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BERIA , HIS ENEMIES, AND THEIR  
GEORGIAN CLIENTELES, 1949-1953

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## I.

Any consideration of the relation between Transcaucasian politics and national Soviet politics during the Stalin era must begin from the fact that Transcaucasia was a political unit of an unusual kind, having an unusual relation to the center. The first indication of this that comes to sight, perhaps, is the relationship of Transcaucasia to Beria. Lavrenti P. Beria had passed the first twenty years of his official career in Transcauc<sup>6</sup><sub>A</sub>asia, for the last decade as First Secretary in Georgia (November 1931) and as First Secretary of the Transcaucasian kraikom (1932).<sup>1/</sup> In the latter office Beria functioned as overall boss of all of Transcaucasia. After leaving the Caucasus in 1938, Beria continued this overall supervision from a distance. This status was marked by the election of Beria (together with Stalin) to the Georgian Central Committee, by his return to the republic to preside over personnel changes, and by the greetings regularly sent to him by Party and Government meetings from the Republican level down to the raikom level.\* Beria had a substantial cult

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\* A note may be useful to the reader who is not familiar with Soviet political institutions of the Stalin period. From the bottom to the top the important territorial units in the parallel State and Party hierarchies of a Union Republic were the raion (country or urban ward), the city, and the Oblast (province). Each of these units has a party committee (the raikom, gorkom, and obkom) and a State committee (the raispolkom, city ispolkom, oblispolkom). The State bodies are directed by a committee chairman, the Party ones by three to five Secretaries of whom the first is by far the most important; he is in effect the overall boss of that area. In the Georgian SSR there existed three autonomous national areas, the Abkhaz ASSR (capital Sukhumi), the Adzhara ASSR (capital Batumi), and the South Ossetian Autonomous Oblast. The Abkhaz and Adzhara Autonomous Republics had, in the organization of the Georgian Communist party, oblast status and obkom secretaries; this feature of Party organization made the First Secretaries of the Abkhaz and Adzhara obkoms and the First Secretary of the Tiflis gorkom the most important territorial officials in Georgia. At the end of 1951 two non-ethnic provinces were created within Georgia, the Kutaisi oblast and the Tiflis oblast; they were abolished in April 1953.

of personality in Georgia, copiously displayed on occasions such as his birthday.<sup>2/</sup> One also sometimes comes across more specific references to Beria's supervision of policy in the Georgian press. In 1949 Zambakhidze, the First Secretary of the Tiflis gorkom, told a meeting that

[Our] successes are indissolubly connected with the name of Comrade L. P. Beria.

From the first days of the postwar five-year plan the Bolsheviki of Georgia, following the instructions of Comrade L. P. Beria and under the direction of the CC of the CP of Georgia, carried on with new strength many-sided work to successfully actualize a vast program of housing construction and provision of public services for the cities and villages of the Republic.<sup>3/</sup>

The first word that comes to mind to describe this picture of Georgia under Stalin might be "fiefdom." Georgia apparently formed the domain of Beria, in the sense that he had special responsibility for policy and appointment there, and in return enjoyed a personal position of honor there. While we are accustomed to think of the Stalin regime as highly centralized, this kind of arrangement necessarily involves a certain degree of autonomy for the "fiefs." In the absence of a real federal system corresponding to that of the Soviet constitution, a Union Republic would normally receive policy guidance, representing some consensus of top officials, from the center through a chain of command. If there is a direct personal relationship between Transcaucasia and one of Stalin's closest lieutenants, however, this chain of command will be circumvented to some extent. Since Beria's influence with Stalin was greater than that of any Minister of Agriculture, for example, the

procedures and policies established by that ministry will have relatively less effect in Transcaucasia than elsewhere in the USSR. Beria's own policy preferences (which are bound to differ frequently from those of other leaders) will deflect the course of policy in Transcaucasia somewhat, particularly on issues that are not deemed important enough to be personally decided by Stalin. In fact we do know that policy in Transcaucasia did diverge from that in the rest of the USSR on some issues; agriculture seems to have been one of these. A more striking example is the Historical and Ethnographical Museum of the Georgian Jews, which remained open in Tiflis from 1933 to 1952, when Stalin was moving against Beria. It is remarkable that an institution devoted to celebrating Jewish culture, which included such exhibits as a portrait of Albert Einstein, could continue to function after 1948, during the years of the anti-cosmopolitan campaign.<sup>4/</sup>

We need to pay particular attention to the regional "fiefdom" of an important Moscow politician because it is a distinctive institution of the Stalin regime. Beria was the "lord" of the Transcaucasus for nineteen years, while Zhdanov was in charge of Leningrad for fourteen years. In contrast, most pre-modern autocratic regimes avoided leaving powerful politicians in charge of distant provinces, and generally changed provincial governors very frequently. When Egypt ruled the Sudan in the nineteenth century, for example,

...few Governor-Generals were allowed to remain long in office. Between 1825 and 1885 there were 25 governors or governors-general in Khartoum, only three of whom held office for more than five years.<sup>5/</sup>

The Stalinist institution of the regional "fiefdom," such as Transcaucasia,

is a particularly important feature of the Stalin regime to study because it is an exception to the tendency to "atomize" solidarities that might impede the ruler's ready ability to turn the society in the direction he chooses. In the rule of some important peripheral areas, Stalin's government, a totalitarian regime, displayed less desire to disrupt the formation of partially autonomous local units than many earlier autocracