-autocrat, democratic-liberal. The transitional developments made the accurate use of these labels difficult mostly because the new establishment formed in the 1990 elections and in the mayoral elections afterwards, and which was officially democratic and reformist, included persons of different political backgrounds and soon advocated strong executive rule (Campbell 1992: 211–212).

The August coup of 1991 signified a final turning point in the center-regional-local relations. In comparison with other former socialist countries, former members of the party stayed in their positions, even though the formal organizational guidance and planning system was gone. In the politically turbulent times, the central government concentrated on consolidation of its own political power in the regions. The naming of the head of administration, the institution of presidential representative and the tight control of economic processes served the same political purposes of preventing the independence of regions and stopping the provinces from siding with the Parliament in the constitutional battles being fought in Moscow (Luchterhandt 1995: 32).

The institution of the presidential representative (in the territory, region, autonomous region and autonomous area, as well as the cities of Moscow and St.Petersburg) which was confirmed by the President in 1992, meant setting up an office of supervision accountable only to the President himself. (Sheremet 1993: 103.) The main task of the representative was to ensure that the local legislation was compatible with federal laws. He had access to local administration documents and could also recommend the dismissal of local officials who were not in line with the national policies. In addition, he could appoint and dismiss department heads of the local soviet executive committees, reorganize these departments and veto their
decisions. Yet, the representative was not to interfere in local decision making or issue orders for a certain territory. (Sakwa 1996:182.)

In a sense and in comparison with the Soviet system, the presidential representative replaced the oblast level first secretary, although his jurisdiction was more limited and he did not take part in local level decision making. Similarly the representative supplemented the authority of the prosecutor’s office which was to be less political in the future. Yet his post was not only to be an official controller of the legitimacy of the regional decisions but also to see that the government’s economic policies were carried through in the intended way. In this capacity, the presidential representative also greatly resembled the commissariats performing the political supervisory role in the early Bolshevik government. The institution of presidential representative continued the tradition of quickly established control and guidance organizations with “outside” functions.

Resembling the 1917 revolutionary developments when the Bolshevik government needed both the old structures and the expertise of tsarist officials, the new mayors needed the professionals of the former executive committees and the industrial managers of the economic bureaucracy to pursue changes. The political struggle which emerged in cities and regions was less traditionally political and more institutional. This was so, for example, in defining authority limits, economic relations and the political guidance of developments between institutions, rather than defining a clear political line of “democracy”, “reformist western line” or other such thing. In addition, the picture was confused by the fact that persons representing “anti-western” blocks and more conservative views did, in many cases, oppose the strong executive rule in favor of elected organs. (Campbell 1992: 212.)

In March 1992, just before the signing of the Federative Treaty, the parliament accepted a law concerning “The District, County Soviet and the District, County Administration”. This ordered the double subordination of the regional head to both the soviet and President of Russia, and the subordination of the administration to the soviet and head of region. The soviet was given a right to appeal the decisions of the head in a court of law, as well as a possibility to ask the President of the Constitutional court to dismiss the head of administration. The head of the administration on his part was given a right to veto the decisions of the soviet which were won with a simple majority of the votes. Conflicts between the two institutions could be decided not only by the President or the supreme soviet, but also
by courts. (Gelman 1998: 95.) This decision was meant to help ease the tense situations which had risen at the time when the regional heads were still named by the President. It certainly lifted the weight of the regional elected representatives as well as the role of the central assembly in Moscow. The regions were thus brought more closely under parliamentary regulation and vertical control was tightened.

In 1993 a decree was passed on October 27 governing the election regulations and the formations of legislative bodies. The regions were given a right to make decisions on these questions at the regional (oblast) and town levels in line with the general regulations. The officials from the administration could now take part in the elections, and stay in their positions if elected. (Gelman 1998: 97.)

According to Vladimir Gelman’s analysis the most notable of these changes from the point of view of the administration were at least the following:

- the right to combine the works in legislative and administrative bodies,
- hierarchical subordination of the executive power and the inability of the assembly to control the personnel policy of the administration,
- the reduction of the assembly’s rights to create legal norms,
- the inability of the assembly to take sanctions against the heads of regions [the governors] and the administration (Gelman 1998: 97).

The strengthening of the executive’s role at the beginning of the 1990’s was administratively justified, similar to the delegation of power to the regions. It was intended to prevent the interest groups from the old regime from sabotaging the reforms and keeping the new representatives from slowing down administrative efficiency and the building of new institutional power. A strong mayor who was directly elected was considered the best way to bring order to the local level and to take needed action within the budget which the council had decided. (Campbell 1992: 213–214.)

The early years of the 1990’s gave birth to a local level which was structurally diverse. In over 3,000 local governments the head of the administration was also a member of the soviet and, in practice, worked as its chairman. An extreme case of unity was in the Kaluzhkoi oblast where all the 49 heads of local units were also deputies. (Tsentralkaia izbiratelnaia
In these circumstances, the new Constitution of the Russian Federation was accepted in the general elections in December 1993. It divides the federation into six types of subjects of the federation: the republics, the *krai* (territorial level), the regional level (oblast), cities with federal importance, autonomous oblasts and autonomous *okrugs* all of which are equal subjects of the federation. Of the 89 subjects two are cities (Moscow and St. Petersburg) in which the administration of the subject and the town is joined under the governor who is elected by direct vote. The status of the different subjects is specified by both the Constitution of the federation and by the charters (the area *ustav*) of the different subjects of the federation which have been accepted by representative organs of the subject. The change in the status of a particular subject can be achieved by mutual agreement between the state and the subject. On the other hand, the borders between two different subjects can be changed by an agreement between them alone. (Konstitutsiia Rossiiskoi Federatsii 1993: 5, 66–67.)

The main features of the government structure of the Russian Federation are shown in annex E which is my illustration of the system. In annex E one can also see that the structure of the Russian government is based on the separation of powers which is the major difference in comparison to all the previous government structures (in annexes A-D) in Russian history. The government includes the federal government, the co-operational or joint government of the Russian Federation and the subjects of the federation, and the local self-government. The Constitution lists the tasks related to each category of government which form the real limits of power in each area of government. The practical decision making possibilities of the local level in the Constitution is formulated more by the description of the joint government level than by its own constitutional outline. It is further noted that outside of this joint government, the subjects enjoy full state power. (Konstitutsiia Rossiiskoi Federatsii 1993:72–73.)

The President leads the executive side in all parts of Russia. In this role he is, in very concrete terms, a decision maker in the administration at all levels. The President can suspend a decision by a subject’s administration which is in contradiction with the Constitution and the federal laws even before a court decision. The use of presidential decrees (*ukazy*) and the policy of “dictatorship of law” show that this position is a cornerstone of the
present Russian presidency, although it involves aspects which can be in contradiction with the separation of powers. The President has his own administration which is responsible for the preparation of his decrees. Despite its influence on legislation, this administration is not mentioned in the Constitution.

In 2004, further central government reform took place. Before the 2004 central government reform, structural hierarchies mainly stayed the same as they were before the Constitution. Ministries are director-led organizations, of which the so-called power ministries (at present the Defense, Foreign and Internal Affairs, Justice and Emergency situations ministries) together with administrations of this group are directly under the leadership of the President. The other ministries and agencies are led by the government. The 2004 central government reforms reduced the number of ministries and central committees and commission. Some of the latter went through a change in status, such as the Committee on Customs which became a branch of the Ministry of Economic development and Trade. (Ukaz prezidenta, N 0649, 20.4.2004, Postonovlenie Ministerstva ekonomicheskoi razvitiia i torgovly Rossiiskoi Federatsii, N 187, 6.4.2004.)

In daily work, the legal work done by the ministries is important. Ministerial subordinate legislation (regulations and instructions) is enforced everywhere in Russia. The Supreme Constitutional Court decides whether the regulations of a lower administrative body or the ministry are right.

Before the 2004 reforms, the federal level had a multitude of different committees, commissions and federal agencies which were independent expert organizations and which were in existence during the Soviet period. These too had regulative power in their respective field. An example is Gosstandart which was a federal administration for issuing certificates of approval and product testing. Its work was regulated very loosely by federal laws and it made its own rules about standards which are binding everywhere in Russia (Federal´nyi zakon o sertifikatsii produktsii i uslug, 10.6.1993, No 5153–1, Gosudartsvennii komitet Rossiiskoi Federatsii po standardizatsii i metrologii: Pravilo po provedeniu sertifikatsii Rossiiskoi Federatsii, utverzdeni postonovleniem Gosstandardta Rossii ot 10.5.2000, No 26.)

In the subjects there are central administration organs and agencies which are extensions of their parent organizations. In addition there are “joint administration” organizations which, according to the Constitution, are cooperative organizations of the subject and the state. An example is the Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs in the St. Petersburg and
Leningrad area. The structure and functions of these organizations are regulated via a contract between the state and the subject.

Today the legislative power, the Lower (Duma) and Upper Chambers (Federation Council) of the parliament, makes the core of legislative input in the Russian Federation. The Federation Council plays an important part in monitoring the national budget and approving legislation. It has consisted of regional governors and chairmen of assemblies, and two representatives from each subject of the federation. As it is not organized according to party lines, its political power has rested on the shoulders of strong individuals who lobby regional interests. In this sense, it is possible to say that the Federation Council has acted as a stabilizing force in the state politics. At the same time, it has had a right to veto legislation which has in some way threatened the corporate interests of the regions. (Sakwa 2000: 24.)

The public administrations of the federal subjects have many matters which are decided upon jointly by the state and the subjects. The federal level enacts the basic legislation and the subjects add to it its own regulations in accordance with the federal laws. This system of joint government includes a united structure of executive power at all levels of the federation. At the same time, the subjects can “outside of the limits of joint government” enact their own regulations. Particularly important in this sense is the mention of conflict between a federal law and a regulation enacted by the subject outside of the joint government. In these situations the Constitution favors the subject’s decision. (Konstitutsiia Rossiiiskoi Federatsii 1993: 76- 77.)

In the course of the 1990’s and the beginning of the new century three levels of legislative input have emerged. At the federal level the Constitution and federal laws serve as the basis of local decision making. Within this level, the ukazes or decrees of the President (which according to law should not contradict the Constitution or federal laws) form the third important source of normative regulation. (Dimitrieva 2000: 76–82.) The early transition period in particular, up till the adoption of the present 1993 Constitution when normal legislative work was seriously disrupted, saw many such presidential orders by which major structural changes were enacted.

The Constitution is not exhaustive in its character. It is specified by other federal laws, of which the Civil Code is among the most important. The Civil Code reveals for instance the content of property rights. (Tolonen and Topornin 2001:19.) In the group of federal laws which specify the Constitution there are three types of legislative acts. Firstly there are federal
laws of the Duma. Second, federal laws given by the government (in totality), and third, federal regulations which are orders of a sectoral ministry. All have the same authoritative meaning in the guidance of administration.

At the regional (subject of federation) level, four types of sources can be found. Firstly, the Constitutions of republics and charters of other lower level subjects defining the meaning and jurisdiction of local self-government. Second, there exist laws of different levels of subjects concerning the organization of local self-government, which are followed by local regulations about the most important legal relations in municipalities. Finally, there are the regulations of different institutions such as the decisions of legislative assemblies of republics, orders of heads of administrations, and sentences of constitutional courts within the jurisdiction of the subjects. (Dimitrieva 2000: 83–86.)

The formation of new authority at the regional and local levels reached an important stage in the 1995 law on “The structuring of the Federation Council of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation”. The first elections for governors which took place in the fall-winter 1996 meant a chance (but not without problems) for the population to freely choose the direction of the subjects. It also gave the governors themselves a legitimate position and, in principle, a role separate from the appointment politics of the President. Their relations changed from merely administrative to independently political with the emphasis on regional issues. (Gelman 1998: 100–101, Rossiia: Monitoring, analiz, prognoz 1996, no. 6:15.)

The formulation of the nature of local self-government was left open in the 1993 Constitution. There is no mention of the separation of powers and the local level can itself freely decide the construction and relations of its decision making powers. This power has in fact been put to use by the localities. (Shugrina 1998: 158.) In this sense the Constitution treats the whole issue of the forms of local operation as a question of self-government. At the same time, the lack of essential legislation, most of all the Land Code, have put the local level in a waiting position. The constitutional rights for local decision making have existed but the operational tools for its full use for the benefit of the local economy have not.

Throughout the 1990’s the position and role of local government have been complicated by the structure of the state itself. The regional level has exerted a considerable amount of influence and direct decision making power over communities in its role as a mediator between state and local interests. At the local level, the region (subject) has represented the state.
One example of the regional-local relationship is the question of a suitable level for self-government. In many cases actual self-government has been established only at the lowest level of communities such as villages. Often this decision is a result of discussion and is not based on a law. This makes its authoritative foundation questionable and creates problems for the legal protection of the inhabitants whose lives are affected. (Gribanova 2001.)

The local government is supposed to handle matters of local significance, as well as the administration, use and distribution of municipal land. The local organs have a right to draw budgets and establish taxes and payments at their own discretion. The local organs can be given particular state authorities with material and financial resources to accomplish given tasks. The practical realization of this process will then be under state control. Moreover, the local government has the right to take its cases to court and to receive compensation for extra expenses incurred as a result of the state’s decisions prohibiting the organization of self-government according to the Constitution and federal laws. The actions and decisions of the local government itself can also be tried in a court of law. In a clear departure from the Soviet era constitutions, the Constitution of the present era gives the municipalities a right to own land and natural resources. In addition, it is separately mentioned that the use and protection of land and natural resources of a certain area are regarded as “the basis of existence and activity” of the people in that area. It should be noted, however, that these very issues also belong to the competence of the previously mentioned joint government of state and the subjects of the federation. The joint government handles the decisions concerning the use of waters, land and other natural resources, as well as the administrative legislation concerning ecology. (Konstitutsiia Rossiiskoi Federatsii 1993, Luchterhandt 1995: 35–37, Tekoniemi 1998: 20.)

The legal basis of local government developed further with the ratification by the Russian Federation of the European Council treaty about Local Self-Government in 1998. Even before this, the Federal Law on Local Government (1995) laid down the rules for all significant aspects of local level decision making and execution. Within its geographical boundaries, a municipality has the right to enact its own local laws and rules in accordance with its own charter. In the charter the following issues are regulated:

- definition for local self-government, its territorial and legislative base, including local constitutions
• rights of citizens to take part in local self-government, direct forms of participation of citizens
• the jurisdiction of state and regional authorities in local self-government
• organs of local government and the local officials, their responsibility and control.
• financial-economic base, state support.


A federal program of state support for local self-government was also launched the same year with a governmental decree. Its aim was to help the transition from the centrally led system to a more independent local government. Attention was given to the qualifications of the administrative work force, the separation of state and local funds, the role of local communities in the privatization of municipal property and the right of localities to allocate land. (Postonovlenie o federalnoi programme gosudarstvennoi podderzki mestnogo samoupravleniia 27.12.1995, No 1251.) With both the program and the federal law, the state attempted to secure the legal rights of the much needed local executive.

The fact that the local self-government was loosely regulated by federal law, diversification of the formations and authorities of the local level appeared. According to the analysis made by the Central Election Commission of the Russian Federation, there were several points in which the approximately 13.300 (by 1st of June 1997) local governments have differed significantly. These included:

• The enactment of the charters which had usually been done by the representative organ, but in the case of 16 subjects by way of referendum (for instance the oblast of Murmansk, Leningrad, Arkhangel, Saratov and Sverdlovsk).
• The city district level in the bigger towns and cities of regional and federal significance has in some cases had its own legislative (e.g. Murmansk), and administrative organs and in other cases a city district has been subordinated to the elected mayor.
• The heads of administrations have either been elected in direct elections or chosen by the assembly among its members (e.g. the
Novosibirsk, Saratovsky and Smolensky regions.) In 59 subjects the mayor has been chosen in direct and secret elections, usually for a period of four years. (Tsentral’naia izbiratel’naia komissiia Rossiiskoi Federatsii 1997: 75–77.)

The legislature in some areas has included in local self-government only major cities and rural districts (for instance the Ulianovskaia and Belgorodskaiia regions) and smaller towns and villages have belonged to the jurisdiction of the district administrations. At the other extreme, there have been cases where the big cities and rural areas do not belong to this category at all. Instead, local self-government has been organized only in the small towns and villages (e.g. Tatarstan, Bashkortostan). (Reznitsenko 1998:166, Vasiljev & Peshin 1997.) The formulation of a proper role for the local government has come down to the competition for power between different levels to achieve the optimal balance. This had been particularly important in big cities such as Moscow and St. Petersburg where the state and regional powers cannot compete with local self-government. (Tsishliaev 1995.)

At the same time as the local level was restructuring its authority relations, the political strengthening of the regional level by the central authorities led to the local level being more acutely dependent on the regional head of administration. The regional development is in fact difficult to separate from the local level during this period. Regional politics and administration, “regional authoritarianism”, in the 1990’s have meant political guidance which has included at least a part of the following elements: the executive side has dominated the legislature; informal contracts of mutual loyalty have existed between national and regional authorities (“the elite settlement”); there has been indirect control of the regional media by the executive authorities; political opponents have been neutralized or their effect has been limited in the area; there has been patronage of public associations by the executive in exchange for loyalty. (Gelman 2000: 238–239.)

The background to the regional authoritarianism lay in the federalization of political culture. This has created different types of new regional elite combinations in different parts of the country. The general development was toward a regional identity which placed the dependency on the financial, economic and political influence of the center. There was a tendency to build elite formations which were not based solely on political and economic factors but also on ideological and philosophical grounds to find common
historical traditions. In Sergei Barsilov’s assessment this led, to a certain degree, to the drawing nearer of the administrative, technical and intellectual elites who began to feel that the federal government represented more of a ritual than real power. The first elections of governors meant the unification of the elites under one leadership, whose role is also underlined by the fact that administrative power takes priority over legislative or judicial power. This was compounded by the effects of a transition from an ideology of party-politics to an ideology of regional societies based on local possibilities. (Barsilov 1998.) The time of regional power was a mixed blessing for the local level.

This regional power included two mechanism which affected the position of the local level. First were the organizational measures which included the disproportionate sharing of power between the assembly and the administration, the strong nomenklatura background of the assembly which depended on the regional leadership, and the election of the municipal head by the assembly based on the recommendations of the administration. Second, there were the financial measures which included the continual dependency of the budget of the municipal administrations on the budget laws of higher levels of government. (Podovzhniaia 1998: 156.)

The regional culture of government has been repeated, to a certain degree, at the local levels, where the organization of local government puts emphasis on executive power and one-man management. This makes the mayor the single most important public decision maker accompanied by a comparatively weak council. The mayor also performs the role of both advocate and lobbyist of his community at the regional level where state funds have been allocated to a large extent according to its own preferences influenced by different types of loyalty and personal relationships. (Gribanova 2001.)

The local level has variously received attention as a result of the conflicts between regional leadership and the federal authorities. For the raising of their status and advancement of common issues, the local governments of Russia have established several organizations for collaboration during the 90’s. As a co-operation forum for the local governments, a Council on Local Government has served as a channel to the President of the Russian Federation (Sakwa 2000: 27). However, the lack of one strong organization with state wide representation is a problem. Different organizations instead compete with each other. In one town there can exist two or three
organizations to which only a part of the administrative organs of the town belong (and example can be found in Saint-Petersburg). There has been interest in taking part in the international organizations of the local level where common issues can be more easily approached. (Gribanova 2001.)

The center has tried to control the growing power of the governors in the form of dictates about regional economic policies, the raising of the status of local self-government and by strengthening the positions of the presidential representatives. Paradoxically it is the negative phenomena that have been brought to the regional and local levels through democratic elections and legislation. That is the key reason why the elements of censorship of publicity, as well as the rights and freedoms of citizens, the supremacy of certain political-economical groups with client orientations operating outside the elected organs and/or dictating their decisions, the pressure on the opposition and so on, have not disappeared. (Gelman 1998:101–102.)

The regionalization period, although essentially a continuation of the perestroika policies and initially backed by the Constitution of Russian Federation, created a multitude of side-effects and intensified the risks of the society instead of neutralizing its most potent tendencies. In terms of political risks, the side-effects of regionalism created a similar situation as the early 1990’s strengthening of the executive rule. Both had a legitimate and democratic basis which was difficult and politically risky to overturn. For state building, the side-effects in the legislative and political fields alone where harmful. In addition, the economic changes exacerbated the unwanted changes.

In some ways, the 1990’s meant a restructuring of the local economical administration in an even more radical manner than in 1917. The relations of the local administrative market and the center were marked by the sudden absence of the Communist party which had provided a link between regional economic activity and Moscow, and a social control of conduct. The party was now gone but the old elite was still in place with its network and power. The drastic change in the authority relations of the former economic administration had several consequences for state building.

The political and economic liberalization in the period 1990–1992 gave the local level a fundamentally different role. This included several new rights: municipal ownership, more independence in environmental monitoring and land issues, right to set up enterprises, take part in financial
relations and have foreign economic contacts. In addition, the local administrators could go to court if the decisions of higher state bodies violated the rights of citizens.

The creation of local property began with its separation from the state property. This was done in 1991 with the decree of the Supreme Soviet of Russian Federation which distinguished properties of federal, republican, regional and lower levels. This decree followed the requirements of previous laws on state property (1990) and the privatization of state and municipal properties (1991). The law on privatization of municipal property was subsequently renewed in 2001. (Sokolova 2003: 21, 25.)

In principle there existed the opportunity for purely local decision making which was separate from the state’s collective aim and structure. The actual developments of local self-government were complicated by many practical problems, one of which was the financial relationship between the local level and the regional level. The perestroika era laws imposed restrictions on the way the municipal soviets of regionally important towns could raise funds. The annual budgets of the regional bodies (territories and regions) were drawn by them independently and approved by the appropriate soviets, thus leaving the local level outside of this decision making process which greatly affected its options in the coming year. One conflict of interest issue was the transfer of old state property to municipal ownership which the regional level had the right to check. (Piskotin 1993: 100.) Yet these questions were superceded by the bigger problems of daily financing of services which the population needed more badly than ever.

Similarly, with the early limited attention to the governability of the state, taxes were given a low priority in the shock therapy period of the early 1990’s. The return to the realities of running a state were given more concentration after the conclusion of the political fight between the President and the parliament. (Easter 2000: 304.)

In purely financial terms, the break down of the planning organization led to a situation where the local administration was left to hope that the regional administration would receive enough budget money for it to cover municipal services in different parts of the region. The developing federal relations were reflected in the way budget resources were given to different areas according to their “donor” or “receiver” status. In effect, this status depended on definitions of what was included in calculations and what was left out (Sakwa 2000: 18.)
An important economic condition of independent decision making and a reason for the above mentioned alternative routes for the regional level was the difference in proportion of tax revenues which the region could retain. The differences have been seen as results of several factors. First, there were results of the above mentioned negotiations between the region and a ministry in Moscow. Second, there were results of the real life difference of tax bases in the regions. Third there were results of the response of the Ministry of Finance to the social need and/or political “clout” of a certain area.

The often emphasized negotiations mean that the outcome has been claimed to depend on either the real need of the area, or the political power of the leadership, or the center’s will to secure support in that area. However, McAuley has found a clear link between actual consideration for social concern and the central governments decisions about redistribution. The relevance of plain political maneuvering and bargaining skills at the regional level seemed to be secondary, if not losing their meaning. (McAuley 1997: 434.) In the light of the administrative market concept, this would not be a surprising thing. For even in the market conditions, the aim was to benefit different interest groups within a geographical area.

The Gaidar program of restructuring the economic market was, in essence, the following: first, reducing drastically the state expenses in different social services and delegating budgetary expenses to the lower levels at regions and municipalities. In addition, subsiding ineffective state industry to be stopped and firms forced to find other market solutions. Second, revenues to be raised by selling natural resources in the world market and the state to eventually privatize these companies. In addition, other state property would be sold in the general privatization campaign. Third, a creation of new revenue collection system through the tax service which had been established in 1990 would be developed. A federal law “On the Basis of the Tax System of the Russian Federation” in 1992 listed the rights and duties of tax payers and the tax service. (Easter 2000: 305–306.)

The emphasis shifted from the central level to the municipalities. These entered market conditions without a well-working capitalized private sector to fund public expenditure on such important services as construction, education and culture. Because of the lack of organized social assistance routes in a civil society, the local administrations were left the take care of everything alone. (Mitchneck 1997: 1002–1003.) The budgetary problems were made difficult by the rising proportion of pensioners, which in rural
areas can be as high as 45% and 25% in small towns. The transitional economic difficulties faced by many of the so-called company towns (a town built mainly around one major factory or industrial plant), as well as by agricultural enterprises, have greatly increased the burden of local government. In the Soviet Union both of these were responsible for the social services of their workers. The municipalities have been faced with the challenge of taking over their functions, often without adequate financing. (Gribanova 2001.)

As a result of these challenges the local level decision makers either had to attract outside funds or cut the social programs (Campbell 1992: 216). The early confusion over authority and lack of legal guidelines led to all sorts of spontaneous commercial activities and privatization on the elites’ terms, many times by preserving local monopolies (for instance collective farms). The vertical control in some cases did not work and the governors sometimes distanced themselves from the central economic reforms while the presidential representatives could not guide the developments which were largely in the hands of regional elites. (Hanson 1993: 29–30.) Moreover, as Richard Sakwa has noted, the economic reforms at the center of the transition were not carried out particularly successfully by local authorities. Instead, the main initiatives came from local entrepreneurs and from Eltsin’s government in Moscow. (Sakwa 1996: 196.) Politically these conditions set the local level and the central government into opposing positions and undermined support for the transition itself.

According Beth Mitchneck’s analysis of budgetary reforms of local government in Russia between 1991–1995, the local level was in a contradictory situation after the break up of the Soviet Union. This was when many local and regional governments, after a short period of economic liberalization, started to use soviet fiscal practices which had broken down during the end of perestroika. The political liberalization was illustrated by the fact that between 1992 and 1993 members of the elected assemblies reviewed the planned budgets and often made meaningful changes to it when they did not consider the budgets to meet the local needs. The crisis of 1993 meant, however, that fiscal accountability was lost. When the assemblies returned to work after the elections, the culture of public review was to some extent restored but without the financial and bureaucratic foundation that had existed before. (Mitchneck 1997: 997–1011.)

The main obstacles to the working of the Gaidar government plans were the governments inability to reduce costs. Not surprisingly it was difficult
to slash the wages of federal budgetary workers and close down industry units which could not be expected to produce profits for some time. In addition, state property was often sold at a low price in legally unclear conditions which raised deep political suspicions among citizens. Third, and from the administration’s point of view, the most depressing fact was the lack of a system to collect taxes. A result of these developments was that free market shock therapy was replaced by “elite bargaining”. (Easter 2000: 306–307.)

In essence elite bargaining meant replacing formal institutions and bureaucratic mechanism in favor of negotiations between agents of the central government and a new forming financial elite. In the administrative market, new mechanisms appeared in the negotiations of the economic elite: insider trading, debt-swapping and short-term credits. These method coincided with the second wave of privatization put into effect in 1995. (Easter 2000: 308.)

For the municipalities and regions, the elite bargaining period coincided with the signing of the bilateral treaties which were meant to assure political peace with the regions. For the regions, these contracts meant that their tax obligations to the central authorities were reduced. Some regions were exempt from paying federal taxes all together for some years (such as Tatarstan and Karelia). Debt-swapping practices were accepted by the center in a similar way. These allowed the regional governments to make arrangements with the industries of their area in which tax debts of firms were pardoned in exchange for services they gave to the region. An example is the building of a distribution pipeline by a gas company to a region as happened in Sverdlovsk. At the regional level, the dependency of budgets from local companies has sometimes been considerable, for instance in Samara the Yukos oil company’s taxes accounted for a quarter of the regional budget in the latter part of the 1990’s. (Easter 2000: 309.)

The regions also became more generally important as the executioners of the government’s economic policies. The regions used their right to enact their own administrative economic decisions, for instance in the form of import and export tariffs (Tekoniemi 1998: 24). For the state sector in the regions it was politically important to have good connections with the changing prime ministers of the time in order to secure more federal financing. In the economic sector beyond the state budget, new economic and politically influential elites emerged. These included managers of former state owned enterprises, new businessmen, small and medium
enterprises, and the agrarian sector. Some governors were very active in economic policy making by attracting foreign investors into their regions and thus giving a boost to the image of a locally booming economy. (Sakwa 2000: 20–21.)

Political and macroeconomic changes did not take place in a vacuum of administrative culture. The market of administrative dependencies which was broken down and had been socially supported mainly by the blat or unofficial network traditions, needed to be replaced with new structures which were only in the making. Meanwhile, some of the major administrative decision making was done in a legal vacuum. This resulted in the transformation of the blat element of administrative culture into corruption of all sorts, and the creation of very high political risk in the near future.

Russian corruption in the 1990’s was not merely a continuation of the Soviet administrative market (blat) tradition, nor was it only a result of the economic crisis. Corruption serves as a prime example of the structuration process in the administrative culture which was going through a major transition. Alena Ledeneva has concluded that: “The formal structures not only restrict but also enable informal practices, while informal practices not only subvert but also function to support and sustain the formal institutions which they exploit. [...] By examining the role of informal practices one may acquire a better understanding of the nature of formal systems, the continuity in their transformation and the limitations on their ability to change.” (Ledeneva 2000: 321.) The Russian transition can also be understood as a process in which both an informal and formal administrative market coexist and evolve together. (Comp. Gelman 2000: 229.)

What has blat/corruption meant in the latest transition? At the macro level, contacts and their unofficial (extralegal) use has meant creating opportunities to invest. Access to administrative decision making and information is used to provide a basis for business and trading. Unofficial, friendship based contacts can be used in situations where there is competition among bribe givers. In addition, unofficial contacts are helpful in getting access to a means of making of money, meaning budget resources, export licences, privileged loans or business information. Blat has logically been most important in tax, customs, banking and regional administration. (Ledeneva 2000: 324.)

Administratively, a transition of practices took place in the course of the 1990’s in the use of blat. Ledeneva has called it “the monetarisation of blat practices”. This has meant that what used to be a traditional norm of using
kinship, friendship and collegiality has transformed itself into a market of services sold to the highest bidder. Monetary transactions have entered the world of unofficial practices. As a result, what used to be a matter of unofficial arrangements and debts of gratitude, became direct bribery. Bribery has often taken the form of expensive presents or business/professional opportunities. Particularly at the macro level, an important development of corruption has been the merger of state and market sectors in the so called nomenklatura business in which officials receive access to private resources. At the local and regional administrative levels, the arrangements led to the spread of barter, anti-bankruptcy alliances, “authorised” business structures and “problem solving” services through informal channels in the local and regional authorities, tax inspection and coercive institutions. Informal arrangements have been made at the local and regional levels to either prevent or facilitate the bankruptcy of enterprises, or to intervene with the mechanisms of corporate governance. While the macroeconomic level was showing promising signs according to international standards (IMF set requirements), the microeconomic level retarded to double bookkeeping, false reporting and bribery. (Ledeneva 2000: 325–326.)

Blat practices enabled the transition to bribery in the absence of structural restraints. Corruption transformed structures and created new ones. All of this took place without political controls. Political risks materialized in questions about rule of law in decision making and execution, social and economic rights of actors and the legal protection of them. The effects of risks in society effectively slowed down the development toward free market and growing state tax revenues, thus creating great disbelief and frustration with the transition.

At the same time, the legal basis of local government finances was being developed. By 1999, over 12 laws regulated the local government financing (Fabrichnyi 1999: 8–9). The municipal budget is presently drawn by the locally elected organs which also decide on local taxes and payments. The federal government controls the use of unitary methodology and federal social minimum standards and norms in the drawing of local budgets. The income of the municipalities includes sales profit from the municipal property, at least 10% of the proceeds from the privatization of state enterprises situated within the municipal limits, profits from the use of land according to federal laws, taxes and payments based on federal laws, at least 50% of the property tax on enterprises, income tax of private entrepreneurs
without the status of a legal person, a part of the income tax of physical persons and a part of the value added tax of domestic production. (Federal’nyi zakon o financovyh osnovakh mestnogo samoupravleniia v Rossiiskoi Federatsii 1997.)

Local income also includes federal and regional taxes and payments from which different percentages are given to the subject (regional) and local levels for the budget year or for a longer period (Sokolova 2003: 31). In the federal budget, there is a fund for the support of local self-government from which municipalities are directly supported according to demographic factors such as the share of school-age children and pensioners, and the geographical size of the municipality. (Federal’nyi zakon o financovih osnovah mestnogo samoupravleniia v Rossiiskoi Federatsii 1997.) A large part of the municipal tasks are, in practice, state functions which receive direct funding from the federal budget. An example is the payment of pensions which is done by officials of municipal administration functioning in effect as state civil servants.

The administration of the subject defines the share of state support which its municipalities receive to perform their state-sanctioned tasks. (Federal’nyi zakon o financovikh osnovakh mestnogo samoupravleniia v Rossiiskoi Federatsii 1997.) The legal position of the local level has been strengthened by its right to appeal in court those state or regional decisions which infringe upon its constitutional rights. At the same time its own actions can be sued in a court of law by any citizen.

In the regional-local relations a multitude of side-effects of the fiscal crises and break up of institutional practices were felt. One result was the reluctance of the regional level to trust to the local level financing services because of control problems. The financial situation and the lack of internalized norms of good governance lead to the strengthening of existing nepotism and corruption as means to desired ends. (Gribanova 2001.)

By 1998, the debt-swapping practice was forbidden by a presidential decree. As a reaction to the continuing risks felt in the budgetary sphere of the state and side-effects of the fiscal irregularities, a Temporary Emergency Committee on Tax and Budgetary Discipline was organized by the government. Its task was to demand immediate tax payment from firms and encourage citizens to duly pay their income taxes. (Easter 2000: 310.)

The former administrative market went through a great structural transition in the following changes to the authority of local organs. In the background to the changes in municipalities, the economic bureaucracy
was radically altered by the privatization program which aimed to create a private market along with the state planning system. The main operative move in the early 1990’s was the voucher-sale which effected a large scale transfer of state owned property to new owners. This started a period of fighting for economic power which took place at all levels of society. Institutionally at stake was the future political decision making power in Russia. (Sutela 199.) In other words, the administrative market was restructuring itself while its different levels received new authority positions and institutions had to assume power either within new legislation or without it. While the economic administration had to restructure itself in a legal vacuum, the representational administration was in a better position because of the perestroika reforms which had already began to reform its authority position.

It is uncertain what the practical extension is of a purely local right to land and natural resources. The Constitution alone gives quite little to lean on in case there is a dispute of the limits of a town to make its own decisions in ecological questions involving the sale of natural resources or the prevention of pollution. The same problem concerns the areas of social and educational services, which in every case are locally administered.

Even as the economic transition has been implemented slowly at the local level and the re-centralization to the federal and regional level have reduced the impact of the taken measures, new instruments in the fiscal policies of the local level can be found. There was increased local responsibility for general tax policy and tax collection. The right of the local level to levy minor taxes and fees going directly into its own budget has been an important step. Particularly the fees, licenses, fines, permits and customs increased their importance during the 90’s as a source of revenue for both the regional and local levels. The economical developments of the local and regional level were by no means linear. Tax collection is a good example. It was first decentralized at the very same time as the arrears of enterprises and all government levels were increasing. This led in turn towards re-centralization by the cities, who unified district budgets with their own, and the federal level also trying to tighten control to reduce its budget deficit. (Mitchneck 1997: 1000–1001.) With conflicting decisions like this, the natural effect on the provinces was an inability to plan on a long term basis.

In the early post-communist party period of 1992–1993 the standards of living in Russia declined rapidly. There were constant shortages of products
and production levels were dropping. The cost of living increased twelve times from March 1991 to March 1992. The result of this picture can be seen in the first elections after the Soviet Union in 1993. (Williams 1996:11.)

At the same time, in the last part of the 90’s, the regionalist developments created great difficulties in the much needed all-federation economical policy. This can also be described as a weak conceptual understanding of the role of state government in the making and execution of decisions. The lack of feeling for the entirety of the state had, in the view of this criticism, led to the break up of the vertical power axis and discord of opinions about the competence and duties of federal and regional powers. This did not necessarily create more local democracy but helped the formations of regional elites who used the legislative and administrative powers of the regions to install political and informational monopolies and to financially bind the local self-government. (Abdurakhimov 1998: 149–150.)

A culturally negative impact has influenced which different group interests have had an effect on the regions. Their interests have in some cases had a criminal or at least a legally uncertain and unorganized nature which has in turn fed the negative attitudes of the general population towards the system of Russian power. Privatization is seen as being favorable to individual persons, groups and sometimes criminal structures which are not punished for their actions. (Kirianov & Moskovtsev 1995.)

At the same time, a parliamentary committee was also working with the same problems by assuring the rights of the local level in the daily work of different actors at that local level. There was a great uncertainty of the practical decision makers as to what the limits of power at the local level were. (Komitet gosudarstvenoi dumi po voprosam mestnogo samou-pravlenia, Vestnik 1996.)

The Federative Treaty of March 31 1992 was a significant legislative turning point in the development of regional authority. It gave the status of “subject of the federation” not only to the republics themselves but to lower level areas such as territories, regions and areas, which had earlier been ordinary administrative-territorial units of local bodies. This also meant that the self-government of these geographical areas was in the joint competence of them and the state of the Russian Federation. This was a change from the Russian Law of July 1991 which did not add anything new to the powers of regions. (Piskotin 1993: 83–84.) The treaty favored economically the ethnic republics. These obtained the right to master and
sell the mineral resources of their areas. They also received the right of independent foreign trade with the world market and favorable tax treatment which other areas did not get. This inequality was meant to calm down the nationalistic tendencies but it also succeeded in inciting protests in other areas. (Tekoniemi 1998: 19.)

The position of the subjects which are in principal a rather independent sphere, is however limited by both the Constitution as well as by other federal laws. The change of status is, in practice, made quite difficult because its forms are not explained and the term “mutual agreement” is left open. This has created a legal risk for those subjects which used their strengthened political power during the regionalization period. The transitional problems of a weak legal basis, unclear hierarchy of decision making and lack of qualified staff to work in the rapidly changing environment, among other things, led to a situation where different subjects tried to consolidate their authority by alternative routes which were sometimes vague in their constitutional character. An example was the mutual contracts between the center and a region. (Adukhov 1996: 113–114.) These contracts which have their legal bases in the Federation Treaty, were signed during President Eltsin’s term. The power-sharing bilateral treaties formalized an unbalanced federalism which was based on customized deals. In terms of the hierarchy of laws, the order of importance was unclear. In addition, subjects bypassed the center and signed agreements among themselves. (Sakwa 2000: 17.)

The right for the regional and local levels to form their own charters (ustav) which determine their authority and mutual relations with the center created many side-effects. Over half of the 89 charters contradicted the federal Constitution. Some subject constitutions claimed rights which breached the principle of equality between subjects. (Sakwa 2000:16.) In practice the process of approval of these papers was stopped at the central level where it was the Ministry of Justice’s task to go through them. One of the main reasons was the unacceptable levels of independence which the regions were demanding in decisions concerning the use of land and mineral resources, exceeding the constitutional limits. (Tekoniemi 1998: 20.)

A formally diverse system of local government evolved during the 1990’s. At the same time, there remained weak points which slowed down the turning of this procedural freedom into a reliable system of democratic and independent decision making. One of these is the process of developing regional legislation about local self-government which has not progressed particularly rapidly or easily. By 1997, the fragmentation of legal space had
developed into a situation where nearly half of the regional legal acts did not comply with the Russian Constitution or federal legislation. (Sakwa 2000: 17.) According to Lidiia Reznitsenko, in 1997 there were still around 30 subjects which had not enacted a single law to institutionalize the new local self-government. In some regions the local self-government had been transferred to the local state administration – in violation of the Constitution (for instance Tatarstan, Yakutia, Bashkortostan and others). Based on the analysis of the Ministry of Justice, there were only four subjects (of a total 68) whose regional legislation about local self-government was strictly consistent with the Constitution. Typical violations of local self-government were the effort to form the whole structure and organization of activity of local government from the top, violation of the rules of elections, and the poor level of public organization of the local government. Understandably, the problems were bigger in small towns and in the rural areas. (Reznitsenko 1998: 166.) One of the first legislative moves of President Putin was to abolish the practice of signing bilateral treaties. The Constitutional court of RF furthermore proclaimed them unconstitutional in its decision.

The local administration is most of all affected by federal laws and decrees of the President, the latter of which dominated legislative work in the beginning of the 90’s. Institutional administrative instructions and regulations form an important way of communication inside organizations. Federal laws have remained general in nature and thus their actual implementation has been guided with sectoral rules (i.e. a ministry’s own legal acts) and administrative acts of the implementing organization.

Similar to the economic changes a restructuring of the local control administration has taken place. As a clear change to the Soviet times when civil and arbitration cases were often settled outside of the court system in the administrative market, the courts have become a separate administrative institution, new courts have been established, courts have the power of judicial review which did not exist in the Soviet period (Jordan 2000:194) and legal consciousness has gained the importance it has in the liberal-democratic model.

The Constitution and the federal law “On the Constitutional Court” in 1994 made the court a 19 member organ which is nominated by the Federation Council. Its task is to review legislative acts, including orders of the President, federal laws, republican Constitutions, and treaties of both national and subject levels. The court could not initiate a review of the
constitutionality of the government’s actions in implementation. This is the task of courts in general jurisdiction which the Supreme Court heads. An individual’s appeals are accepted on the basis of an inquiry on the constitutionality of legislation dealing with a particular case from a court. Abstract review on the legality of the President’s and government’s actions is not permitted. (Jordan 2000: 196, 198.)

The Constitutional Court is important from the point of view of local officials because in certain areas of Russian law, for instance that which concerns the freedom of movement, the Court has often ruled against the local organs. An example is the residence permit (propiska) which has been demanded by Moscow city to prevent uncontrollable migration into the city. Yet, the problem of the 90’s which still continues is the inability to secure enforcement of decisions. (Jordan 2000: 197.) The Constitution court has also proved its usefulness in the protection of constitutional relations in cases of breaches of jurisdiction. The authority of local government has been reinforced against a governor’s attempt to monopolize power. (Gelman 2000: 241.)

The Constitutional court and the Supreme Court which has civil, criminal and military judicial departments have both exercised the right to review the legality of executive acts. In fact the Supreme Court, which according to the Constitution is the highest court for appeal in civil and criminal cases has favored a diffusion of constitutional control by directing the lower courts in 1995 to consider the constitutionality of legal acts. In 1998 the Constitutional Court assumed the leadership role in the matter by ruling that all other courts were prohibited from deciding on such issues. Instead, lower courts were instructed to always apply the Constitution in ruling and request the Constitutional Court to review any case were a contradiction might be found. (Jordan 2000: 199.) In this way, the court system experience a similar type attempt of centralization and redefinition of authority as the representational administration.

The third party in the court system which affects the administration is the arbitration courts. These are specialized courts which settle property and commercial disputes and, at the request of juridical persons (including foreign companies), cases involving decisions by authorities. The consolidation of the arbitration court system as an independent body started in 1991. This was with a resolution by the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation which abolished all previous arbitration bodies and similar systems in the government. Judicial proceedings about economic
disputes began to be carried out according to the Arbitration Procedural Code of the Russian Federation from 1992. (The Supreme Arbitration Court of the Russian Federation 1997.)

Its work is presently regulated by the federal laws “On Arbitration Courts in the Russian Federation”, and the Arbitration Procedural Code, both from 1995, and by the 1995 federal constitutional law “On the judicial system in the Russian Federation”. In the year 1997 there were 82 first level arbitration courts in Russia. (The Supreme Arbitration Court of the Russian Federation 1997.)

The judiciary and the prosecutors form the combination responsible for monitoring the legality of administrative acts and decisions of officials. The prosecutor’s role is presently governed by a law on the prosecutor’s office (Federal'nyi zakon O prokurature v Rossisskoi Federatsii/2000). After 1991 the prosecutor worked in the self-conflictual role of being the general controller of legality, while at the same time that of the criminal investigator and court prosecutor. At the time of the drafting of the new Constitution, two main positions existed concerning the future role of the prosecutor. The first wanted to keep the office strong and centralized with many official tasks. The second wanted to scale down its authority and strengthen the courts. The prosecutor’s office itself saw the courts as having too little personnel, and in many cases too inexperienced judges to handle all complaints against officials. In 1993 the prosecutor’s office received more than 100.000 complaints ranging from pollution, housing, pension, labor conflicts to administrative fines. Of these approximately 13.000 resulted in formal protests by the prosecutors. It was argued that the process would take too much time and money for ordinary citizens. (Smith 1996: 360.)

After the end of the socialist system, court personnel were not purged, yet the position of the judges has undergone a major change. In this sense, the court serves as a prime example of organizational learning in administrative transition. In 1992 “Law on the Status of Judges” and the Constitution itself defined the role and authority of judges. Higher education, life long tenure, immunity from prosecution and federal financing for courts are structural requirements. In terms of administrative practices, the judges are subordinate only to law, cannot join political parties and can find people in contempt of the court. A 1996 “Law on the Court System of the Russian Federation established a unified federal court system of which judges are a part. The 1996 law on courts also established subject level constitutional courts which have the right to review the local norm
production. (Jordan 2000: 200–201.) The former local and regional court structure was authoritatively buried and courts made into state organs.

Legal protection is built with a multitude of legislation (see Alekhin & Karmolitskii & Kozlov 1996, for a full list of legal sources). As there is no one administrative law which would dictate the procedural behavior of officials, different laws need to be looked at together. In addition to the Constitution, the Civil Code (Grazhdanskii kodeks Rossiiskoi Federatsii 1994) is the basis of legal protection. It states the right of appeal of administrative decisions in court and gives the court several tools for the correction of illegal decisions. (Grazhdanskii kodeks Rossiiskoi Federatsii 1994, glava 2: 11–13.)

The rulings of the Constitutional Court can be included as legal acts which are a part of the legal basis of local level decision making. Presently, this legal basis also includes the Constitution of the Russian Federation, federal laws, special laws on local self-government and federal decrees. (Sokolova 2003: 6–9.)

The Civil Code has been complemented by the Federal Law about Complaints to the Court about decisions infringing upon the rights and liberties of citizens from 1995. It ordered the state officials – and municipal officials who acted as state official in their duties – to recognize, monitor and defend the rights and liberties of citizens. The law gives a citizen the right to see material which directly concerns his rights. He can appeal the decision either with a higher organ or in the court. (Federal´nyi zakon ob obzhalovanii v sud deistvii i reshenii narushaiushchikh prava i svobody grazhdan, No 4866–1, 27. aprelia, 1995.)

The experiences of the 1990´s has shown that judges have generally been disposed to ruling in favor of the plaintiffs when a citizen has filed a complaint against an official or administrative organ. The number of complaints has risen steadily throughout the 1990´s from about 4.000 in 1991 to over 80.000 in 1997. Claimants won in 70% of cases. (Jordan 2000: 204.)

Different sectoral laws, such as the Federal law on social services from 1995 states the right of citizens to receive counseling as to their rights and services. However, there has not been a body of legislation which would have concisely gathered together the procedural principles of good administrative work. The Law on Administrative misconduct from 1984 has been the basis of rules on behavior. A new Federal Law on Administrative Misconduct from 2001 (Kodeks administrativnih pravonarusheniakh
2001) forms a type of administrative guide for good procedure. Yet it can best be described as a separate section of criminal law which deals with misconduct somehow related to administration. Its object is both the officials and the citizenry. An important group of sanctions concern private enterprises.

Legally and economically the municipal administration serves two masters. Its own space has been strengthened and tools for its daily work have been developed. The period of regionalization, privatization and reformation of the administrative market have been closing down since the end of 1990’s. The risks involved in these processes from the point of view of developing administrative practices are obvious: lack of clear policies, changing of laws, political instability, unclear re-division of state property and resources, unclear norm hierarchy, growing political and economical corruption replacing the blat of the Soviet administrative market, lack of public trust.

President Putin’s governments have answered these risks with a strategy of “dictatorship of law” and political control of the regions. At first, the dictatorship of laws and the centralization of political guidance and economic decision making was directed toward bringing some constitutional order into the prevailing situation of regional and local authoritarianism. The accent has been on the federal laws which would supersede any local and regional legislation. The goal has been to get away from a situation where every organization has its own rules according to which the federal laws are interpreted. The second political goal has been to create a unified economic space in Russia where fiscal federalism would work according to the same rules of the game in all parts of the country and to make the center the primary decision maker in economic policy.

Richard Sakwa has noted that “bargaining between the federal government and the subjects is one of the most salient aspects of politics in contemporary Russia, but the rules of this bargaining process have not yet assumed a precise institutional form: the rules of the game remain unclear and arbitrary. […] yet transparency is not something that can be imposed but emerges out of political struggle itself. […] The imposition or importation of practices of good governance would probably be fragile, whereas a political order hammered out in conflict and compromises between the actors themselves would in all likelihood prove more durable.” (Sakwa 2000: 25.) The matrix of scenarios by Vladimir Gelman further more clarifies the situation which Putin faces in the political guidance of
administrative reform. It would seem that Vladimir Putin has sought to move from the “elite settlement” scenario to the “struggle according to rules” stage where formal institutions are used as a weapon against others in the struggle for survival. (Comp. Gelman 2000: 234.) Formal rules are important in this scenario but their politically wise use is the tactic which makes a winner.

The elite settlement approach which President Eltsin used can, in hindsight, be seen as one of the main risk producing strategies in administrative change. Such a situation did not give enough legally protected room for long term planning and institution building. Guidance was reacting to seeming side-effects and deterring political risks. Main concentration was given to regional political struggle which allowed the economy to become an open field for well positioned and connected players. Politically the risk was high, because at stake was state property and huge natural resources unlike in the small former Eastern European countries. Constitutionally the situation was unbearable because the local level which should have in principle been one of the main beneficiaries of the new developing market economy was mostly left outside of the decision making. It began to bargain for a piece of the budget, instead of becoming a master in its own geographical area.

From the local perspective, it would seem that the Putin regime has opted for a strategy of forced legalism by using institutions formally and opponents’ institutional weakness informally. The main tactic is gaining economic control of Russia’s regions and strengthening legality at the expense of democratic practices. The legitimation seems to be that constitutionalism in administration can only be realized with a strong centrally guided state. The government’s view seems to be that delegation of authority to unregulated regional political elites in the vast country leads to risks which shatter economic planning and threaten the rights of citizens more than a controlled media and institutionally weak opposition.

After stopping the signing of federal treaties, Putin instituted seven new administrative federal areas which formalized the unity of political and legal control in the regions and created new super-areas which are not mentioned in the Constitution. The heads of these regions report directly to the President and use the information which is primarily collected by the security police (FSB) in the area. The intention is to secure the execution of federal laws, monitor the media and elections in the area and to work with the regional and local authorities to combat corruption (Gribanova 2001).
In this sense, the policies follow the risk administration route: the insecure environment and political guidance problems make the security institutions stronger both operationally and politically.

Legislative efforts have been given a great deal of importance in the Putin policy. Major legislative changes have taken place in the tax law, criminal law, land law and administrative law. The former went through a major modernization in 2001 when a new version of the former federal law on administrative offences was revised. The Federal Law on Administrative Misconduct (Kodeks administrativnykh pravonarusheniakh 2001) can be called “an administrative fine law” because it sanctions different fines for different types of actors. The administrative duties of civil servants are united with different categories of fines which are used as a negative guidance tool. A second important quality is the requirement for legality which seeks to eradicate the most obvious violations of human rights from the Soviet era. It is important that any other correctional decision other than a fine, is decided by a court. The equality of all citizens before the law is underlined, innocence is presumed and retrospective decisions are void. (Kodeks administrativnykh pravonarusheniakh 2001.)

At the work organization level, the structural changes have produced a need to assess the service of the population in a new way. The administration at the local level is no longer merely an extension of the representative organ which in the Soviet Union had given popular legitimation to the decisions made by the party bureaucracy. The local administration has been faced with the dilemma of becoming a genuine separate legal and operational entity responsible for the sustainable development of state programs.

6.3 The New Administrative Culture Since 1991: Building Practices of Discretion

This chapter is based on the interview data which was obtained for the research in the October city district administration in Murmansk in 1993 and 2000. The interviewees were city district employees, altogether 36 persons. The interviews were conducted by the author, transcribed in Russian and then translated by the author into English. Interview quotes are numbered to help the reader find a specific quote in the text. Quote numbers do not represent different respondents.
6.3.1 A Case Study of the Murmansk City District Administration, 1993–2000

The city of Murmansk can be called a pure Soviet city because its history as a city starts officially only a year before the Revolution in October 4th (21st of September) in 1916 as “Romanov-on-Murman”. Before that it was a far away Imperial post in the North whose economic growth was in the last part of the 19th century based on forestry. The growth of the population in the area required better ways of transportation which became a decisive issue for the future of the area. (Kiselev and Tulin 1977: 7–9.)

By the end of the 20th century Murmansk has become a commercial and military port situated in the Kola peninsula on the bank of a bay leading to the Arctic Ocean. The city is the capital of Murmansk oblast in which metallurgy has been the main industrial base in the 1990’s (Universitet Laplandii-Kolskii Nauchnyi Tsentr 2000: Murmanskaiia oblast v 90 godoh). The Kola Peninsula is the most important mineral resource area in the Russian Federation, since more than a quarter of all known minerals in the world can be found in this area. In 1994, the Murmansk oblast produced 100% of all apatite concentrates, 41.2% of all nickel and 13.0% of copper in the whole Russian Federation. Large natural gas deposits are situated in the Barents Sea, of which the largest is the Shokhmanskoe gas and condensate field 600 km away from the city in the sea. (The Barents Euro-Arctic Council 1995: 61, 63.)

The population of Murmansk was growing in the 1970’s from 309.000 (1970) to 381.000 (1979). In 1989 the city had 440.000 inhabitants. By 1997 a decline had taken place and 394.000 people lived in Murmansk. In 2000, every fifth person in Murmansk was a pensioner (Administratsii goroda-gorodera Myrmanka 2000:1). A steady number of people have moved to the more Southern regions of Russia, either to work or after their retirement. The city has been struck with unemployment since fishing lost its earlier prominence as a major economic provider. By 1994 the annual catch had decreased from 1.172 million tons in 1990 to 0.53 million tons. (The Barents Euro-Arctic Council 1995: 61.)

The oblast charter (ustav) defines the municipal government as an independent legal entity which does not belong to the state administrative structures. The municipal charter and the structure of local government are decided by the inhabitants of the municipalities. Municipal elections are held according to the oblast law on elections. Locally elected representatives
have a right to take part in the initiation of legislative acts in the regional duma. Motions and official requests of administrators in the local administration should be a priority to the higher administrative organs. Local administration and state local administrative offices have a right to enter mutual contracts. Citizens living in the municipality, organs of self-government and administrators have a right to appeal the decision of state organs or officials, organs or officials of local government, enterprises and other organizations when these breach the limits of local self-government. (Ustav Murmanskoi oblast´i 1997.)

The system of self-government in Murmansk includes the elected mayor, the city soviet, the administration and territorial (regional) organs of self-government. The mayor is elected every four years by citizens over 21 years of age and has a double role as both the head of the administration and the speaker of the soviet. The work of the mayor includes heading the local administration on the basis of a structure which the soviet has accepted, confirming orders concerning administrative organs and considering collective and individual appeals. (Ustav goroda-geroia Murmanska 1995: glava I:8, glava IV:23,24.)

The city charter mentions 16 sectoral organizations which can be either departments, committees or administrations and which receive their funding from the city budget. The city is yet further divided into four administrative areas, each of which is headed by a deputy mayor within whose jurisdiction have a right to give orders and instructions. Each administrative district (okrug) is directly subordinated to the mayor and functions together with sectoral organizations of the city administration. (Ustav goroda-geroia Murmanska 1995: glava VI:32,25.)

Since 1996, the city was administered through:

Four administrations –
- The administration for social protection,
- The administration for finances,
- The administration for building maintenance
- The administration for building,

three committees –
- The committee for health protection,
- The committee for education,
- The committee for municipal property,
nine departments –
- The department of housing
- The department of architecture,
- The department of citizens’ appeals,
- The city department of employment,
- The department for the cooperation and development of private enterprises,
- The department of trade,
- The department of consumer protection,
- The department of culture,
- The department of civil registrations,

and one foundation which is the ecological foundation. (Administratsiia goroda-geroia Murmanska 2000: 1.)

The study for this research was conducted in the central city district, in the administration of the October district. Murmansk city government was divided into districts for the first time in 1939. The following year the studied district was organized into 10 departments, including the department of social services and housing. Nine years later, the district was abolished with all its local government organs, only to be re-established three years later. The abolition was repeated in 1958 and the re-establishment in 1967. The decree of the President of Russian republic (No 239, 25.11.1991), the subsequent orders of the head of administration (No 220, 2.3.1992) and the October district executive committee (N 100, 2.3.1992) ended the district soviet. The same year, a new structure of district administration was formed. Finally, in 1994 the decision of the head of October district administration changed the earlier district department of social protection into the Administration for social protection. (Historical information collected from the October city district administration during a visit in 2000.)

The Administration for social protection of the population (UCZNN) works as a provider for basic social services. Along with federal laws and regional programs, social services have been guided at the city level by a program which directs attention to three issues: the condition of veterans and invalids, and poverty in general (Administratsiia goroda-geroia Murmanska 2000: 1.).

The social services provided by the city district include social assistance to families with children, assigning pensions to retired persons, and special
assistance to invalids and refugees settling in the area. In other words, the organization is concerned with the basic needs of the population in the city. Formally the goal is to assign all benefits in time to those who are seeking assistance or legal entitlements. At the same time, the work involves a certain amount of evaluation of the needs of citizen groups and taking care of those client groups who cannot be expected to initiate processes themselves. The primary task is to count benefits and guide clients to the right services which the city is able to provide.

6.3.1.1 Economy

The oblast budget has suffered from deficit from 1994 onwards, the worst year being 1997. The deficit has been covered by subsidies from the state budget. The state fund for the support of the regions had financed the oblast level, and the subsidies for the regional budget financed the municipalities. (Universitet Laplandii-Kolskii Nauchnyi Tsentr 2000.) In 1996 the city administration reacted to the financial challenges by establishing a Coordination council for different administrative organs involved in the collection of income. Included in this new organs have been representatives of the Tax inspection, Tax police and municipal funds. The main task was to individually see which organizations and enterprises owed the city taxes and other payments. (Administratsiia goroda-geroia Murmanska 2000: 11.)

Between 1996 and 1999 the practice of debt-swapping was used in the administration to help the finances of health care, educational and housing sectors which owed money for heating, food, medication, repairs of schools, hospitals and clinics. A system of dept-swapping was also created between the providers of communal services and the oblast budget. In the arrangements social assistance payments due were substituted with exemption from rents and other communal payments. In the year 2000, the city had made 205 contracts with local enterprises for these to provide free material support and food stuffs for inhabitants eligible for assistance. (Administratsiia goroda-geroia Murmanska 2000: 2, 11.)

In practice the services largely included concrete material help. Between 1996 and 2000, the studied organization gave humanitarian aid to 8.026 persons, concrete material aid to 27.196 persons, free meals at the sum of 103.100 rubles. Subsidized medication was provided for 12.657 persons. In
addition small numbers of people received free newspapers and journals, trips to sanatoriums and had their travel to a holiday place paid. (Administratsiia goroda-geroia Murmanska 2000: 45.)

In the beginning of the transition, economic difficulties penetrated everything. This meant inability to plan anything in the work, not having the proper tools (computers, calculators and so on) and simply having too little material assistance to give to the recipients. Laws about benefits and pensions changed four times a year, which made taking care of even the routine calculations burdensome. At the same time, the clients’ situation worsened rapidly. There was a sense of diffusion of power in the sphere of economy. Keeping one’s head above water by trying to manage the obligatory tasks in one way or another dominated in 1993.

Along with the braking up of the economic bureaucracy, the drastic organizational changes in political guidance and authority relations challenged the practices of the administration. All through the 1990’s there was no strong correlation between “self-government” and the place of local level legislative and executive decision making within the system of the Russian state (Gribanova 2001). In the studied organization this meant both opportunities and risks in the form of unclear jurisdictions as the following quotes from interviews reveal:

1. “The [earlier Soviet time] budget was more stable, because we for instance in October approved the budget in the session and we in the course of a year knew how much and where our expenses went. Now the index is such that with our unstable situation, of course it is very difficult to make a prognosis. […] The ’93 budget is more or less unstable, and we consider this budget unrealistic because we approved it in May and now it is October and there has already been inflation twice. […] Earlier it was not like this. The earlier budget was approved and the whole year we worked peacefully, without any changes.” (1993)

2. Now this question is open because we don’t have any delegates, and the budget was approved by the session. […] The session decided if we distributed finances in the right way. It was they who approved the budget. For us it was the law […] I do not know what will happen in 1994. Probably we will ourselves make and execute the budget.” (1993)

3. “There is no socioeconomic development plan. I do not know how the budget will be formed for the next year. It is hard to say what becomes of building and financing. I don’t know. The State Duma will be elected on the 12th, if there are elections. But then, how is the State Duma going to plan
because soon it will be the year of ’94. How is the budget [going to turn out] or does the matter just go to the executive powers. In other words, we receive some control number and within these “borders” we will work. Like that.” (1993)

4. “If all would be normal financially, actually not even financially but politically somehow peaceful, then we would be able to arrange everything, make a prognosis, plan and peacefully decide all our financial questions. We could think in terms of the future. Now we practically do not do such things.” (1993)

Seven years later in 2000 the economy was stabilized. Although the budget limits were felt in every day work, other things had become more important in the development of work. Even though the client’s situation had scarcely become better, the administrators themselves were more concerned about computer program efficiency, general attitude towards the clients, getting their own voice heard in the collective and so on. As one interviewee said:

5. “We can decide. But again we don’t have the financial means.” (2000)

6.3.1.2 Authority in the Administrative Market

The separation from the party structure and reorganization of positions had changed the organization in many ways and altered personal careers. The statistics of the organization from the year 1998 show that altogether 61 persons worked in the six departments. These people were on average 38 years old and had worked in the organization for an average of 7 years. Those working in bookkeeping had the longest careers, almost 14 years. Nineteen persons had worked in the administration over 15 years.

In 2000 the organization had again changed. It had been streamlined and its personnel reorganized. Some departments had disappeared and others had acquired a more meaningful position. The personnel was 68 persons of which 75% worked in the social assistance sector. Along with these changes the professional titles of administrators had changed, although the job descriptions had stayed basically the same. The organization’s work was a state delegated task.

Those interviewed in 1993 still had fresh experience from the administrative work during the Soviet period. Interviews from this year provide evidence of the fact that the disappearance of the political
administration had immediately changed the practices in terms of organizational limits and the restructuring of tasks.

6. “Earlier, for instance, we had a plan. We subordinate the administration, as a rule, salary, methods, explanations of laws and everything else comes from the regional administration. If earlier the law was written in ’56, it had practically not changed in any way, and all possible extra explanations, plans, orders, all came from above. Whether we want it or not, whether we considered it necessary or not, we were required to implement it. Today everything is different. [...] Purely in an organizational manner there is more independence. I can today, for instance, by myself arrange the structure of the department, as I see it. We can change things. But again by showing [plans] to the head of the administration. Earlier this was not possible.” (1993)

7. “Now the structure is completely different. I feel it is more democratic. First of all earlier we absolutely had to, I know it was the Regional committee of the party, but we always presented the fulfillment of the plan, looked at the results, the fulfillment of the socialist building, [and] drew conclusions. Now we don’t have any of this. Now it is simpler. I work only with people. Higher questions – well, generally no one interferes.” (1993)

8. “Structure changed, it changed, how would I say it, it became complicated for my work. Earlier in the Regional executive committee, they worked with a variety of questions. Now, abolished are the organizational department, general department, only one supervisor stayed. [...] For me it became harder to manage all my duties. I am being alienated by this situation....” (1993)

9. “There is a new department of “socioeconomic development” the whole structure. Bookkeeping was not at all a part of administration, it was in the city administration. [...] “General management”, we didn’t have that kind of a department. It was all decided by the Secretary. The staff has now grown in the administration and more departments have appeared.” (1993)

The local city district level depends on the decisions made by higher organs, but at a slightly different level than before. Along with the political freedom received after the end of Communist party double control, the administrators felt less direct control from the center and in connection with the regional higher administrative organs. Tellingly, In 1993, the oblast level was seen as representing the state.

10. “Without a doubt we depend on the city administration, and on the oblast administration. Earlier we depended on the party organ, it was very rough. There is dependence, but the structure is such that you cannot escape
it. We are not autonomous in the city, we always say that the master in the city is the city administration. We are masters in our districts. Inside the district we are almost full masters, but because we are the central district of the city we sometimes. ... We find out who is going to decide a particular question. [...] Now the federal level comes down to the oblast level. We practically do not feel its control, because it does not control us in an immediate manner. This [control] comes probably from the federation. We don’t always think about where it comes from. (1993)

11. “No Gosplan, planning does not come from above. [...] Generally we don’t work on any programs now at the level of a district. In other words, if I had a program, it is worked on at the level of the city.” (1993)

The local level independence was seen as something of an impossibility without virtual complete economic independence, which was not even a consideration. Instead the administrators put the emphasis on fulfilling the administrative tasks well in order to serve their specific clientele. The clientele in this manner was regarded more important than other factors, such as local policy decision making. Legal orders and federal laws dictated the content of the work.

Most interviewees testified to the growth of actual decision making power and control of the work, while reminding that total autonomy was not realistic. In 2000, not a single individual admitted to feeling any particular pressure from any higher organ in their daily routines. In this sense they described the organization to be quite free in its daily routines from the controlling of little details by higher organs.

12. So, of course earlier, before deciding some question it was necessary to have it approved, particularly because we are the lower level, and above us is enough observation. But now we can practically decide ourselves any question which lies in our competence and then talk with the city administration. In that sense things have become simpler.” (1993)

The view on organizational authority was mixed. If the comparison was the Soviet situation, definite changes were recognized and mostly seen as giving much more flexibility. Even as administrative independence as such was generally considered a good thing, its meaning at the bottom rung of the local level was questioned. At the same time, this development was not regarded as complete. The reasons were both organizational and financial. Too wide authority was seen as producing risks for work. The city administration was the receiver who executes federal and regional decisions.
13. “The only thing is that now we have more freedom. In other words earlier we had to consult the city with many questions, but now we can decide many of them ourselves. [...] I would like to limit our decision making rights. [...] If we knew that this issue does not belong to us we would not start to work on it.” (1993)

14. “… I feel that in the direct meaning of the word we don’t have independence. We have double subordination. We subordinate to the department in the city administration and in the oblast administration as higher organizations. But I want to say that the department still is on its own, work is independent and self-sufficient. We don’t feel from any side any kind of [influence] on ourselves. (1993)

In general, the period of regionalism did not help the Russian local level in uncertain situations to decide which of the two powers [state or region] is more important for it, and where it could find its rights. (Sherbakova 1998: 163.) The unclear jurisdictions of different levels of government were also challenges for the Murmansk administration. Instability and ineffectiveness of the state structures, insufficient legal background to support the local level, the absence of minimal federal social standards and the principles of work in the social questions, the unclear budget relations of different levels which would have guaranteed the independence of the local level, as well as the lack of experience in self-government all affected directly the creation of a new local administration in the 1990’s. An example of a legally unspecified area are those situations where the municipality has the right to transfer its decision making authority to the region. (Pankratov 1995, Vasiljev & Peshin 1997.) In the October city district administration similar situations had also appeared.

15. “Administrative independence will never work out. He who makes the budget, – we don’t plan it ourselves. We are given everything from above. Then we will have independence when we ourselves build the budget and by ourselves implement it. But now we are given control numbers from above and we just implement them. And we don’t always agree with them. [...] This will never change because the tax system is such. If tax collection changes a little bit, then maybe. Maybe the State Duma will change the new way of tax collection, maybe, I don’t know. But independence. I feel that we cannot get rid of the [central] government. All the same somehow there is a separation in the federal budget. And it will stay that way. How else can we keep up this army and so on? In other words it makes no difference. But it would be good if we ourselves would plan and would make our numbers.” (1993)
In 2000 it was explicitly pointed out that the local city district level performs state tasks at the local level. Localism in this issue is reached by knowing the clientele and its specific situation in the city of Murmansk. Political localism did not particularly touch the daily work of the studied organization.

Changes in the administrative market were felt mostly as a positive thing. The position of the administration, or the emergence of such, was seen as a possibility to take decision making closer to the citizens. The separation from the work of the council was not seen as a negative matter. The former Soviet’s role was viewed with some reluctance. From the point of view of some persons interviewed, it’s role in the new situation had been formed into a lobbying system for clients’ cases. Others simply saw the soviet’s role as diminished in the daily running of things after the formal separation of structures. Some regarded this as not merely a positive move. Answering to the needs of the citizens in new ways, such as with the help of non-governmental organizations, was welcomed with a mixed feeling.

The work of the soviet delegates did not have a clear role for the line workers. In the new local self-government structure, the soviet had standing commissions which took care of sectoral issues. The job of the commissions was to prepare normative acts, initiative on policy issues and look into appeals of citizens. The social sector was handled by the standing commission on socioeconomic development, privatization and the management and distribution of municipal property. This commission made decisions on the initiative of the city administration. (Polozhenie o postoiannykh komissiiakh Murmanskiego gorodskogo soveta, prilozhenie k resheniui Murmanskiego gorodskogo Soveta ot 4.2.1997, N3–42.)

The changes in the administrative market and the strengthening of the executive were described in the following way:

16. “Now delegates [...] only [for] purely material help, only with purely these kinds of technical questions they turn [to us] [...] Yes, if I earlier worked with delegates, knew all that they worked with from the beginning to the end, so now these questions were taken away from the supervisor. These questions do not concern me. I work for the head of administration. I execute his orders. I do everything in order for his machinery to work normally. And the soviet works on its own and with its own questions. [...] If anyone comes to me directly, it is only the chairman of the soviet and only for purely technical questions. For example, to influence the politics of the district he can only [do so] through the head of administration, he does not come directly to me. If he
came to me, I would send him to the head. I am commanded by the head of administration.” (1993)

17. “I would like that the delegates would come, in case they have questions about the law, showed interest, asked questions. But they understand their task a little bit differently. A particular person comes to them and they come with this person to me behaving quite strangely. At least as far as I have been in contact with the delegates, they all behave the same way. “We have to decide this voter’s question.” But they don’t for some reason want to explain to the voter why the question cannot be decided in a certain way. […] They explain to their constituent that “the political executive board does not want to decide your question, we cannot do anything.” I would like them to study the situation and to explain it to the person. […] They put us in opposing positions with the constituent.” (1993)

18. “The disconnection of the work of the speaker of the soviet and the head of administration was, in my view, not very reasonable, because it created a static in the sense that when the speaker and the head were one and the same person, the speaker knew how he was going to implement decisions in the administration. But now we have a situation where the soviet makes decisions and they are not interested in how we will carry them out, and in this sense rose misunderstandings.” (1993)

19. “… Now of course there is more freedom in activities, because earlier we were completely dependent on the work of the party organs and they came to the Executive political committee and dictated their terms to the committee. Now the head of administration himself makes practically all decisions but has to approve them with the soviet and higher administrative organs in the city administration. He has double subordination.” (1993)

20. “First of all, our delegates were not very competent people, unfortunately. They were good people as people, well meaning, – good person, orderly, but here you should also be a professional. One should at least know the basics of law to know whether it is possible to deal with the situation or not. A person must be explained to immediately. Unfortunately, this is not so. Here, you know, things are always decided at an emotional level. […] I felt that the professionals did not work with their constituents. They met with them from time to time when they had an appointment, but further than that… Now I do understand, they may not have very much time for that, but we either agree to do this work or we should refuse it.” (1993)

21. “… There were no special contacts with the delegates. They came only for their constituents’ questions, if they were retired persons. […] They come
with the same questions to somehow help someone. To sort out retirement questions.” (1993)

6.3.1.3 Information and Guidance

Connected to decision making and direction giving in the administration is organizational communication. By the year 2000 the knowledge gathered by the line workers in the appointments moved to a certain degree upwards in the hierarchy. Unanimously the interviewees in the 2000 sample acknowledged their ability to influence planning and practical work in their own department, thanks again to the immediate leadership.

22. “We give our points of view there upstairs, about what the retirees want, what kinds of problems they have. We help, maybe, the leadership to work on the policy which they are supposed to have. Of course from our discourse with people we gather a lot of information, of what should be done and how it should be done.” (2000)

23. “Earlier you were not asked. Nobody was interested.”(2000)

24. “… In other words, what concerns changes of a local nature, in other words the city, we write to the city [as to] how things have to be done, this has to be done that way, – and we are heard in some places and in some others not, but we have a direct connection. […] We in a sense have a double subordination, a set of local questions the city decides, and if the questions are federal, then we as a matter of fact don´t have a general center of coordination, we instead go straight to the oblast level. […] In all of this, we have it easier with questions of local self-government. Things move from the bottom upstairs easier. The connection is better. But what concerns the connection through the subject of Federation, in federal questions, it is more difficult. In this connection it is more just executing decisions of higher organs. And our initiatives play a lesser role. It is more a matter of correcting already made documents. In practice we start to implement them and we see that they don´t work, then we start to write how they work and what should be changed, if indeed changes will be done, if they are considered needed … if it is seen that something does not work here, then we write to the oblast committee. There are of course points of collision. There are questions which are not decided. I can´t say about it more directly because I don´t work with these questions, but one feels. Because, for instance in our work, when there are two masters of the house, as a result nothing works out. That is why a sharp separation is better, just one
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[decision maker], and the other does not touch the question. We have this situation for instance with homeless people.” (2000)

The higher vertical line was mostly in the hands of the director of district administration, as the answers indicated some hesitance as to how much the practical experiences directly influence higher decision making outside of the administration. All in all, the change in the way information could be obtained by the clients and let out by the administrators themselves had radically altered during the 90’s compared to the Soviet times. The work organization itself had become more responsible for its work and making a difference in the realization of federal policy.

25. “If I have been given a task, I will myself decided it. I am not dependent on anyone. I look at the financial situation in the district. And that is why no-one can influence me because I can personally decide certain questions. Earlier all came from the center. There was the center, only the center decided everything. And now the questions are here in the district. We don’t even have to go to the city but we can decide questions here. […] We became more independent, than for instance in the 80’s because then the center decided.” (1993)

Another side of the information and guidance is the way work conditions and information processing itself has developed. In the studied organization, the practical conditions had improved significantly since computers had been bought for each cabinet. Even though two persons shared one computer this was a major improvement in the way information could be processed and clients served. It had also added to the professional skills of administrators. Even though there was a hope to have each one have her own personal computer, and to improve the quality of the programs used, the general development was seen as positive by the informants.

26. “We have a shortage of work space. I think that we don’t even have the elementary conditions for an inspector’s work, because generally in one room four people hold consulting hours. Four people ask questions and four people answer. Eight people speak at the same time. It is not possible to work in such conditions. Maybe in time, we will be helped. We were promised computers, calculators which work on the light not electricity. In other words we have many problems. Especially our department. They involve technical questions and the staff. We have a problem with the staff, people do not wish this kind of [working condition]. We have a big shortage of staff. On top of this I would to say that we endure on enthusiasm. If they were offered something better, I think that many would leave our department.” (1993)
Computerization had been the major change in the 90’s. This had a significant effect on the way each citizen’s affairs could be managed. The administrators could instantly control the situation of each client by checking his/her information and by calculating the possible needs for changes. This obviously decreased the possibility for error as well for the misplacement of paper documentation. At the same time it made keeping records easier. The effect that these routine issues had for the sense of efficiency and client service was worthy of note.

27. “The most important thing is computerization. I am convinced of this because one of the first who started to work with computers was our department.” (1993)

28. “Here is our problem. People cannot ask questions. Also, all kinds of letters come. Even if you would like to answer, you don’t know what is the concrete point of interest, what is needed.” (2000)

29. “I would like that we would have, – that we would not collect papers, but would have computers. […] At least now it is very difficult, even with the Tax inspection we cannot make this connection with computers, so that we would have a uniform system. […] Even though in the finance department we all have computers, but information is not such as we would like to have.” (1993)

30. “Work became more productive. First of all, earlier we had a lot of hand work. […] But now we have computers in out rooms. In other words, information is before your eyes in the computer. There is more information.” (2000)

At the same time, good service to citizens (sensitivity to their problems, professionalism) even under the strains of change was brought up by some of those interviewed. This line of thinking had strengthened itself in 2000. It had become the new norm of action which was reflected in the answers and in the behavior of the work collective. Giving information in a more open manner and according to clients’ needs had become an important “self-evident” norm. This was also reflected in the way the physical surroundings were organized. The names of directors, their room and phone numbers as well as times of appointments were on the wall in the first floor lobby.

In the studied organization, openness in information giving was unproblematic. However, this does not directly correlate with active administration. Clients were still expected to initiate processes and be active in their own cases. They could get service but the quality of the process depended also on the specific client.
6.3.1.4 Leadership

The break up of the administrative market had altered the position of the director considerably. The head of the new administration who in the Soviet system had a double position as a member of the soviet and the head of its executive committee (present administration) had structurally new limits but within his own organization at least the same amount of power. The 1995 city charter again founded the double role. The head of a district acts as a deputy mayor. (Ustav goroda geroia Murmanska 1995: glava IV:23, glava VI:35).

The view on leadership and its role had changed in a quite note worthy manner between 1993 and 2001. The change is even more evident when viewed against the leadership qualities dominant in the perestroika period. In 1993 some expressed the view that the head of the district administration had in effect become an authoritative leader only after the changes when the Soviet no longer had institutional power over the administrations daily actions.

31. “We decided things in a collegial manner earlier. The chairman of the political executive committee was here and the committee decided everything. Now almost all decisions, maybe since ‘93, since ‘92 when we became an administration, – in a collegial manner are decided very difficult questions, the collegiate is founded along the administration- and generally the head of administration can decide small questions himself.” (1993)

32. “… With the appearance of administration, we began to execute the politics which the head of the administrations guides, in other words we execute the will of one person, who stands on top of our administration. All departments are for that and exist so that we can bring to life his politics. Earlier, when there was the Regional political executive committee, we executed the will, – in other words the highest was named the Executive committee of the Regional Soviet of delegates –, in other words we executed the will of delegates. Here is the difference.” (1993)

In 2000, the leadership’s role was drawn from a distinctly different corner. His role as a model for good a administrator, organizer and controller of work was emphasized. He was seen as a person who shaped the spirit of the organization and also defended it against the outside. The leadership was given credit for creating a comfortable and open working atmosphere which in the assessment of the administrators differed from other districts. The meaning of open communication style and practical initiatives of the
immediate leadership in the department was stressed. Against this background the director of the whole organization was seen mostly as a controller and defender of the formal interest of the city’s administrative market.

6.3.1.5 Personnel

The most visible effect of the changes in the administrative market had taken place on the personal authority of the interviewed administrators which had grown in a noteworthy manner both formally and factually. Most independent in the sense of their own initiative and activeness was the work of social assistance administrators. Their ability to use discretion could in certain situations be quite large. They had direct access to the population and had legal rights to make immediate decisions concerning benefits by themselves. It was also pointed out that the city district as an organization now enjoyed fuller power. Issues had gained more importance along with the hierarchy of relations. Yet, this was not regarded solely as a positive matter, since it also created new practical problems. Control of everyone’s personal performance was ensured by way of withdrawing a wrongly calculated sum of money from the administrator’s salary. This, along with citizen’s complaints to the immediate leadership, were enough to make everybody keen on not openly making mistakes. Control in general was now coming more from those parts of the population which the administrators were supposed to serve than from the hierarchy of the administration itself.

Democratic and open working style where each individual administrator had a say in her daily routines and in the development of the organization’s work was seen as such a value in itself that it compensated for salary and the hardships of the client service. In contrast with the earlier Soviet times and even the beginning of 1990’s, there was clear change in attitudes towards this end which was born out of personally positive work experiences. Even though a social and authoritative hierarchy existed within the organization, its immediate weight on practical work had diminished and the line workers felt more authoritative in their respective roles. They had in this sense acquired “faces”.

33. “Disturbing impression. Very disturbing. When you came to a higher ranking person in the administration, earlier it was called obkom, – he did not
see you. Can you imagine, it was a terrifying impression when you stood before him and he did not see you. Now I don’t feel such things anymore. I don’t know why. Thanks to perestroika, I don’t know. But now I don’t feel that anymore. They see me. They don’t always listen to me, but at least they see! They see that I stand before them.” (2000)

34. “Rights, generally speaking they don’t solve anything. Our supervisor is such that – she is democratic. You can always say your opinion. There are demands. Of course, if you are not right, you can be told about it – but only by the leadership. Otherwise, suit yourself. It is normal pressure. […] I observe a certain distance, distance in official relationships, not in the sphere of human rights. This distance, it has not shrunk or grown, it has become more democratic. […] The head of administration values our work. Understands what it is, that it is very hard to work with people. […] Questions concerning the organization of work, we as far as I know, decide together. Our director, she collects all the interested parties and together everybody decided what to do and how to do it best. Because of this, there is talk that October district wants to do everything. That this district tries to do things which others do not. This is the way we decide.” (2000)

At the same time personal independence had become important for the administrators. The official roles had grown and the work had thus also become more demanding. They did not need to ask for permission from the higher authorities in matters which were within their legal discretion, or indeed wait for general administrative directions in all details. The organization itself had become the general manager in its daily practices. Laws were the primary limitation to what decisions to make.

35. “You don’t feel any pressure. Here are your duties and here are your rights. […] You feel freer here. You breath more freely. But, along with this, you know, that you breath freely only thanks to your sense of responsibility. If you don’t do something, you also won’t feel that free.” (2000)

The position of the administrative personnel had changed in two ways during the studied time periods. First of all the work load itself had changed dramatically in the beginning of the 1990’s, laws and regulations changed rapidly and made the practical work difficult and tiresome. Client interest in the changing laws, together with the acutely difficult financial situation, made the work very demanding both physically and psychologically. At the same time the conditions for organization had not improved. All the work was done with a pencil and paper which meant a physical build up of documentation. Even the privacy of clients was questionable when in some
cases there were four inspectors working in the same room. Computerization began in the organization in 1995. The continuously changing pensions made calculating the amounts people were supposed to receive burdensome. Many interviewed persons told about having to bring work home and receiving people not only on the official days of Monday and Wednesday, but every day when necessary. Generally speaking the personnel felt that more of it was demanded on daily basis and the environment in which the increasingly demanding work had to be completed was all the more unstable. Planning and personal development of the work where mostly goals for the future.

According to the city charter, the staff of administrative organs are chosen and approved internally with the exception of the director of the organization, who is appointed by the mayor and the vice-directors, who are nominated by their director and appointed by the mayor. (Ustav goroda-geroia Murmansk 1995: glava VI:34.) The recruitment practices had principally stayed the same in the 90’s. This meant a situation of usually knowing about vacant positions through personal contacts and then getting to be interviewed by the immediate leadership. A person’s interpersonal skills played an important part in the choosing along with specialization.

Affiliation with any particular political party did not play a role in the choosing of line workers, the leadership on the other hand was chosen by higher administrative organs. The employees represented different types of personal backgrounds, so there was no clear indication of the recruitment system officially favoring a particular group. In general, politics was removed from the discussion which instead emphasized legalism and service to the population.

36. “Work is work. Under which flag it takes place makes no difference.” (1993)

The interviewed persons had different educational backgrounds. That is why many of them had learned about administrative processes and the respective laws at work. The education of the collective was of notable importance to the interviewed group of 2000. The reorientation of the work collective into the new situation had already started in 1993, but in 2000 the studied collective had specifically started a loose program of work related education. This involved both knowing about the implementation of new legislation and regulations and on the job computer education. Besides this, many in the organization had taken it upon themselves to take extra classes on their own in different types of educational institutions of which the
Academy of Administration in Saint-Petersburg was one of the most prominent. Even though this type of adult education was not compensated by salary, it was seen as a great plus and personal insurance for the future. In this sense, learning had become a new tool for survival as well as a value in itself.

37. “… The most important thing is professionalism. So that specialist would work here. Not just anyone, but for instance and inspector should be correspondingly educated in law. He should know the law. He should not work just for one day. He should have a job contract for some time, in other words he should be a professional in his work. Today it is still very, – of 29 people there are maybe 6 professionals. The rest are new, just again coming to work without the corresponding education. As a rule in the Soviet Union there were only 6 colleges for our area. Now it is almost not possible to find the ideal specialist who could come and work. Maybe in the future there will be support for this. Maybe the government pays attention to it. Of course retired persons need specialists.” (1993)

38. “Yes! The thing is that from ’85 on and especially since ’86 when perestroika started. Earlier our department was named “social security”, and the task was very narrow. In other words it was decisions on pensions, state payments and somehow distribute travelling tickets [for trips to sanatoriums], this kind of one time help, very small. But in today’s life our functions of course are expanded very much, we have an extra acute service “social help” […] We started to invest more support materially, our workload grew much. (1993)

39. “Autumn arrives. And then you will of course work longer, and at home too. I had to sit at home till late night, I took work home, because one must. […] With all these new government decisions, in addition to that we in the administration work with all kinds of other questions, all kinds of humanitarian assistance, which take your work time. And all the rest we are supposed to do, to do within time limits, time limits … You know, it is a habit! A habit, and still I love my work. I would not change it.” (2000)

40. “I fear getting older. Not that I will be unemployed. But that I will become worse. […] One is ashamed to become worse. Earlier this was not the case. But now it is. Because I started to notice how people lose their work skills as they get older. […] For the future’s sake one has to study. And I really don’t want to study. I really don’t want to. It is not the studying itself, but … first of all education is not free, and I have a daughter. It is problematic. And secondly, our director takes this issue very seriously. I don’t particularly wish to discuss this theme with him.” (2000)
The growth of discretionary area for each official was described in the following manner:

41. “People themselves I suppose changed. Earlier there was a different climate, demands were different. Here you have to think about every case separately. But its not just that, I mean that you cannot discuss with a retiree the way you would at home or in the street. You talk with him as an official. You cannot bring anything unnecessary into the situation. […] Do you know the type of demands we had earlier: to do things fast. We had to perform our tasks fast, with quality, but – the main thing was speed. Now things are already a little bit different. You are supposed to perform your tasks not only fast, not just with quality, but you are supposed to take responsibility, think, you know, the main thing is to think. Earlier it was: do, do, do. Here it is not. We started to have more responsibility.” (2000)

The only visible distinction which had remained was that in spite of the staff being nearly 100% female, the top leadership of the house was male. At the city level, though, the mayor did have female deputies. The issue of equality was not specifically raised in the questions, and the interviewed persons themselves did not mention this question. The fact that a woman had never headed the whole house did indicate men being traditionally top leaders. For one reason or another the chance for a male worker to one day reach the top in the organization was proportionally many times greater than for a woman.

42. “Sometimes I think it is our men, the directors are used to seeing men in leading positions and women they think need to be freed from workloads. Maybe it is on one hand good but if you take a look, in our government sits only one [woman] minister, Panfilova. There are no others. This is telling. We have one woman at the city administration, deputy head of the administration. But at the county level there are no woman deputies. […] That’s how I feel. Women should not take on their shoulders any responsibility. (1993)

The composition of men and women in decision making positions seemed to show that the old culture of male leadership was quite firmly in place. The development of equal advancement opportunities for women in Russian administrative organizations can be linked with the general strengthening of formal, legal and impersonal institutional channels. For instance in Friedgut’s 1983 study one conclusion was that informal work related communication networks which supplement the formal channels are most useful to male workers. In other words, there has been “a male bias” in the informal networks in the Soviet local administration which
stops women from advancing to more important posts. (Friedgut 1983: 150.) For future studies this characteristic of Russian local administration is particularly important because the services which the local administration provide such as education, health and social services are both vital for the support of the transition and “female” in the Soviet hierarchy of matters.

6.3.1.6 Citizens and Non-governmental Organizations

The client service was described as requiring good psychological skills from the administrators because the people who came to the organization were either old, poor, stressed out, sometimes in need of psychiatric help, or families with children, sometimes living in particularly bad conditions, or homeless. Each case needed individual consideration which also gave the administrators room for discretion. The year 2000 group stressed that those who are not suited for the conditions of the work, simply leave.

The information the administrators gathered in their client contacts was generally speaking quite routine. It involved finding out the benefit seekers economical status, work background, marital and family situation and the personal grounds for seeking assistance or pension. The clients filled in a respective document and came to the appointment with the proper papers to hand. With the help of the administrator, they hand wrote on a blank piece of paper their personal history which served as the basis for judging whether they were eligible for benefits or not. The decision itself was made by the commission of the pension and benefit department which met every Friday.

The activeness of the clients themselves was raised by many. The pension receivers particularly were described as very active and aware of their rights in different situations. This was a clear change from the time before 1991. Many described their clients as very demanding which made their work both more interesting and stressful at the same time. The clients followed the newspapers and demanded that the administrators took action immediately. In this way the role of the client had gone through a major change since the Soviet times ended.

Between 1996 and 2000, 44 civil complaints were filed in the court about the district administration. Of these, seven were ruled in favor of the plaintiff. In comparison, during the same time period the administration took to court 68 cases of which 32 were ruled in its favor and 36 were still
waiting the result in the year 2000. (Material o rabote administratsii g. Murmansk s noiabr 1996 po nostoiashee vremia 2000: 46.) The city charter also formalizes the citizens’ right to appeal in the administration as well as to the Murmansk city prosecutor who works as part of the federal system of prosecutors. (Ustav goroda geroia Murmanska 1995: glava VI: 38.)

Within 10 years, the client had been transformed from a legally passive recipient into a citizen with a voice. Changes in laws were being followed even by the oldest of the clients and hesitations towards expressing one’s view had disappeared. The clients also protested the decisions made by the administrators and used many channels to get results at the same time. This made taking care of their matters sometimes confusing for the line workers.

43. “… Earlier we received [people] one day in a week, now we practically receive [them] at any time, but officially two days a week, Monday and Wednesday.” (1993)

44. “Personally my working became harder. I already told you about how people have become less good willed in their relation to us civil servants, even though in principle in my work and in my relationship to people nothing has changed.” (1993)

45. “Generally I don’t have problems. People turn to me usually with questions about social security. They are usually retired persons. So … Of course it is mostly material means. Surely we don’t have enough of material means, and that is why we have very many people who need welfare. If we had more material means we could help people of our district more. […] The door is open at any time and people come and consult me with questions of interest to them. Generally the door is always open, any time of the day …” (1993)

46. “Goodwill from my part and attention. This is from my part. For the part of the clients, – we have had a problem which is even hard to formulate –, it is anger. People come to us very angry. […] Earlier we first of all had “ranks”. It was not always possible to express your negativity – this is first. People have become freer- they express themselves. Maybe our life changed somewhat. In some ways it has become worse, because of prices, salary (you understand this perfectly) – this is secondly. And thirdly – maybe the negative reaction from the part of the mass media. You know, “civil servant- bribe taker” and so on. This is one reason. And of course the general low level of culture – people are not very cultivated. I suppose that these are the problems. And then, naturally, when people come to us to the department, the government cannot give an apartment to us. Never in principle could, but it did advertise
this possibility. Now it doesn’t advertise it. [...] I have everything in order as far as contacts are concerned. Because this is a department which works with people all the time. Who ever comes here, we talk with them.” (1993)

47. “Pressure? I don’t feel pressure. Demands grow. And how? They don’t grow to benefit for instance me but to benefit those who we serve. I don’t even think that it is always good, because sometimes you feel ashamed to have to protect for instance some alcoholic, some mother who has deserted seven children, and I for some reason should take her from outside the line and give her material assistance, or in some way console her with words, and I know that she is an alcoholic woman who has deserted seven children. But I have to! This outrages me. It is the only pressure I have. Otherwise nothing. There are demands, yes. But I consider that it is necessary. I am not against it. Maybe I don’t like it. Maybe it takes extra time from me. Extra physical energy. But I understand that it is necessary.” (2000)

48. “For me sharp changes have taken place. Although they came as planned. There was no shock therapy, but sharp changes in every case. How I used to view my work and how I do it now, they are two different things. In other words, sense of responsibility grew a lot. [...] You know, you handle consulting hours quite differently. You understand that you for example, – when I worked in the center of pensions, yes, I could “relax”. I could allow myself to talk to the retirees in a way that I can’t today, then it was a different style. In general, nobody asked about this. Here I have a different attitude, totally different. “Paws up.” ( 2000)

49. “We are forced to work all our free days to do to them what they [clients] ask. (2000)

50. “We are worse off, but you know, I want to say that in my own work even 10 years ago I more often met people who said: “Oy, I wish I would die soon!” These were old people. Now this happens rarely. It does take place. Because there have always been pessimistic people, and always will be. But more rarely. With all these difficulties, life became more interesting. Yes. More interesting.” (2000)

The situation in 1993 was at the cross roads of old and new in the environmental relations. The old party organized connections had been broken and many of the services which had thus earlier been provided by the community, such as centers for retiree’s, New Year parties for children and such had been discontinued. The help of humanitarian organizations, including foreign, was greeted mostly with a certain amount of indifference. Their role was not yet clear at the time, and many interviewed persons did
not see a clear benefit to their work. Yet at the same time there were cases where the organizations work was recognized and in one particular case assessed as highly meaningful. It seemed that the more vulnerable and marginalized the clients’ situation was at the time of the interviews (such as for instance children living in orphanages), the more the interviewed persons working with that group of clients appreciated outside help.

51. “You know, social organizations practically do not work with my department, especially so because they have no influence on my work. They do not give any help, they only turn to us with questions. Frankly speaking I would like that before they [the social organizations] turn to us, they would carefully look at what it possible. […] I would like that when they turn to us, they would have studied the situation before coming to us. […] Then of course it would be easier to work. […] I have a commission in the department, social commission, where representatives of organizations come and we work with them. Only, we do not meet often and [then] we deal with concrete questions of distributing living quarters.” (1993)

52. “To have time to find these people. It has only began here, we just started a service “Urgent social assistance” and we try to [provide it] from all of these social organizations and clinics and such services which are essentially joined with our area, with retired person and invalids. So that we would ourselves find these people. So that they would not come to us as today but we would go to them, to give help or what ever.” (1993)

53. “They of course influence us a great deal, because these organization are unions of our people. “The organization of invalids”, they meet and some piece of this work they do themselves through their own contacts, people don’t feel forgotten. (…) “Red cross” has a very tight contact with us. Foundations for children, we work with them. So they help us in a wonderful way and we try to help them.” (1993)

55. “Now, how can they [social organizations] influence? They by nature do not influence. They try to show us some help … The Association of Veterans, which is joined in work with the administration, it helped us. We had to collect documentation from many. They organized the collection of documentations beginning early March till May. If a signal comes that somewhere someone lives badly, some retired person, they help us to go to the place, follow how that person lives.” (1993)

The regional administration had passed a decree on the cooperation between executive organs and non-governmental organizations in 1996 according to which administration and the organizations could enter into
contracts to realize federal and regional social programs. For these purposes the regional government offers grants over which it makes decisions. (Postonovleniia, administratsiia Murmanskoii oblast’i, ot 27.11.1996, No 428.) In this way, the third sector had been incorporated into the official policy execution hierarchy.

In year 2000, the official forms of co-operation with some non-governmental organizations such as the Red Cross, had been in place for some time. These were now viewed as a part of the community service but at the same time their role was secondary. The effort was to do things within the system and use the help of NGO’s such as the Red Cross only in those programs where acute material help was needed, such as the soup kitchens for poor retiree’s and clothing for homeless persons. The role of civil society was not expressly underlined and the NGO’s, as a part of the regional social policy, was still a new thing. The third sector, even if in some cases vital, was not seen as an extension of the administrative structure. Mostly it was viewed as a necessary helper. Relying on the help of the third sector also, to an extent, indicated “failure” by the official structures. There was not yet an expressed transition toward, for instance, the American type a system of local government.

By the year 2000, the situation had stabilized itself to a degree and planning of work tasks had received a place in the development of the service. This stabilization of the situation meant that the quality of the client service itself had become a manifestly more important matter. What was earlier a duty that needed to be done, was now a specific goal. Every person interviewed told about the client service from the point of view of quality: what type of information people receive, how they have to be treated, and what types of person’s are suited to this work. The organization had acquired a sense of a common working style.

55. “We have a remarkable work collective. We, 50% of our collective, worked together already for 20 years. In other words, you understand, in Russia to work 20 years together means one family.” (2000)

56. “I think that the most important quality for a worker is the will to work right here. Because the work is hard. We are in contact with such a category of people, grandmothers and grandfathers, with them the level has to be such that they understand, one has to help, just talk with them, maybe feel sorry for them even so that they … as people. Then of course knowledge is necessary, ability to work with computers. […] The social culture should be a certain kind. […] Respect towards people, work discipline.” (2000)
6.3.1.7 Law and Rules

The changes in legislation and the lack of clear decision making norms had gradually been replaced with a more stable situation. Yet there remained practical challenges in the way the new legislation was implemented at the customer service level. The importance of legal promptness and accuracy was stressed as the main indicator of success in the timely delivery of payments and regulated material assistance. The level of financial assistance or the direction of social services in general was not discussed.

In 1993 many administrators pointed out that their practical work consisted of “carrying out” the laws – work on which nobody could have an effect. Some pointed out that planning itself was not carried out at the district level. Laws at the time of the first interviews were changing very rapidly and the relationship with them was mixed. The past system was viewed as stable and monolithic with regard to changes in law. New norms had not emerged to replace earlier ones; there was more of a sense of being in limbo.

This transition was described in the following series of excerpts as a tumbling of changing laws, more vigilant and worried clients and a breakdown of legal planning. The flow of information outside of the administration collided with difficulties in micro-managing federal laws locally.

57. “... It is as if we were guilty of everything, you know. And of course we have delays, because the law making is not very calculated. We all waited for the law on pensions but it didn’t turn out quite the way we expected. We work with the old laws and the new ones. [...] I feel that earlier people came to appointments less frequently. It was only in some particular cases. The workload has grown but you cannot make much sense out of it. [...] Maybe there were always some kinds of problems. But really now the conditions of life have changed, the problems with which we work have changed.” (1993)

58. “They could come and say that they will send you to the party organs or some other place, they wrote to newspapers. This they could. But, first of all, it would have been a great exception. Why? [...] People woke up. Back then, one in a hundred did not sleep. In other words one in a hundred was active. And for a person to come with a law, he should have first of all found it somewhere. Well, yes. He could have come, could have. But maybe he wouldn’t have been listened to. Or maybe they would have listened to him only because he was such a wonder. Why did he come?! Then it was a wonder. How on earth? ... How can there be such an educated person?! Where did he find the law?! Now things are different.” (2000)
59. “Earlier documents, instructions or laws came more quickly. Now they are delayed somewhere on the road, one can say to the residents that they come delayed. And we, as all citizens, read about the laws in the newspapers.” (1993)
60. “And of course we have delays because law making is not very calculated. We all waited for the law on pensions but it didn’t turn out quite the way we expected. We work with the old laws and the new ones.” (1993)
61. “Today we have the peak, because as you have probably seen the retirement law changed, it changes practically every quarter of the year. But the laws in question have not come here yet, many are already published and therefore we, for instance, do not know how many of these should be implemented in today’s situation. And people may already know about this law but its implementation mechanism is not specified. This is why we try to do something, order something, but we cannot just pay what they should by law receive. […] So far it is worse. So far this conflicting problem is pointed.” (1993)
62. “Once in three months this year already. This is of course a big weight. … Stressful? I don’t even know … the same situation. If there weren’t these recalculation, everything would be normal.” (2000)
63. “You know, now they tell me about laws. They started to read newspapers, a lot. Earlier we had only one newspaper, The Poliarnaia Pravda. […] Now we have many papers. They come to me with newspapers. They tell about what kinds of laws they have read and what I am supposed to do for them according to that law. In other words, it is they who are teaching me. You know, now we have new law about a raise in pensions in August. This law only came out and they already during the second day call, after they have completely calculated their pensions. Can you imagine! I still do not know how to calculate it, but they already know. […] Just as new laws come out, they already run here. […] In other words, now they have become very well versed. They watch television …. They sit in the waiting room line and all discuss new laws. Imagine. They read newspapers out loud while they sit in the line. Earlier they didn’t need anything. You know, they … they didn’t need anything. Absolutely. This is not just because I myself was young. What would they have needed?! There were no changes. Always the same! But now of course everything is different.” (2000)

Yet, in 2000 legal changes still took place often but the organization had overcome the first stage of adaptation and moved on to thinking about its methods of work. The sense of disorientation and day by day survival had
disappeared and the work collective was concentrated on the planning of weekly and monthly tasks. There was also a pronounced feeling of appreciation of the changes. Even as the economic situation was difficult and sureness of future was gone, the work itself was considered much more rewarding and challenging. The ability to enact changes at the personal level and have a voice in the decisions of client services was regarded as a positive aspect of the transition. The quality of the work in this sense had improved according to all those interviewed.

The period between fall 1993 and summer 2000 had changed the organization in terms of clarification of priorities. The stabilization of legal interpretation and the changing of major legislation had begun to take effect. If in the fall of 1993 the political, legal and economic situation in the country was so confusing that any type of long term goal setting and guidance policy would have seemed futile dreaming, by 2000 it was already a natural part of the agenda. The difference in attitude was also quite clear. Professionalism in customer service and getting results in helping the clients was mentioned in both sample periods but with more unity in the latter group. The idea of citizenry had emerged in the sense that people came more prepared to the meetings and they needed to be handled in a certain way in spite of their individual qualities. Guidance to this end – or control of every one’s work style – was the leadership’s role.

In 2000 short term work-task goals had become routine and professionalism was raised by both the leadership and the line workers as the number one goal. Merely being able to pay more money to people was not raised as a primary purpose of the work. Instead the general moral, psychological and professional assistance of clients was seen as the officially most important tasks. A shift in the clarity of norms had emerged compared to the situation in 1993 during which people’s orientations were still uncertain. There was a great deal of a sense of loss which was reflected in “it makes no difference anymore” type of reactions to questions. The sense of guidance vacuum was not present in 2000, when people had a sense of commonly accepted orientation towards work and goals.

6.3.2 The New Local Administration Culture

The crumbling of the administrative market was felt in a very dramatic manner in 1993. Representational and economical administrations were in
upheaval. By the year 2000, enough stabilization had taken place that the administrative orientation had in the example case organization shifted from waiting for answers from the political machinery to practical actions and changes in their daily work. Both legislatively and culturally, the local level had acquired a sense of organizational responsibility. It did need the state’s money, and it did execute state laws, but its daily work was in its own hands. Politics have taken a back seat in the organization of practical citizen service. The change from the perspective of the studied organization can be summarized by the following respondent’s analysis:

64. “Responsibility grew. Responsibility, both materially and morally. Because, first of all, you feel that you want to – the face of administration- you want to … You want to support the reputation of the collective. Because we have the best collective in the city. Because of this, of course, you feel a huge responsibility. Our supervisor is such that you always wish to support her. You know, making mistakes, in the work, – you don’t want to hit her in the face … Things changed, of course they changed a lot. Earlier you came to work and just mechanically performed your duties. Now you already fundamentally feel that on the basis of that work depend, not only for example, the retirees, but your colleagues. […] And knowledge grew. I don’t think that we only suffer from the situation which we have in our country … that there is something that people don’t receive, because in any case, there is progress. There is progress both in the head and in the work, naturally. In practice a lot has changed with the influx of information. Earlier, things were different. You see, you know more, you try to understand more. Here in the administration we study, you get to know all the laws[…] you yourself start to grow. Because of this, I see only positive things.” (2000)

Even as the Constitution secures the new status of the local level, the regional emphasis in the political power balance has not given the municipal administration more practical space for independent decision making and planning. Instead the regional centers advanced their own independence in the joint-government system of subjects and the state. This means decentralization in the sense that the “battleground” is closer to home, but on the other hand it means the continual difficulty of unified economic policy for the central government which forms the financial basis of the municipal services. For the consolidation of administrative practices, all of this results in delayed attention to actual policy implementation.

The present local administration culture can be viewed from three different perspectives. Firstly by looking at the local administration as
management which underlines the economic efficiency and control of decision making and execution. Secondly by seeing local administration as governance which emphasizes the development of democratic political life in connection with legally based institutions. And thirdly by emphasizing “good public administration” in which the principles of rule of law have materialized in client-oriented service culture. In the last one the focus is on the actual daily contact with the population who have certain rights (equality and trust in the predictability of the service). (Terms in italics from Mäenpää 2001.)

The political leadership in the transitional Russia has already used several administrative strategies for change. President Eltsin’s period could be said to have emphasized the governance side by giving the regions and localities the decision making power but also the responsibility in sorting out transitional problems. President Putin’s period seems to have underlined management of the economy through legal control. Good government has been developing along side but its development has suffered from economic and political setbacks. This has created a paradox where talk about the unity of the state and the underlining of law as the guarantor of order, safety and equality – although basically constitutional requirements – have been associated with political centralization and authoritarian tendencies.

The worst institutional chaos which was apparent in the early years of the transition is, for the most part over and organizations can again start looking inside to their own practices. As in the previous administrative transitions, this allows the actual administrative ideology to develop. A major factor in the stabilization of administrative work is the creation of basic legislation which has been a massive and difficult effort (see Sharlet 1999: 6–9).

Yet new risks also present themselves in the overall social development in the vast majority of Russian municipalities of which Murmansk is a more typical case than, for instance, St. Petersburg or the capital. In his 1994 study about the disintegration of the Russian economy Michael Spagat has contended that the deficit of good physical capital is likely persist for a long time. By this he means that first of all the wages of educated labor will be held down to levels which do not encourage younger people to acquire human capital. Secondly the older generations will abandon their professions which leads to knowledge not being transmitted to younger people. Thirdly the cost of education will become higher as the general level of education falls. (Spagat 1994: 64.)
The Murmansk city administration case would seem to indicate that the falling of salary levels and new requirements for on the job training and general level of education has put a lot of stress on individual administrators and poses a great challenge to the leadership. One of the main tasks of the transition period has been to change the use of information as a mechanical tool for implementing decisions to a socializing and educational medium. In the 1983 study conducted by Sternheimer the interviewed ex-administrators placed a low value on the educative-socialization function of information. Customer complaints, social survey data, research in general and “the public opinion” had little practical meaning in city planning. (Sternheimer 1983: 142–143.) The transition to a local level administrative work that involves internalizing the principles of rule of law and democratic government practices, requires a much wider personal discretion from the rank and file administrative workers.

The political ideology of administrative change has received more concentrated attention after the 1998 financial crisis. By that time, ideas of developing the state structures and service culture had taken off. The need for more legislative control was seen as a paramount question for the future of Russian society. The period of regionalism had come to an end and the legally controlled unity of the state became the main administrative method by which to advance the purposes of change, which by now generally tried to advance the market economy with a functioning social sector. Constitutionalism continues to suffer from ideological crisis as long as the war in the Chechen republic continues and the central government and major business do not have clearly separate areas in society. Yet at the same time, constitutionalism has gained importance in the administrative practices both through the activeness of ordinary citizens and the learning of officials.

In the 1990’s, the administrative work has been influenced by two qualities in the development process which can be seen as obstacles to transition: the unclear hierarchy in actual implementation of laws and the vagueness, or general character of laws themselves which does not define execution precisely enough and thus leaves the lower level administrators with the task of deciding even policy issues. This latter quality can be seen in the previously described risk administration. In this example organization the change in the way of working was most of all a matter of returning to a balanced situation which allowed relying on laws, clearer guidance in the application of laws and timely decision making. Time limits have a major importance for a guidance method in transitions.
The political measures which have been taken by President Putin’s administrations in the form of “dictatorship of laws” have responded to the anxieties shared by the local administrations workers across Russia. In his 1994 study made in Kirov (population 500,000) and Syktyvkar (population 240,000) James Alexander found that in terms of corruption and law the most common complaint was that the state officials function for their personal interest and do not fulfill their jobs. Officials were often held responsible for the social instability. Respect for the legal foundation was supported as the solution by reformers and conservatives alike. This was seen particularly important for the development of trade and production. (Alexander 1998: 424.)

The local level served as the laboratory for the effects of both radical economic restructuring and administrative-political decentralization which took place in the beginning of the 1990’s. Neither of the theories of society (privatization and constitutionalism) took effect completely or in the manner intended in the original texts. The privatization program in particular was chosen and put to effect in the first place as a method of political competition for power which came to influence its acceptance. The lack of legal rules and institutions willing and capable of enforcing them soon created wide spread mistrust in the way privatization transferred property inside the society. At the same time, the turbulent situation in which fast economic deterioration, intensive political battles at the center and unclear state relations both vertically and laterally made any type of planning needed in the constitutional state building very difficult.

At the work organization level, the transition has brought about a sense of independent administrative collective which in many cases can not only use its own initiatives and discretion but is also responsible to a degree for its own development. The greater freedom to choose local accent and ways of approach in customer service within the time limits set by law is a positive sign of development. Yet, it cannot be said that active administration (Heusala-Pushnov 2003) would still be firmly institutionalized in the practices. There is not even federal legislation which would require this. Currently, administrative law in Russia means mostly a list of prohibited things. Citizens and other clients generally speaking need to be active, rather well informed or at least able to find information and ask for their rights. Because of the economic situation, the clients are generally vulnerable. This makes possible arbitrary decision making and action by administration even more hurtful.
At the work collective level the Russian administration may have – again, paradoxically – been more ready for the changes than was previously thought. Because of the high need for latent unofficial contacts among organization members in the Soviet system to get things done, administrators are used to forming lateral contacts in their daily work. As Aarrevaara has concluded it is useful for the employer to encourage the unofficial, reciprocal dimension to make the organization work more efficiently (Aarrevaara 1999: 55).

Municipal administration leadership has acquired a more prominent role as the executive line has been strengthened and the administrative market reorganized. The line workers had lost their double role as both party members and administrators and in this sense their professionalism had changed. A sense of developing the content of one’s work was strengthened while dependence on the organization, as a such, was more acute. As a reaction to growing personal risks, further education was highly regarded by most.

The local level in the transitional Russia since 1991 has tried to develop itself toward all of these aspects of public decision making and client service. The experiences of the example case organization show that since the separation of administration from the soviet, political governance has become a separate sphere which does not touch upon the daily work of administrative officials. Economic management on the one hand has suffered from the budget restraints and dependence from the center. Yet on the other, economic responsibility of the administration and demands from the population have grown.

The main area of independent development has taken place in the “good public administration” side of the work. Rule of law principles, although not always explicitly underlined, have emerged at least partially as a side-effect of legalism and educational awareness of the administrators. The personal responsibility of officials has grown along with demands on commitment. The example case showed that the Russian local administration organ can possess considerable initiative in the organization of its own work and in its personnel policies. Probably the single most important factor which enables the birth and growth of more open and accountable service is the flow of information and computerization.

In retrospect it can be said, that the liberal economic and state reformist lines had some of their initial thoughts (such as citizen’s right to sue, separation of powers and so on) materializing. These groups have dominated
the official administrative-political discourse of the 1990’s. Simon Kordonskii has categorized the new political thinking as the legalized form of the old dissident thinking. As the formerly dissident became the dominant force in public discourse, the administrative market could not function in its old way. (Kordonskii 2000.)

The post-perestroika new Russian local administration has worked in an environment where the state became a separate entity from the transitional private economy. The roles which actors, including the local level administration have in this new situation are much more clearly defined. The political has evolved into a new meaning, truly political, and the administration into a management of state administrative affairs.

Socially the state and the market economy now preside over different realities. In the former, the position of people who were “functionaries” or “bourgeois” in the Soviet system have been dominant. (Kordonskii 2000: 132.) Whether this translates directly into a some type of a behavior in administrative work cannot be shown here. The case study in the Murmansk administration showed that people had mostly left behind the institutional thinking which was needed in the soviet administrative market and were concerned about raising their administrative status through qualifications, re-education and personnel policy. In every case, the local level line administrator had acquired a social space which was wider and a legal status which was stronger than the one in the Soviet Union.

The ongoing serious conflicts in the Russian society (polarization of wealth, poverty, weak services and war) have continued to affect the development of administrative thinking through political instability. The reaction to these risks has been to use legal reasons as purposes and security organs as a method to tighten the administrative control from the center. As a side-effect, casualties in this struggle have appeared. Particularly control of the media presents a long term risk to administrative accountability. The risks society (see the author’s description of this concept in chapter 1.2.3) which developed in the 1980’s is going through another wave of alternating administrative approaches to state building. It remains to be seen which elements of administrative culture survive the competition.

To summarize, the analysis of this chapter shows how principles of “good government” have suffered from economic and political set bacs. As a result, the unity of the Russian state and the underlining of law as the guarantor of order, safety and equality have in recent years been associated with political
centralization and authoritarian tendencies. At the same time, the use of information which began in the perestroika period, has fundamentally changed administrative culture at all levels.

In the structuration process, neither privatization nor constitutionalism took effect completely or in the manner intended originally. Serious risks to democratic administrative development were created in the economic decisions of the early 1990’s. Planning became very difficult which undermined laws, clear guidance in their application and timely decision making. Yet rule of law principles have emerged as a result of legalism and education, similar to the legal developments in post-reform 19th century Russia.

The main result of the transition has been a separation of powers, for the first time in Russian history (shown in annex E). A place for local administration exists where administrators can develop the use of discretion. The use of information seems to have assumed a “revolutionary” role. Work collectives and individuals can use information gathered from different sources as a socializing and educational medium.
7 Conclusions

This study has looked at the transition of administrative culture in the municipal administration of Russia in four different historical time periods. I have described how new structures based on a new ideology of administrative change and the old culture converged in the transition processes to produce cultures different from the original political purposes of those transitions. Here I wish to return to the theoretical framework described at the beginning of this work and draw on the main empirical findings to answer a number of questions concerning the transitions of local administration culture in Russia. Each question forms a sub-heading to the subsequent sections of this concluding chapter.

7.1 How Can One Define Local Administration in the Russian Context?

I defined the focus of this work to be the executive functions of local government, jointly administered functions of the local and state levels and state organs in municipalities. The reason for this wide definition which includes different internal variations of administration at the local level, is practical. From a historical perspective, the cultural realities of local self-government have been administratively less important in Russia than state administration’s extension of itself to the localities. It would have been difficult to draw a strict line between “real” local government and mere structural arrangements. In addition, I have wanted to include the Soviet period in this study for its importance in the understanding of the present transition. Instead of strict limitations on the meaning of structural arrangements as the focus of this work, I have wanted to show the plurality of organizational forms and territorial arrangements which
have existed in Russia for a period of well over a 100 years. Clearly though, the territorial designs and the hierarchy of decision making which followed held a significant meaning in the creation of local administrative culture.

Historically, a more difficult task is to decide what is considered “administration” in general. Is there a difference between governing and administration? Is it the goal of modernization to make governing into a professional administration? In this study administration was defined by reference to three key aspects: the publicness of its decision making, its relationship with citizenry and the organizational frame in which professionalism developed. I argued that all these aspects are important when we try to see what administrative culture is like.

In the 19th century the Russian provincial development also served territorial control. Regional and local levels were connected with the need to strengthen the political rule of the Tsar and his court. Peter the Great’s reforms meant an attempt to professionalize the bureaucratic structures through civil service reforms. His reforms were indeed a perestroika of turning governing into a more professional administration. The transition was only partial, most of all because of the political restraints which enabled the law from becoming a genuine independent instrument of the administration. In the transitions of the 1860’s and 1870’s, the local political freedoms were extended to manage the population’s social, educational, legal and other needs better. The political discussions about the local level stressed most of all the governing aspect of the local administration. The Bolshevik government tried to unite both professional expertise and political participation at the local level. In the transition process, the Soviet local level became a market of different sectoral administrative organizations under the political umbrella of the party. In this sense, it represented the continuation of the territorial governing tradition.

The question of the definition of local administration has again followed the latest transition period which started with Gorbachev’s reforms. This transition has also meant a period of fluctuating development. On one hand, there was a possibility to develop local executive functions into a separate administration. And this indeed took place after 1991. On the other hand, the political and economic instability and the regional developments have slowed down the professional modernization of the local level. The centralization which has been used by President Putin as a
means to gain more stable control over territory, has again steered the ship toward governance.

The definition of administration, its role in the society and the meaning of the local level, re-emerges as a political issue in crises situations in Russian history. One could define the four studied periods in the following way: 1) state administration as the governance of the Tsar, combined with a restricted civil society in the grass roots, 2) state administration as the all-encompassing economic structure with the party controlling the politics of the developing local administrative market, 3) state administration as the economy with a hierarchy of administrative market, and 4) the definition of the local administration undefined in the transition of state economy into a separate executive administration.

It is too early to say what the present transition really means for the development of local administration. A new federal law “On the general principles of Local Government” (Federalnyi zakon Rossiiskoi Federatsii ot 6 oktiabria 2003 g., N131-F3 Ob obshchikh printsipakh organizatsii mestnogo samoupravleniia v Rossiiskoi Federatsii) will come into effect in 2006. At the same time the integration of Russian economy into European structures and the world market will in the best case strengthen the work of local administration. Even with its political risks, Russian society has never been as open as it is now. Information and technology particularly help organizational learning at the local level. Legality as an ideology of administration in the present constitutional context would seem to offer a chance for institutional modernization. Economic independence of the local level would ideally follow the institutionalization of formal legal administrative channels as the only way to get things done. Centralization, paradoxically, may strengthen the local administration.

However, it needs to be remembered that efficient administration is not the same as democracy. The contents of the laws themselves and the interest and ability of citizens to take part in the formulation of policies matter. In the long run though, paradoxically, if the rule of law thinking materializes in the practices of administration, core democratic values can be sustained even when popular passivity dominates.
7.2 How Valid Is the Concept of Culture in Studies of Administration?

The theoretical background of this work relies heavily on the idea that the concept of culture is valid and, furthermore, a necessary one to understand how administrations work. I argue that the historical cultures upon which the present culture develops are an integral part of discovering why an administration is the way it is. Culture has been understood as a mixture of structures and social systems. Have I then studied the so called “cultural legacies” of the past to understand the present?

Stephen Holmes (1996) has criticized the use of “cultural legacies” as a concept in explanations of post-communist experiences because they are vague and use pop-psychology. He does not agree with those who see the future in the developments of the past and demand that good knowledge of history is needed for the understanding of what has happened later on. In this, an analogy is confused with causality, researchers “mistook the false pleasure of pattern recognition for the genuine pleasure of causal explanation”. Holmes suggests that instead of reaching for the past, we should look at the present in order to find reasons for reform slowness (Holmes 1996: 27, 49).

Holmes argues that “the reform-inhibiting baggage that Russians carry with them is more situational than psychological. Russians are psychologically prepared to obey the law, provided the law is enforced”. Holmes concludes that in the attempts to explain the shortcomings of changes, excessive emphasis has been place on a purported lack of receptivity to Western values as result of habits born under communism. Not enough attention has been given to the collapse of the state. Instead of asking why reform has been difficult or slow even though the totalitarian state is gone, Holmes suggests that we should wonder if the dismantling of the state is the cause. His thesis is that instead of vague cultural explanations, the universal problem of post-communism has been the crises of governability. A legally bound strong state is needed not only to execute the changes but also for the civil society. (Holmes 1996: 49, 52.)

Using Holmes’ arguments as a starting point, I ask the following questions: 1) How much can we understand of the present by knowing what past cultures have been like? 2) Does analyzing the present administrative culture help to see what is ahead after 10 or 20 years? 3) What is the
connection of the collapse of the Soviet state and its administrative culture?

Administrative types show the dominant qualities of administrative elements in their historical contexts. As has been pointed out in the theoretical part of this study, the types of administrative culture which are built do not correlate directly into actions of organizations and individuals. They only show the most dominant general features of the four studied time periods. Reform attempts which have been looked at as processes of transforming administrative ideologies into state building are a separate matter. In order to understand how a transition happened it is more useful to look at the ideology of administrative change and compare its purposes with the end results of the state building process.

This same view is expressed also by Matti Mälkiä, for instance, who categorizes different approaches to studying the history of public administration (Mälkiä 1995). Particularly policy-analytic studies which consider the tasks and goals, and their attainment involve studying that which lies behind a certain culture. Similarly, administrative-historical studies seek to make the past understandable in order to see how administrative structures have developed and what types of restraints bind present development.

The meaning of culture was explained at length at the beginning of this work. Culture is seen as a process in which transition takes place as the new purposes meet the old structures. Side-effects of the transition can sometimes be dysfunctional and if they are institutionalized as practices, they may be hard to change. The blat-system in the Soviet Union is a good example. The historical background of the present administrative culture helps us to understand what elements of the old have survived change and what has happened to them. By understanding what meaning different elements of the culture have, we can better see what must be the focus of change. Yet, it needs to be remembered that looking at the present culture does not help us to predict the future. Changes happen as a result of political purposes and administration follows behind.

In this work culture is not an alternative to studying the structures. Even more importantly, culture is not something psychological or historical which is detached from the modern state. I defined culture as the product of the social system of administration within the administrative structures. Major changes in the structures (of the state) effect the culture directly, but the state in this process is also effected by the old culture. Both major
ruptures in 1917 and 1991 show the strength of the old culture in structural changes. Transitions have been long and costly both humanly and economically.

In the case of the collapse of the Soviet state, the dysfunctions of the administrative market can be offered as a major cause for the impossibility of a political reform. The market in a sense was a giant fusion of the political, economical and administrative into a system of commodities and services exchange. The party’s strength in this system was less political and more administrative, guiding and mediating. The party was the ultimate source of legitimacy, an arbitration court of interests. The state administration was the structure upon which this authority rested.

The study of the collapse of the state is thus a study of the break down of a culture. The problem of transition is the fact that the structures can be changed quite fast compared to the change of social systems. All though the old Soviet state collapsed, it took a much longer time before the administrative market of the old culture was reshuffled into new administrative practices. This process is still continuing.

7.3 The Specificity of Russian Administration

The cultural elements studied in this work and the changes which took place in them across different time periods, are shown in the following tables (tables 1–8). The tables are based on the previously presented findings of the study describing the new administrative cultures of each time period. Each table takes one of the eight analytic elements of administrative culture used in this study (economy, authority, laws and rules, organization, information and language, leadership, personnel, clients and citizens) and maps the shifts in their local interpretation and application across four identifiable administrative time periods in contrast to the liberal democratic ideal type.
### Table 1: Analysis of changes in local administration culture by economy in contrast to the liberal-democratic ideal type

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>open market economy regulated by a universalistic approach to law</td>
<td>developing market economy</td>
<td>state planning and central delegation of resources “administration as the economy”</td>
<td>state planning with small enclave for local cooperative initiative</td>
<td>administrative reorganization of economics and moving toward a market system shock therapy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>local level self-government in economic matters</td>
<td>limited local taxes (land)</td>
<td>local level as a part of the central planning system</td>
<td>no rights for local taxes</td>
<td>uneven economic development territorially and organizationally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>differences in the share of public funding for local services</td>
<td>restricted local government rights and poor funding of services</td>
<td>regional specialization central delegation of resources</td>
<td>administrative market in front of major economic reforms company towns</td>
<td>great dependency on the regional level, difficulties of planning and weak resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>differences in the arrangements of local services</td>
<td>local administration developing services such as schools, maintenance of buildings, firefighting and local police</td>
<td>state assuming responsibility for local services such as schools, medical care, housing, cultural services and security</td>
<td>state retaining its role as the provider of services with greater difficulties</td>
<td>different regional survival techniques (e.g. debt-swapping)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 2: Analysis of changes in local administration culture by authority in contrast to the liberal-democratic ideal type

<table>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>separation of powers and authority based on law</td>
<td>autocracy as the source, personal authority of directors in organizations, “irrational” authority</td>
<td>fusion of powers in the same identity party of as the source, delegated with political discretionary rights “irrational” authority</td>
<td>no separation of powers, the party as the ultimate source of authority, reshuffling of authority locally, personal authority through political status</td>
<td>separation of powers for the first time in Russian history, unclear jurisdictions in the 1990’s, centralization of authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>legal limits and control of discretion</td>
<td>unclear administrative limits, double control of decision making</td>
<td>strong formal control through diversification</td>
<td>legal (rule of law) consciousness introduced, network relations before formal authority</td>
<td>building legally constrained discretion, diffuse practical authority in organization level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>civil servants’ authority defined by law which is upheld by culture</td>
<td>authority depending on organizational leadership, patron culture</td>
<td>many types of authority positions depending on the organizational context</td>
<td>re-examination of the rationality of authority</td>
<td>a combination of a loss of control and gaining new authority</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 3: Analysis of changes in local administration culture by laws and rules in contrast to the liberal-democratic ideal type

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>separation of powers</td>
<td>no separation of powers until 1906</td>
<td>no separation of powers</td>
<td>no separation of powers</td>
<td>separation of powers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clear norm hierarchy and state legitimating law</td>
<td>Emperor-based legality, codification of laws incomplete</td>
<td>sectoral regulations dominating norm hierarchy, commands in place of civil law</td>
<td>“socialist rule of law” – ideal</td>
<td>federal laws in a “dictatorship of laws”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>legal protection a high priority (arbitrary use of law strongly denounced)</td>
<td>rigid guidance through regulations substituting professional knowledge, low level of legal protection</td>
<td>emergency regulations and “special measures”, “telephone justice”, prosecutors enforcing legality and repression</td>
<td>organizational and ministerial instructions more important than federal laws in daily work</td>
<td>suspicious public views about administration, learning legal protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>use of independent courts in administrative law</td>
<td>appellation important, developing legal profession and courts</td>
<td>networks replacing courts</td>
<td>prosecutors dominating the judicial system and assuming new roles in transition</td>
<td>courts gaining importance as a venue for securing rights, prosecutors as supervisors of legality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>universal laws and application of them, transparency in the application of laws and rules, institutional trust</td>
<td>contextual application of laws, trust personal</td>
<td>contextual application of laws, administrative secrets, trust personal</td>
<td>contextual application of laws, unavailability of laws to the public, trust personal</td>
<td>forced policy toward a universalistic legal culture, availability of laws to the public, toward institutional trust</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Table 4: Analysis of changes in local administration culture by organization in contrast to the liberal-democratic ideal type**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>separate elected and executive side</td>
<td>council and executive officials often the same people, in principle separated</td>
<td>integration of the party with administration and economical institutions</td>
<td>administrative market and institutional competition</td>
<td>dissolution of the administrative market separate administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>congruence of authority and powers based on laws</td>
<td>incongruence of formal authority and power</td>
<td>incongruence of formal authority and power</td>
<td>incongruence of formal authority and power</td>
<td>incongruence of formal authority and power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clear hierarchy and rules of decision making between different levels</td>
<td>double control</td>
<td>double control for local representational, political and economic administrations</td>
<td>vedomstvennost, double control</td>
<td>dependency on regional decision making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>guidance through universal administrative procedural principles</td>
<td>no universal administrative procedural principles</td>
<td>no universal administrative procedural principles, guidance through repression and party</td>
<td>no universal administrative procedural principles, guidance with legislation (fines) and party</td>
<td>policy of trying to develop universal procedural principles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5: Analysis of changes in local administration culture by information and language in contrast to the liberal-democratic ideal type

<table>
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<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>transparency of public administration</td>
<td>censorship</td>
<td>secrecy rules and censorship</td>
<td>glasnost</td>
<td>major growth of transparency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>right to be heard in decision making process</td>
<td>illiteracy widespread, poor access to information</td>
<td>classification of information</td>
<td>right to ask and demand answers allowed</td>
<td>active and well informed citizens using new rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>access to information concerning oneself</td>
<td>poor feedback and illiteracy</td>
<td>unreliable access, feedback through party structures</td>
<td>weak access but more direct feedback to the administrative decision makers</td>
<td>feedback through appeals and in administrative procedures of offices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>procedural principles guiding information processing</td>
<td>formally correct document production and circulation a high priority</td>
<td>formally correct documentation and circulation a high priority intelligence used in planning</td>
<td>formally correct documentation and circulation main task</td>
<td>creation of new working styles in organizations, technology as a modernizing tool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizenship, public and work organization aspects important in the rhetoric</td>
<td>directive language, public organization aspect referred to in the rhetoric</td>
<td>work organization underlined, language purification</td>
<td>all aspects referred to in the official rhetoric</td>
<td>all aspects underlined</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6: Analysis of changes in local administration culture by leadership in contrast to the liberal-democratic ideal type

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>democratic controls</td>
<td>absence of legal controls at the top</td>
<td>meeting targets of the plan a priority for leadership, arbitrary political control</td>
<td>meeting the targets of plan a priority for leadership, democratic pressure from the public</td>
<td>reshuffling of leadership positions, developing democratic controls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>law bound discretion</td>
<td>individualistic authority</td>
<td>party setting the limits of discretion</td>
<td>party setting the limits of discretion</td>
<td>learning rule of law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>open competition for posts</td>
<td>table of ranks, patrons used</td>
<td>nomenklatura peasants and workers raised to new positions</td>
<td>nomenklatura</td>
<td>new advancement routes, updated professional skills valued</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>democratic leadership style</td>
<td>authoritarian leadership style</td>
<td>hands on, highly authoritarian leadership style</td>
<td>authoritarian leadership style</td>
<td>mixture of authoritarian and democratic leadership styles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7: Analysis of changes in local administration culture by personnel in contrast to the liberal-democratic ideal type

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>open competition for posts, transparent requirements</td>
<td>all-male administration, patrons and table of ranks, relative professional autonomy locally</td>
<td>women included, political and technical requirements, nomenklatura, fragility of positions</td>
<td>male-dominance, nomenklatura, networks</td>
<td>new opportunities for women, educational credentials valued, transparency of requirements along networks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>discretion limited by law</td>
<td>discretion limited by supervisors and law</td>
<td>discretion limited by party, repression in guidance</td>
<td>discretion limited by party, administrative law (fines) used in guidance</td>
<td>building practices of legally limited discretion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>transparent salaries and compensations</td>
<td>rules depended on organizations</td>
<td>social and other benefits through work, nomenklatura</td>
<td>social and other benefits through work, nomenklatura</td>
<td>transparency of official compensation but low salaries present a risk (corruption)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>citizenship aspect valued in work</td>
<td>rigid social hierarchies</td>
<td>administration as the society, legal protection not important</td>
<td>practices remaining the same, citizenship aspect debated in public</td>
<td>development of practices through legality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rather low power distance and task specific power changes</td>
<td>very high power distance</td>
<td>very high actual power distance</td>
<td>high power distance, inflexible structures</td>
<td>collective solidarity and high power distance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 8: Analysis of changes in local administration culture by clients and citizens in contrast to the liberal-democratic ideal type

<table>
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<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>access to information</td>
<td>limited by illiteracy and office cultures</td>
<td>restricted for security and political control reasons</td>
<td>restricted for security reasons, glasnost</td>
<td>access to many new types of information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>appellation</td>
<td>appellation in courts introduced</td>
<td>appeals mainly through higher executive and party organs</td>
<td>appeals mainly through higher executive and party organs</td>
<td>courts used actively by citizens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>legal protection a high priority</td>
<td>legal protection not a priority</td>
<td>individual rights transferred to organizations</td>
<td>legal consciousness tolerated</td>
<td>legal protection introduced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>equal treatment</td>
<td>estates giving rights</td>
<td>arbitrary political considerations</td>
<td>from blat to corruption</td>
<td>“dictatorship of laws”, constitutional rights tested</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>democratic controls</td>
<td>no democratic controls</td>
<td>no democratic controls</td>
<td>no democratic controls</td>
<td>democratic controls suffering from risk society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>free civil society and administration coexisting</td>
<td>controlled civil society along limited local government</td>
<td>civil society incorporated into the administration</td>
<td>glasnost, civil society activated</td>
<td>civil society along administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>low power distance</td>
<td>high power distance</td>
<td>quickly growing high power distance</td>
<td>high power distance</td>
<td>locally reduced power distance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The specificity of Russian administration refers to the unique historical features which separate the Russian local level administration both from the liberal-democratic ideal and other types of administration. This work has been based on the positivist presumption that Russia can and needs to be observed with a general analytic tool. The picture which has emerged shows that Russian local administration has gone through several major changes and some of the features which have emerged, seem to reappear again in a cycle.

The purpose of the above tables is to show the transition of Russian local administration culture at a general level. The elements initially chosen on the basis of the ideal liberal-democratic model of administration proved to be useful in bringing out the specific features of Russian change.
The citizenship, public organization and work organization aspect (see chapter 1.1.3 for a description of these) have all received attention in the Russian transitions. The citizenship aspect was clearly undermined in the pre-revolutionary and post-revolution Stalinist administrations from the point of view of a liberal-democratic ideal type. In both periods the interests of the state, represented in the personas of the leadership, were dominant. The power distance between the citizens and the administrative leadership was high in the first case and remained so in the latter. The same was true of the inside communication of administrative hierarchies. Restricted access to information was a major obstacle to a citizen’s enjoyment of real power in both administrative cultures. In the Stalinist administration this feature took its extreme form in the language purification and secrecy rules. In the perestroika and the post 1993 periods, the citizenship aspect has been important in the modernization of the administration both rhetorically and in practice for the first time in Russian administrative history.

Since 1993, the citizenship aspect of administrative work has taken the form of coexistence and cooperation of non-governmental organizations and the local administration. This in itself is not a new phenomenon but something which was very important at the end of the 19th century when the role of non-governmental organizations was debated. The local soviets, after becoming more or less multiparty and multi-interest, have in the 1990’s lost their former official position in the administrative market. On one hand, this has made them political actors in their own right. On the other, the financial difficulties at the municipal level and the dependency on state subsidies for fulfilling local tasks has reduced the meaning of local decision making from the point of view of the executive side. Today, the citizen’s voice can most effectively be heard in local activism of different sorts. The Murmansk case study shows an example of Russian local administration which has for the most part had an active and informed clientele, often demanding the service which it is entitled to.

In comparison, the post-revolutionary Stalinist local government suffocated free competition and local activism. The leadership thought that political control of local developments and the mobilization of resources to create a socialist economy demanded repressive methods with which to guide the citizenry into a new social reality. There was no demand for civil society in its liberal-democratic meaning. Civil society, as such, was an conceptual impossibility because the social and political aspects of local life became linked to the party and administration. As a
result, in the Soviet Union there were many locally organized state organizations which performed social and cultural functions and now have to be managed by local governments, non-governmental organizations or private enterprises.

The information revolution started in the perestroika period. The relaxation of censorship and the possibility to receive information from around the world changed Russian localities more than anything else. It also changed the relationship between the local administration and its clientele which became divided into new social and ethnic groups which had no official meaning in the Soviet Union. Because of information, the administration became accountable in terms of its client’s expectations. Citizens had access to information concerning themselves and could contest the decisions of the local administration. Administrators on the other hand could get information which was educationally valuable in their effort to modernize their work organization. Active administrators such as the ones which were interviewed in the Murmansk case study could in this way moderate the difficulties faced by the organization in the transition period.

More individualistic discourse has replace the collective one in some senses since the perestroika time. This presents itself in the way citizens’ rights are viewed and discussed, and how the administration is viewed in terms of its performance. At the same time, the stress of the collective has not evaporated from the Russian work culture, as the Murmansk case study shows. The collective is the source of solidarity and comfort in the face of the administration’s internal power struggles. The collective is also important in terms of introducing new methods of working style.

The tsarist administrative culture was characterized by the formal circulation of paperwork because reporting in the hierarchy was a high priority. At the same time, the information from the local level was censored and politically controlled. The same was true in the post-revolution Stalinist administrative culture which used secrecy rules extensively and specifically at an organizational level. One of the noteworthy routes for an individual to voice his concern was the Senate which acted as the highest arbitration court. After the revolution, this possibility was, in essence, abolished.

The work organization aspect has presented itself most of all in the way professionalism has been stressed in the studied time periods. In imperial Russia, professional standards were most effectively introduced by independent non-governmental organizations, such as the lawyers’ and teachers’ professional associations. In the pre-1905 class based adminis-
The Transitions of Local Administration Culture in Russia

tration, professionalism was a relative matter. Even after that, political considerations and the social status quo in the provinces was the highest priority of the state leadership.

The Imperial Russian local administration and the present day Russian local administration both serve as examples of time periods when experiments in the delegation of power and subsequent centralization of political power have followed each other. In both periods, local professional groups working for the local government or inside of it, have in practice shaped the towns and cities of Russia and enacted quiet social changes in their own right. Examples are teachers in the late 19th century, and lawyers working in city departments in the present day.

The Stalinist local administration was geared most of all toward the division of power territorially and functionally in such a way that administration in the full form of the ideal would have resembled a well working factory with central power system. The local level in this respect needed (and in due course was) professionalized along two lines: 1) party bureaucratization and 2) the professionalization of executive administrative functionaries by critical groups – engineers, book keepers, economist and lawyers. Two main types of professionals were created, the first of which controlled the latter. In the administrative culture, the professional knowledge of the these groups was subordinated to the task of executing decisions which were politically based bureaucratic directives from the ministry. In cases of resources, the executive committee of the local soviet was one player in the local decision making market politically coordinated by the party organs. Professionalism was very important but it was very tightly controlled to benefit the growth of the economy and the balance of the political system.

Since the party became bureaucratized, political in the common use of the word lost its meaning in the Soviet Union. Political activity became a way of socializing the work force and reproducing the state’s authority base. Executive power was shifted to the administration in which the ministries were playing a central role. The party assumed the role of a guardian which needed to be informed about everything and which acted as the arbitrator between different interests. Yet, it did not lose its authority in society.

A contradictory view is presented by Stephen Whitefield in his 1993 study of the ministerial power in the Soviet Union. He has stated as a result of his analysis that there is strong evidence to see the ministries as being
disinclined to pay great attention to party resolutions concerning their activity in the Soviet period. Economic power which the ministries had, “took over and dominated the political sphere to the extent that the latter was itself economized, or ministerialized. […] The power of the ministerial apparatus, through its control over material resources, allowed them to determine the success or otherwise of those who were nominally in the position of supervising them. To get something done, required the cooperation of the people with real power, the ministerial allocators. For this reason, it was necessary to ensure their presence on the party committees at all levels, not as is often assumed, in order to discipline the members of the ministries through their party membership, but rather the reverse, in order to allow party access to influence of the latter. The coincidence of personnel at the highest level of the ministry and of the party, for this reason, takes on a new significance.” (Whitefield 1993: 128–129.)

Stressing the role of the ministries in the mature Soviet system is probably an accurate systemic approach. The ministerial power, however, in the view of my study was not purely structural, but political. The administrative ideology of change in the post 1917 Soviet Russia was meant to effect structural and social changes which would merge the state and economy into one centrally run administration. The ministerial system, in this sense, was the materialization of that goal. The party gave the managerial role of daily planning to the administration which received its legitimation from the party. Ministries did not perform in a political vacuum but had acquired a social identity which was identical with the party’s bureaucratic goals. The party exerted its authority in the form of personnel policies which were also incorporated into the formal administrative structures and practices of the administration. The distinction of the two in this sense, can be seen as a theoretical question of politology and less as matter of two clearly separate structures.

Whitefield’s analysis brings out the role of ministerial opposition to the Soviet time reforms. This opposition mainly manifested itself in the way the internal priorities of the various ministries were prioritized before the goals of the general plan. Inter-branch efficiency consideration of the different reform attempts were not taken very seriously and structural modernization was thus delayed. (Whitefield 1993: 80.) The administrative modernization attempts which were enacted – of course – as policies of the party, can also be seen as having failed because of the administrative market itself. The party could not dictate structural changes, because it had given up repressive
methods of the kind which were used in the revolution. The mature Soviet administrative market had created rather safe enclaves for different participants which could not be broken or easily changed. In a society where unemployment could not exist, the question is also what was the actual meaning of party resolutions? Was the meaning to execute the modernization of whole structures or most of all show concern for the society’s development and perform a rhetorical role in the public discussion?

In the perestroika administration professionalism was looked at from the point of view of work ethics. Symptoms of the lack of motivation and the dysfunctional features of the administrative market needed to be corrected. Professionalism was underlined in the work environment campaigns concerning alcoholism and unearned incomes. Yet, the perestroika period remained similar to the pre-revolutionary imperial Russia in respect of its conservative outlook on administrative culture.

In the post 1993 period, critique of unprofessional work has been directed at the core of the administrative culture. The main focus, in some way similar to the post 1917 challenges, has been the functioning of administrators as state servants or local government administrative workers. This time, the need has been to create a work force able to make delegated decisions in a constantly changing legal environment and demanding pressure from the public. In the case study, the Murmansk administrators underlined the importance of continued adult education and the strengthening of professional qualification on the job for getting a promotion, or simply to keep up with daily demands. Delegation of decision making also requires that the limits of jurisdiction between different administrative bodies and practices of their cooperation are clear at the local level.

The public organization aspect has been at the center of attention in all transitions. Legality was raised in 19th century Russia by the developing legal profession as a central question for the relationship between the state and individuals. Legal procedures were being developed and the state tried to coordinate the norm creation in the Code of Laws. In the late 19th century, the legal reforms resulted in the use of appellation. Courts and attorneys became more independent with developing a set of procedural regulations and a professionally more independent role in society. After the revolution, the question of new soviet legality was developed parallel with the economical needs of the new regime in the middle of a civil war and fear of opposition. In the late 1920’s and at the end of the 1930’s, repression was
accepted as an administrative control method according to the legal principle which placed group interest above individual rights.

Perestroika tried to return some of the liberal-democratic ideals which had began to take root in the 19th century reforms. “Soviet legal consciousness” returned to the public the right to have a legal voice which was not completely regulated by official group structures. The prosecutor’s office which in the Stalinist soviet system was the most effective organization for political control, in essence a branch of the secret police, began to control the unity of municipal legality. Many of its workers wanted to include the KGB and the party in this supervising function (Smith 1997: 335).

The publicness aspect of the administration has been institutionalized in the form of the prosecutor’s office. The prosecutor’s office in the post-revolution Russia became a powerful and authoritative institution which guided the preliminary inquiry, raised charges on the basis of it and played a dominant role in the court. On top of this, the prosecutors acted as the general supervisors of all administrative decisions and could demand their correction. In fact, the prosecutors acted as the most effective channel of political supervision. In comparison with other professions, such as the police, for instance, the prosecutors were the core around which the legal life of the state was built. The police, or militia, in comparison, took a longer time to evolve into a state wide system. (See Kositsin & Vlasova 1987.)

In the transition period since 1986, the prosecutor’s role has been changing from an almighty institution into an important, yet more balanced party in the legal sphere. However, the role of the prosecutor’s office in the control of administrative legality has remained. The prosecutors have locally assumed tasks which make them the enforcers of new policies, such as the environmental policy.

After the 1993 Constitution, the administration was able to push forward many of the hopes raised in the perestroika period. The public organization aspect of administration has been underlined in the media and in the legal reforms since the early 1990’s. In the post 1993 Russia, the separation of powers, and the emergence of independent court rooms, has resulted in people having increasing recourse to the law. Administrative disputes are often contested, not endured. Legal consciousness has emerged both in the ranks of the administrators themselves, but most of all in the population. This in itself does not always mean effective and timely work – because it requires extra attention from the administration – but it is vital for the existence of the rule of law in Russia.
7.4 What Cultural Significance Does the Level of Administration Have?

The meaning of territoriality in general and in Russian political history in particular has been great (see for instance Bennett 1989 and Bours 1989). Territoriality can be looked at from the point of view of structural divisions and structural levels (administrative and economic hierarchies, center-periphery balance). It can also be looked at from the point of view of governing policy “by territory”. Important questions involved here include localism in political ideologies, territorial policies in administrative reforms, territoriality in risk administration (e.g. in the interpretation of laws, loss of power by authorities) and territoriality of different administrative classes inside the civil service (central-regional-local, regional heads of municipalities and so on). In the light of history, territoriality has been a major cultural element in administration.

The local level and local decision making authority was particularly important in the late 19th century reforms and the period 1985–1992. In the imperial Russian discussions, tempers flew over what should constitute the basic limits of administration at the local level. Was the local level a part of the Russian state or a separate institutional sphere? Originally the local level was developed as a means to govern provinces better (Koivisto 2001). In the reforms of the 1860’s and 1870’s it acquired a new social and political meaning as the zemstvo and town governments were given responsibility over local matters. But again, as Russian statehood began to emerge, the local level became officially subordinated to the state’s administrative needs. In terms of practices, the changes in ideology meant alternating possibilities for local activists and professionals to work for their community.

In the perestroika years, local level activism was encouraged as a means to attack dysfunctions created by the Soviet work culture and administrative autarchy. The delegation of political power to the local level was chosen as the main method, along with more freedom of expression in the media. For the sustainment or gradual reform of the existing system, these strategies proved to be wrong. At the level of local administrative culture, the system of blat and power balance in the administrative market were important. The ideology of administrative change overlooked these practices and paradoxically introduced bigger risks to the system.
In the transition since 1991, territoriality has been an important factor in the birth of risk administration in at least two ways. Firstly in the period of local democracy at the start of the 1990’s which was followed by the stronger executive rule at the local and regional level. Secondly in the period of regionalism which was followed by the centralization of policy making at the end of the 1990’s. Paradoxically, the period of regionalism coincided with the tendency to strengthen the executive decision making power (e.g. Campbell 1992). In this sense, the time of “purely” local democracy was only a brief moment in the beginning of the 1990’s, in very much the same way as power was “purely” proletarian in the 1917 revolution. In both cases, the state administrative needs in the reforms quickly supersededed the local activism.

In the Soviet Union, the meaning of territoriality was very important for the administrative market. The double administrative structure, in itself, meant that in the political administration the higher party organ could always influence the lower level decision making. The administrative organs in general acted as extra-constitutional arbitrators in the market. The fact that the higher level has retained the final say in administrative decision making in Russian history has itself been connected with the problems of geographic governance and the coexistence of unofficial networks along formal channels.

Territoriality is present in the formation of administrative culture at the local level today because the separation of state administration from the economic administration (Kordonskii 2000) has made the lines between different institutions more distinct at the local level. “An administration” has appeared which can concentrate more on professional matters rather than institutional bargaining.

Yet, it needs to be remembered that local administration work today is different than local government as such. The local level takes care of a large part of the social functions which the state has promised to provide. Constitutionalism takes a territorial form in the way local communities can provide the same services to their clients irrespective of the location. In the debate over how the local level should be viewed, this basic starting point receives surprisingly little attention over other matters. From the point of view of legal protection, territorial equality is one of the main concerns. For Russia, the analysis of administrative methods and policy guidance from this perspective deserves more attention.
7.5 Is the Liberal-Democratic Ideal Type Useful in Understanding Other Types?

This work attempted to describe and understand the Russian and Soviet local administration cultures with a set of elements derived from the liberal-democratic ideal type. The purpose was to see how the present transition can be understood from a historical comparative perspective when set against this ideal type. There are obvious benefits to having a clear definition of what one is looking for. The use of the liberal-democratic ideal type is based on those requirements for administration which emphasize its public nature. This makes the choosing of what one is looking for easier.

Looking at the historical Russian local level administrations with the help of definitions rising from the liberal-democratic model of administration can be criticized as being ethnocentric. It can be said that understanding the deeper cultural meaning of words in an alien and historically distant environment becomes difficult with the ready-made yardstick of an other culture and time. The rule of law framework can be equated with the modernization approaches and be seen valuing development by its closeness to Western politics and economy. The use of “outside models” can be said to forget historical contexts and causes by looking at the results of processes. The characteristics which distinguish different historical time periods may not be clearly defined. Often it is nearly impossible to find common traits for different subjects under study. (Brower 1986: 320–321.)

The critique which can be directed to the use of concepts from an ideal type, is of course, that they do not cover all types and are particularly difficult to apply when transitional regimes/states are concerned. This is why I have included other considerations in the examination of the transition in which the administrative culture develops. For instance, ideas from Fred Riggs’ classic “Prismatic Society” model have been borrowed in the analysis of former socialist societies in transition, although it was originally created for the analysis of so-called developing nations. In this work, Riggs’ ideas are used in the description of the ecology of administration. Critiques of Riggs’ model have pointed out that it has a negative starting point which is based on a Western bias and that it overlooks similar prismatic behavior in stable market economies, such as the United States. It is also pointed out that “formalism”, which Riggs uses to describe a situation in which there is a gap between stated objectives and actual
behavior, may have both negative and positive consequences depending on the circumstances. (Heady 1996: 105.)

One can argue that the liberal-democratic ideal type is a representation of political values and does not correspond to administrative realities in any society. It is possible to say that the elements of culture included in this ideal type reflect values which are difficult to study systematically without making mechanistic requirements for each element. For instance “transparency” could be studied by looking at how many institutional actors can take part in decision making and at what moment the general public has been informed about a forthcoming decision making process.

Yet it is possible that an administration more or less meets all the necessary formal requirements and remains far from the liberal-democratic type. Because of this, I would say that the use of one ideal type in the study of other forms of administrations is most useful in clarifying what makes administrations different from each other. This “something” is often seen as “culture”. In this work, differences have been looked as qualities of elements of administrative culture. Administrative elements have been described as parts of the historical transition processes. Their different qualities have been described to the extent they have changed and affected the transition.

The rule of law administration concept is often discarded since it does not match the reality of the present societies in transition. Yet this is precisely its strength when the purposes of administration need to be understood. It is quite impossible to look at an administrative organization without regard to the client-organization relationship in some form. Instead of trying to discard a concept related with liberal-democratic tradition, it is more fruitful to see what its meaning has been in other contexts. As the Russian/Soviet administrative and legal history shows, merely the word “rights” opens up a vast landscape of theoretical and practical discussion about the state and citizenship, among other things.

The building of administrative ideal types from the Russian transitional experiences is mostly interesting as an attempt to see what effects structural changes based on new political purposes have on institutional requirements. Transitions are meant to have purposes. These purposes are meant to effect institutional practices and ways of thoughts. In this work I have explained how things have happened in the transitions of chosen elements of administrative culture. Summing up the main changes and the new dominant elements of local administrative culture has shown the
complexities of transitional processes. Ideal types are in this sense useful for the understanding of the transition itself.

Each of the studied administrative ideologies had qualities which correspond with the “good government” ideal type described in the chapter 1.1.3. In the 19th century Russian town, civil service was being reorganized and legality was pushed forward. Legal protection was structurally strongest in the form of appeals to the Senate. The Emperor’s position, no separation of powers, wide discretionary powers of the security administration, secrecy and limited political rights of the citizenry made the rule of law impossible, but the development was toward this direction. Town government authority was also instituted which involved a larger group of people into the administration.

In comparison to the ideal type of liberal-democratic government, the tsarist town administration culture had a limited non-political authority base. This authority was mediated by the decision making procedures which underpinned the autocratic character of the state. Local actors could, within their own restricted sphere (particularly professional), effect changes. However, the weakness of the administrative authority (both the organizational and civil servants’) created dysfunctions (bureaucratism, multiplication of paper work) and risks (poor feedback and an authoritarian, personal decision making style).

The socialist local administration instituted a complicated structure and strong control of formal procedures. In theory this should have structured and limited the use of personal discretion in a way which could have protected the citizens from the arbitrary behavior of the tsarist local level. However, the political paranoia which was attached to local decision making overrode the modernization side of the changes. In theory, the Soviet state could have provided a structure and mechanism for a clear norm hierarchy. Instead, law became mostly a tool for the administration which was led by the double bureaucracy of the party. In addition, during the Stalinist administrative culture, law became inseparable from political purposes and thus arbitrary. As a side-effect of this, law assumed a formal role and lost its authority to the party instructions and personal decisions by powerful party leaders. Individual rights as such could not exist because the basis of society was the same identity for all member classes.

In comparison to the ideal type of liberal-democratic government, the core of the new socialist administrative culture remained essentially same compared to the tsarist system. This meant that: 1) final authority was
beyond and above law (in the party); 2) local administration was non-political (concentration on quantity); 3) administrative procedures based on trust between organizations and citizens were not created (no rule of law or legal protection); 4) law remained weak (formalism); and 5) bureaucratic language and secrecy were used (separation of different administrative levels and actors from each other).

Perestroika tried to remedy the worst dysfunction of the Soviet system. In this attempt the concept of legal consciousness became a tool for change. Glasnost encouraged discussion about the administration. Political repression was no longer a weapon against the opposition inside the party. “Socialist rule of law” was an attempt to incorporate liberal-democratic ideals of good government into the system of democratic centralism. The contradiction was impossible to overcome and its failure was all the more disappointing because of the other great problems of the perestroika period.

In comparison to the ideal type of liberal-democratic government, the perestroika local administration created new client relations through glasnost. At the same time, risks were created to these new relations because local administrative markets were de-stabilized. Since systemic change was not the original goal of administrative change, the reforms did not have a clear institutional direction. This led to uncertainty in authority relations which greatly affected the following transition.

Russia, since its new Constitution of 1993, must and has been evaluated according to the requirements which the Constitution and federal laws based on it have set. The present administrative law in Russia, although still partially in the making, does build the legislative base – for the first time in Russian history – for a rule of law administration. In comparison to the ideal type of liberal-democratic government, the “good government” principles in the work of Russian local administration have suffered from economic and political setbacks. Planning has been difficult which undersmies laws, clear guidance in their application and timely decision making. Yet rule of law principles have emerged as a result of legalism and education. The main result of the transition has been a separation of powers. A place for local administration exists where administrators can develop the use of discretion. The use of information has assumed a “revolutionary” role. Work collectives and individuals can use information gathered from different sources as a socializing and educational medium.
7.6 Does the Risk Administration Concept Help to Understand the Transitions?

The historical experiences analyzed in this work show that reforms have a common problem: They require reactions to risks which arise as side-effects of political decisions made in situations where planning is difficult or impossible. The connection between decisions, side-effects and risks can help show why cultural change is such a long term process. Cultural change at an organizational level rarely happens as a direct result of intended purposes. In some cases, transitions happen as a side-effect themselves. In other cases, organizations adapt to new risk without higher planning.

Looking at the transition as a combination of side-effects and risks helps one to understand the interests that functioning structures serve. From the Russian experience since the 1990’s, the administratively problematic starting point was the lack of institutional consideration. Too many vital questions were left out of the plan because it was hoped that society itself would eventually replace most state services, and that law and hierarchy relations in the political system would develop in time. The risks created were both economic and political. The development from then on has followed the text book description of risk administration.

Political and economic changes effect administrations directly, but not always in the intended way. In his analysis of the Soviet Union, Steven Solnick (1998) has concluded that when either authority relations or property rights eroded, institutional collapse followed. Hierarchy collapse in the Soviet Union was not a consequence of political-economic factors but constituted the collapse itself. (Solnick 1999:4–5.)

In transitional organizations it is easier to adopt a formal organizational structure with a manifest function than it is to change actual social behavior. Thus the old culture in fact stays strong and a profound organization wide change in the ethics and procedures is difficult to achieve. When side-effects assume a powerful role in the whole social system, a social need for structural change grows. In these situations, the existing structures can regress to defensive practices and thus easily alienate the actual social life from official legitimation even further. But another choice is also possible. When the leadership meets persistent deviations from the official purpose of work, the leadership can change its political goals in order to accommodate the deviations. The leadership manipulates the side-effects to its own benefit
and alters the justification of an organization’s functioning without touching the foundation of its belief system. In the structuration process, this takes place during the mediation stage. Both examples can be found in Russian administrative history.

The historical case studies in this work show the patterns of risk administration formation quite clearly. The risk administration ecology can be found in all four studied administrative transitions. The most dominant risk administration qualities which can be found include

1. The use of security organs (19th century tsarist administration, the 1917 revolutionary administration and the present administration),
2. ineffective planning as a result of structural changes (perestroika administration, present time)
3. quasi-market of the economy (revolution of 1917 and the present time)
4. non-coherent state system (all administrations)
5. formalistic laws (most intense in the 1917 revolutionary administration)
6. severity of policy rules increases as power and control change their nature (all transitions)
7. administrators need to fill the gap left by politicians or state heads (all transitions)
8. client relations are complicated by the attempts to enforce the law (all administrations).

The use of security organs by the tsarist administration and the present administration present an interesting parallel because in both cases the precedent of centralization was the establishment of local self-government for the first time. In 19th century Russia, the local level was made a part of the state administration and given wider rights to pass decisions albeit at the expense of becoming more closely monitored and run by the elite group. In tsarist Russia, administrators often needed to act as enforces of policies. In the present transition, the centralization has paradoxically served the strengthening of the legal position of the local level at the expense of the regions which were given very wide power in the beginning. Regionalization resulted in a non-coherent state system and administrators acting as politicians. The developing market economy was often abused by a small elite at the central and regional levels. The response has been the setting of
new policy rules (central policy and dictatorship of laws) and partially complicated client relations. At the same time, clients have acquired a more prominent role through the courts and information society.

It would seem that the notions of both Peters (1984) and Salminen and Temmes (2000) concerning the diffusion of political power to the administrators in transitional times is true in the studied periods. Yet more political risks are created in the form of centralization policies which are meant to strengthen political control of the administration. In addition, the diffusion of power to the administrators seems to create an environment were old practices and ways of thought are recycled. This was evident in Whitefield’s (1993) study. Risks created by the transition itself, have resulted in the centralization of political power and its bureaucratization in the administration.

The perestroika period in comparison meant this development in the reverse order. The centralization was dismantled with the help of tight policy rules (the anti-alcohol campaign, campaign against unearned incomes and so on). Political pressure led to complicated client relations which made enforcing already formalistic laws of the political system difficult. At the same time though, law served a revolutionary purpose by creating a space for legal consciousness.

It would be tempting to say that transition equals poor planning. To an extent this is the case in all the studied periods. Poor planning in this case would mean choosing a political course instead of the “rational” choice which would consider “practical” realities (financial, organizational effectiveness and so on) as a basis for strategic choices. Political courses mean that transitional problems are tackled through reactions to immediate political risks.

When a leadership style changes, as with Presidents Eltsin and Putin, it means yet another adjustment for the administration. Policy rules (written and unwritten, “historical”) become more severe because administrators need to be forced to understand the changes. It could be said for instance, that President Putin has employed a managerial style which underlines unity of decision making and the use of legal grounds for strategic choices. The legislation passed during Putin’s regime has at the same time demanded the centralization of economic and foreign policy, and strengthened the local level by clearing the rights of different administrative levels and by enforcing the norm hierarchy. This tendency of centralization in connection with the stronger local role follows the cycle of administrative changes in
Russian history. Similarly, the strategic administrative methods in this process have included the involvement of the security administration more closely in the monitoring and staffing of administration. At the local level, the strengthening of the norm hierarchy, centralization of executive decision making and stabilization of economics have also served to provide better chances for developing rule of law practices. This is the paradox of the present transition.

7.7 How Can Local Administration Cultures Be Viewed in Terms of Pluralist vs. Totalitarian and Integration vs. Political Process Theories of Government?

The Russian/Soviet administration can be understood both as a totalitarian/highly authoritarian regime and as an administratively pluralistic government. Both ways of looking at the administration concentrate on the central government and see the local level mostly as an extension of the central culture.

The first view emphasizes the ruler at the top of the hierarchy as the sole source of power and group conflict stemming from the fight to gain the rulers attention. The latter view sees the administration as representing a force of its own which, even as it was always dependent on the final word of the ruler or ruling group, has been able to distribute resources and actual decision making power among different constituents. This was mainly because of the vast geographical area of Russia. According to this latter view, the geographically spread Russian administration has never been a direct “machinery” of the center but instead a bargaining field for different locally and territorially important actors and groups.

The first view concentrates on the ruler’s need to control and integrate all parts of the vast land into one structure which leads to him. The totalitarian view of the Soviet administration sees that it was monolithic both in its structures and in the way decisions about resources were made. Arbitrariness and coercion in the face of different types of ruling risks are natural results of this tendency to secure the power of one family or party leadership. This view can be criticized for creating a myth that such total control is possible in the first place.
A modified interpretation of the totalitarian/highly authoritarian regime interpretation has been a view of the Soviet government as an oligarchy (for instance Hammer 1993). According to this view, the Soviet government after Stalin was not ruled by a single dictator but by the most influential members of the ruling elite. This group shared the same prestige, by and large the same potential for leadership and a wide constituency in the structures of the country. No one person, in spite of his institutional position, could alone decide anything. The solidarity of all members of the ruling group was in fact needed for policy decisions. According to this view, the decision making at the top was indeed a type of a political process, although within the approved version of the communist ideology.

For the local level, however, it would seem that it is less significant whether the top consisted of one or 10 people if the authoritarian culture demanded unquestionable obedience. The question then becomes: did the local level possess similar strong actors who reached a consensus in a bargaining process? The pluralist view would answer this question positively. It sees the local level as a battle field for different interests who could gain or lose power in the net effect. The political process view of culture comes close to this view by emphasizing actual interest conflicts and unpredictable end results.

Yet, the question with the pluralist view is: does all the local meddling actually change the course of events at the local level administration? Even if resources are temporarily shifted a little bit from one place to another, does this mean that the local level makes it own future? Furthermore, did power changes actually take place in the Soviet Union or in the imperial Russia?

This work has not advocated any particular view of looking at the local administrative culture. The results of my analysis suggest that some issues connected with these mentioned views are better suited for the understanding of Russian administrative cultures than others. I would look at these views in the light of the pre-revolutionary time, the Soviet perestroika period and the present time to see if a common view can be used.

The time period before the revolution was at least officially one which greatly emphasized one man rule, authoritarian and very personal, unpredictable and extralegal nature of administrative decision making at the top. This was also reflected in the position of the local level which was limited in its authoritative role. Yet, the fact of life was that the ruler was far away. Local and territorial mini-rulers, and institutional heads could impose
their own will on the administration and on single officials. The lack of legal limits in many cases, class society particularly and the punitive general role which the administration had as a controller rather than provider, added to the independent behavior at the local level. Was this pluralism in the present meaning of the word? Hardly. More likely it was mundane arbitrariness and lack of rule of law in the structures. Even as it is true that semi-autonomous power holders existed at the regional and local level, their institutional position depended on the personal power of the ruler.

Whether the administrative competition at the Soviet local level can be seen as proof of some type of independent local decision making is a more difficult question. It clearly shows that individual actors and actor groups could adapt both their own behavior and affect the system. The local administrators had also possessed different channels of influence in the pre-perestroika period. It had been possible to achieve change within the political limitations of the system. The elite’s privileged position had revealed itself in the way personal contacts helped to maintain position, improve it or achieve needed results. The norms of the social system had in fact made contacts a fully accepted way of bypassing the legal limitations of the system both materially and socially (for instance Sungurov 1998 and Ledeneva 2000). On the whole though it can be argued that the logic of the local level had been a part of a unitarian system where diversity presented itself in different types of unofficial social networks which had mediated the rigidity of the political system. The perestroika period did not change any of this. Perestroika merely made these unofficial ties even more acutely necessary and changed the influencing capabilities of different groups.

The definition of the local administration as a market requires accepting the idea that in spite of a political totalitarian culture, there was functional pluralism in the bargaining over resources. The perestroika period changed the administrative market in which the local bargaining over resources was done. The change was due to the loss of authority by the party in society in general. A type of authority vacuum was being created in the municipalities, which opened doors for actual political and then economic fights over the localities.

In the end of the tsarist era, the new occupational and social groups in towns presented the town administration with legal and economic challenges. The authoritarian practices and ways of thought required officials to develop a set of administrative skills in order to either maximize their influence through social networks or retain their position. Essential to
the political bargaining was the avoidance of conflicts with the local heads of administration who controlled the fate of individuals. It was a political process directed at maintaining official harmony. The closed administrative market could not function as a separate enclave of the society any more. The smallness (both geographically and in terms of personnel) of the administration itself presented a problem. There were not genuinely separate institutional powers at the local level.

The revolution at first seemed to change this culture. Not long after, however, the centralizing policies directed the administrative culture of the local level into its old position of limited power over its own fate. It had a new authority in the formal structures, but the central political process made the local decision makers dependent on the winning dictator. They could not be sure their institutional positions would give them any safety. Stalin’s purges were specifically aimed at creating an atmosphere of institutional insecurity. Since the ruler was beyond law, and interpretation of law was dependent on his political calculations, there was really nothing which the administration could lean on. As a result, it began to execute directions according to the risk factor involved in not obeying orders fast enough. This led to an intense political process of its own sort. Yet it can also seen as a part of Stalin’s own game plan of integrating different geographical areas into one economic planning structure. Administrative culture of this type was, in a way, a most effective resource in itself for him to use.

The totalitarian view has emphasized that the resulting Soviet administration was one of total control. I would see the Soviet administrative culture as one which did succeed in creating a total economic bureaucracy as a structural arrangement and a supporting political-administrative bureaucracy which did not allow a real opposition of state plans to emerge. It did not develop total control of practices and thoughts, however. These developed as a side-effect of the structural changes in the Stalin period and were modified during the following leaderships. A system of administrative market developed in which different actors took their place in the bargaining of local resources (Kordonskii 2000). Campbell has proposed an idea that in Russia there has always been unofficial local insubordination which has mediated the official state domination. (Campbell 1992.) These practices were affected by many cultural factors, such as the relationship which the administration at all levels had with law.

In my view, the bargaining of the local level which affected the work of the local administration cannot be seen as proof of pluralism as such. This
is because all the institutional actors as well as individuals had the same political identity. For this to be certain, there was enough direct legal control. Yet, as Darrell Hammer has pointed out, this did not mean that conflict could not arise between the dominating party and the other institutional actors. This was in fact a continuous situation which was a result of their different functions (and cultural roles) in the planning structures. All actors in the local level had a need to retain their positions and strove toward an equilibrium which would keep problems at a minimum. (Hammer 1993: 234.) The local level supported and recreated the integrationist culture because there could not be a struggle for actual power, only for resources.

The perestroika period tried to attack the institutionalized administrative market with new strategies. In the end it was forced to create an internal opposition to the party which led to the disintegration of the political process in the municipalities and paralyzed the economic bureaucracy. In this situation true pluralism emerged for the first time. The time since 1991 has meant a differentiation of administrative thoughts and practices. There has been a chance for local development which has never existed before. The political process has been intense and old actors have assumed new roles in the rearranged administrative market. New important actors have emerged: the courts, independent legal profession, administration heads with their own local programs, a media and public which has access to laws and the new ideas. These undermine the oligarchic tendencies both at the central and local levels.

Since 1991, the administrative market has been dominated by the executive side of the representational administration while the political has disappeared and the economic administration has been divided into state and private sectors. Tax collection has become the main purpose of administrative change in the formation of administrative market relations. For this reason, the centralization of political and economic decision making can be seen as a part of the change strategy.

The integrationist tendencies which have emerged in the Putin era can be explained as an attempt to safeguard the legal control and unity which sustains democracy. So far, this view has by and large been accepted, particularly after the side-effects and risks which the delegation of power to regional level effected in the early 1990’s. The majority of Russian voters have supported a view that intense political fight which affects the local administration is not desirable. Bureaucratic politics in today’s Russia are
directed not just toward resources, but indeed toward the choosing of policies inside individual organizations. This, together with the legally stronger position of officials, makes it possible for them to have the kind of institutional power that has not existed before. It is too early to predict what the change will bring as a side-effect. That is, whether the political centralization will lead to more control of the economic side and eventual liberalization of administration, or fail and lead to more dependency on security control, or something else entirely.

7.8 What Is the Meaning of Ideologies and Bureaucratic Myths in Transitions of Russian Administrative Cultures?

George L. Yaney (1973) has written that once a myth gains acceptance in society, it becomes a force in itself. People grow accustomed to it, develop habits and practices based on it, and pass it to younger generations. At a deeper level they start seeing denials of that myth as a threat to their way of life. As Yaney has said: “not only do people believe in the myth, they depend on their fellows to believe in it. […] The customs attached to a myth may go on making sense of experience long after the myth itself has ceased to correspond to observed facts, because they are a vital part of the social relationships through which men conduct themselves.” (Yaney 1973: 13.)

I would separate three types of myths with regard to transitions of administrative culture: political ideologies as texts, laws in state building and finally traditions/rituals which sustain a belief in the justification of the transition. Political ideologies serve as the starting point from which the enthusiasm for the change is drawn. They are idealistic but yet contain enough practical suggestion and plans to have significance for law makers who execute the actual planning of ideologies. This is why laws are systems of political myths. They have a mythical aspect because they give the impression of a world which can be controlled. But this is, in my view, less interesting culturally (although very important in itself) than the mythical view of a political society that laws uphold.

Do political programs need to be taken seriously? Should we instead start from laws which are supposed to be orderly statements of what is right and good in society, and which structure reality? My view is that everywhere
Conclusions

it is necessary to look at both in conjunction with each other. Political ideologies may vary, in the contemporary world they are less party political and more “administrative”. In the European context they are styled in the fashion of European Council or EU programs which build a vision of good living in an open and economically active lifestyle (consumption oriented and freely competitive) where borders are mostly a barrier to innovation (for instance moving workplaces to cheaper locations to improve profit margins). The myths of freedom, openness and competition ring in the ears of today’s listeners and they give us an idea that what is being decided in the political arena benefits all of us. We firmly wish to continue our way of life and improve our position to be ready for the challenges which this competitive, open and free society requires. Then there is the problematic group of people who are “marginal” and who need to be rehabilitated or “removed from the statistics” with the help of administrative maneuvers. Who can say that these political texts which we read everyday are in any manner different from the more party political exhortations of the past? All the requirements are there: lexicon, pre-accepted orders of importance and inevitability.

Mikhail Gorbachev’s perestroika reforms are the most recent Russian example of an attempt to materialize myths. Kordonskii (2000) has concluded that the result was the legitimization of the dissident language. The 19th century reforms and Vladimir Putin’s presidency have been somewhat more pragmatic in rhetoric. The main concern has been the strengthening of governability at all levels of the state. Yet this purpose has been legitimized with the idea of “restoration of Russian greatness” to motivate changes and obedience to law.

Myths become interesting in the state building process. Laws are fickle tools which can both build harmony and security, or create inequalities which affect generations to come. No dictator is needed for the latter to take place. Nor are all harmful laws evil from the outset. The study of administrative culture shows that inaction is one of the most effective long term degenerative factors. Legal myths of rationality and objectiveness make the correction of mistakes harder. When in some cases generations of people have gone about their business believing and behaving in a certain manner which is legal, changing the behavior will take time and incentives. New laws maybe required to brake or modify an old custom which is not acceptable. Law in these cases becomes highly political. Suddenly it needs to be justified with an extralegal rationality of good and bad.
The relationship of laws and political values which are commonly accepted as a “rational” basis for a certain life style in society, is extended to the issue of trust which Yaney wrote of above. People trust each other to behave in a certain way and that is why laws have a meaning in their lives. In Russian history, this relationship has been somewhat different. The tsarist Russian law was most of all a punishing and demanding tool for the authorities which sustained order in the society or collected taxes. The developing legal protection and sense of citizen’s rights did not have enough time to make deep roots before the revolution. Stalinism in the Soviet Union on the other hand strived to make law a tool of both irregular political coercion and systematic administrative non-policy routines. In this a “non-systematic” administrative society was created from the point of view of legal trust in which dependency was attached to a person of authority (comp. Yaney 1973: 15). Feedback from the population through representational organs was limited and replaced by intelligence which was extended territorially for use in planning. Other types of control systems evolved inside organizations and in society at large which supplemented the lack of legal consciousness in social relations. The administrative market, which has been discussed previously in this work, is a major example.

The present transition is unique, because its manifest purpose is to change the foundation of social life from a relationship based on personal networks and authority centered obedience, to a dependency of commonly respected abstract ideals of laws. The relationship which Russians should from now on have with their administration should be based on the belief that they benefit when they behave as others who follow laws based on political myths such as democracy, a strong nation-state, the rule of law and so on.

Problematic for state building is that laws (even supposedly revolutionary) are most of all a reaction to the past. They are usually meant to stop something, to enable something else to take place and in this negative reinforcing manner teach people to choose right. Traditions and rituals, on the other hand, give direct incentives to people. These may be decorative or concrete benefits, or they may be social mass celebrations which enhance the core values of a transition period. After dramatic transitions, ceremonial traditions and systems of ranks also help to heal. The use of such elements has played an important role in President Putin’s response to risks.
7.9 What Is a Successful Transition?

Transitions are often studied by choosing between the structural (economic and legal), social (practices and power dynamics) and political as the focus of the study. A choice is often made by choosing between actor-centered and institutional approaches.

In addition to this, different fields have developed their favorite ways of assessing the reasons for the difficulties of transitions. Economists usually concentrate on the macroeconomic side of developments, treat administration as an obstacle to changes and legal issues as “something that needs to be taken care of fast”. Legal experts ponder about the lack of rule of law, concentrate on the creation of new laws and the strengthening of the legal institutions at a formal level while hoping that “cultures would change and there would just be enough money”. Social scientists can retrieve statistics to explain complex issues of societal transition, or merely echo the general media/public perception to describe the difficulties faced by the population in the hands of the bureaucracy.

At best, different fields which choose a specific focus of study, can add to the understanding of a particular sector of the society, but unfortunately do not give an adequate answer to the problems of change in public administration. Going back to what was said in the beginning of this work, public administrations which involve complex economic, legal and social issues in each policy, need to be looked at with a holistic view which starts from the nature of public organizations themselves – not from economics, laws or political ambitions alone.

The publicness of administration is something in which social scientists need to be strong advocates since the other fields, as a result of their more sectoral views, often fail to take it into account. Transitions at the state level require taking the public sector as the starting point of changes. Careful consideration needs to be given to that which needs to be public. The authority of different institutions needs to be clarified and supported with strong economic policies to avoid power vacuums and anarchic reorganization of power relations in the absence of law. The Russian transitions show that the absence of authority is a strong risk factor for ideological transitional policies. It leads to side-effects taking over the process.

At the start of this study I stated that for a transition to succeed in its purposes, all three administrative levels of society (state, regional and local)
have to be connected to each other through the actions of people sharing the same cultural meanings. Problems arise when these connections serve different purposes for different actors and actor groups. Goal attainment is disrupted by side-effects of the social system which returns them as dysfunctions. In many cases the dysfunctions become institutionalized and it is difficult to separate them from the formal system. An important example of such a dysfunction is the blat in the Soviet system (Ledeneva 2000). Blat as a system of mutual assistance was used as an informal daily practice in the official administrative market (Kordonskii 2000) of the state.

The evaluative approach which concentrates on the ideological purposes is to my mind a useful way to structure the transitional reality and analyze the outcome of intervention. The success of transition is naturally the correspondence of the outcome with the original purposes of administrative change. But in actuality, the side-effects which easily take over the process, demand alterations and modifications to the original purposes. In some cases, side-effects produce positive consequences.

In recent times, the activity of Russian citizens at the grass roots level has increased considerably because the state is unable to provide economic security and adequate services for all. In this paradox way, a citizenry which corresponds with the liberal-democratic ideal active citizen has begun to develop. Perestroika itself led to the side-effects taking over. The outcome was the end of one-party rule. The transition certainly was not successful. The outcome of the 1917 revolution in the longer term was a bit more successful in terms of the original purposes which Lenin formulated. The evaluation problem here is more the romanticization of Lenin´s revolutionary thinking, followed by the idea that “the new culture” – ideology in this case – failed.

There is a rather cynical and surrendering idea that major economic changes necessarily produce “casualties”, even in the form of loss of lives and destroyed futures, which pass in a generation´s time and eventually result in a better life for everyone. This idea is often seen as the only realistic choice, sad but unavoidable. Looking at Russian transitions, it is possible to see, that major economic problems and transitional “losses” were policy decisions, and a result of oligarchic political competition. Even economic programs had political purposes as their main target. The strategies which were chosen overlooked areas of society because of the tactical views which the leaders of the moment had. Judging from these experiences, it is
impossible to say whether transitions could be managed in a planned and rational manner which considered avoiding power vacuums in state building as the main priority of political changes. This has never been done. Other forms of revolutions have taken place with a high cost and mixed results, which have then required remedies for long periods of time. Permanent administrative dysfunctions have been created as a result of revolutionary changes.

In the evaluation of transitions, dysfunctions present a challenge. Dysfunctions which are permanent dominant features of the old culture are often seen as one of the main obstacles in the development of new administrative practices. Yet still, historical experiences which have been examined in this study also point to another explanation. Ideologies of administrative change which do not understand or consider the cultural meaning of dysfunctions (such as blat) within the old culture and use these mechanisms in the building of new practices, can lead to failure or cycle of risk decision making. One result of this is that instead of wiping the dysfunction away, the administrative culture recycles it in a new form. Examples are, for instance, the system of ranks-nomenklatura, blat-corruption/privatization practices.

In his study about the systematization of Russian imperial administration, George L. Yaney has pointed out that in many of the social reforms of the 18th and 19th century the “advanced leader” approach has been used. These individuals are given encouragement to bridge the gap between old and new. In reality though, the result has usually been the isolation of these example individuals while the majority has not moved at all, sometimes due to lack of good leaders. (Yaney 1973: 37.)

The Russian experience seem to evidence that strong institutions are needed for the transitions to start having real effects. It is not necessary to destroy old institutions but to change the incentives for their behavior. For individuals, weak institutions which cannot manage their public tasks well enough, mean a loss of faith in laws. This authority vacuum leads to behavior which is poorly manageable from the point of view of reformists.

Stephan Holmes has pointed out that the effectiveness of the state depends on its ability to elicit voluntary cooperation. This takes place in liberalized structures which rebuild the nation’s infrastructure and push the illegal elements to their “normal” sphere. Civil society also requires a stable government which does not change legal rules too often. As a conclusion to his analyses of the success factors he makes the point that
“rights, quite obviously, are an enforced uniformity. Equality before the law cannot be secured over a vast territory without a relatively effective, honest, centralized bureaucratic organization. The resource-dependency of a liberal rights regime becomes undeniably clear when we inspect the weakness of rights enforcement in a financially strapped state. Even negative rights will not be protected in an insolvent country. [...] Rights protection is a problem of complex institutional design and resource allocation, and of maintaining an effective chain of command, not merely building judicially tended “limits” around government and its agents.” In addition to these ideas, Holmes further concludes that rampant criminality is a major obstacle to the rise of legal (rights) consciousness in post-communism. (Holmes 1996: 57.) In Russia’s case, the administrative and political strategies that sacrifice pluralism and centralization can be understood as a way to gain control of the economy in order to combat these ills.

Instead of looking at transitions from one field alone, or concentrating on a macro-micro choice of approach, it is more fruitful to look at the level of management of the process. How can it be enhanced without sacrificing the original purposes? What is needed from different parts of society to change? Instead of destroying authority relations and economical resources, this view would emphasize building new demands inside the old culture right from the beginning. One thing which all the studied transitions show is that weak administrative structures, whether as a result of politics or economics, cannot maximize the benefit from organizational learning.
Annex A: Zemstvos in the main structures of the Russian government after 1864 (from chapter 3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CENTRAL LEVEL</th>
<th>TSAR</th>
<th>MINISTERIAL SYSTEM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supreme organs: (Verkhovnye organy)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ministerial system:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. SENATE (Supreme Court)</td>
<td>MINISTRIES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. STATE COUNCIL</td>
<td>Ministry of Interior: The Central Statistical Committee (Zemstvo affairs)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS</td>
<td>Special committees</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. His Majesty’s Imperial Chancellery</td>
<td>Prosecutor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Council of Ministers</td>
<td>Imperial Secret Police (1883)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>the Military Council, the Admiralty Council, the Finance Committee, the Guard ship Council</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Imperial Office of Petitions</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REGIONAL or TERRITORIAL LEVEL (GUBERNIA)</th>
<th>MAYORALITY LEVEL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Governor (named by Senate) heading the regional board: general bureau and chancellery</td>
<td>Ministries and their departments in the region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estates</td>
<td>Prosecutors Courts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration of zemstvo and town affairs (1870-1917): supervision of legality and jurisdiction of local government and police</td>
<td>Provincial bureau of zemstvo affairs (1890)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOCAL LEVEL OF THE GUBERNIA</th>
<th>MAYORALITY LEVEL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provincial sub-level</td>
<td>Local agencies of the central government, for instance police (subordinated to the Ministry of Interior in 1880)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estates</td>
<td>Prosecutors Courts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Zemstvos (1864): assembly (sobranie) and administration (board), headed by a chairman (predsedatel zemskogo uprava)
Annex B: Town administration in the main structures of the Russian government after 1870 (from chapter 3)

CENTRAL LEVEL

TSAR

Supreme organs: (Verkhovnye organy)

1. SENATE
(Supreme Court)

2. STATE COUNCIL

3. COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS

4. His Majesty’s Imperial Chancellery

5. Council of Ministers
the Military Council, the Admiralty
Council, the Finance Committee,
the Guard ship Council

6. Imperial Office of Petitions

Ministerial system:

MINISTRIES

Ministry of Interior: The Central
Statistical Committee (Zemstvo affairs)

Special committees

Prosecutor
Imperial Secret
Police (1883)

REGIONAL or TERRITORIAL LEVEL (GUBERNIIA)

Governor (named by Senate)
who headed the regional (or provincial)
board: general bureau and chancellery

Ministries and their departments in the region

Prosecutors Courts

Administration of zemstvo and town
affairs (1870-1917): supervision of legality and jurisdiction
of local government and police

LOCAL LEVEL OF THE GUBERNIIA

Provincial sub-level

Local agencies of the central
government, for instance police
(subordinated to the Ministry of Interior
in 1880)

Prosecutors Courts

Provincial town Dumas and executive boards, headed by mayors
Annex C: The main structures of the Soviet government in 1930’s (from chapter 4)
Annex D: The main structures of the Soviet government, 1986-1990 (from chapter 5)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Control</th>
<th>Representational</th>
<th>Political</th>
<th>Economic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>STATE LEVEL</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Supreme and</td>
<td>Congress of People’s</td>
<td>President (1990)</td>
<td>Council of Ministers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the Supreme</td>
<td>representatives of USSR</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>arbitration</td>
<td>Supreme</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>court</td>
<td>Soviet of USSR (two</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prosecutor</td>
<td>chambers)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Presidium</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>REPUBLICS</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appeal</td>
<td>Soviet and its</td>
<td>Republican congress</td>
<td>Directors of all-union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>courts</td>
<td>executive committee</td>
<td>level party committee</td>
<td>service and production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prosecutors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>units</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>REGIONS (OBLAST)</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Courts</td>
<td>Soviet and its</td>
<td>Regional party</td>
<td>Directors of production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prosecutors</td>
<td>executive committee</td>
<td>committee</td>
<td>and service units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LOCAL LEVEL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town and town</td>
<td>Local soviet and its</td>
<td>Local party</td>
<td>Directors of production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>district courts</td>
<td>executive committee</td>
<td>committee</td>
<td>and service units in the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prosecutors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>municipality</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

party members (primary party organizations at work places)
ANNEX E: The main structures of the Russian government in 2005 (from chapter 6)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REPRESENTATIONAL</th>
<th>EXECUTIVE</th>
<th>JUDICIAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CENTRAL LEVEL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEDERAL COUNCIL</td>
<td>President of the Federation</td>
<td>Supreme Constitutional Court</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Duma 2. Upper House (450) (150)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Supreme Court</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GOVERNMENT</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. MINISTRIES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. STATE COMMITTEES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. FEDERAL SERVICES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>THE FEDERAL ADMINISTRATIVE AREA LEVEL</strong> (7 AREAS IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION) Headed by a presidential representative who is assisted by a staff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUBJECT LEVEL (Regional level)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Courts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AN ELECTED ASSEMBLY</td>
<td>An administration which is led by a governor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The regional organizations of ministries and central administrations (services)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The joint administration of state and region</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LOCAL LEVEL (Municipalities)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locally elected representative body</td>
<td>City administration which is led by an elected mayor</td>
<td>Local courts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>State administration at the local level: a) State administration carried out by the local executive organ such as pensions and social services. b) Locally functioning state administration bodies such as the militia.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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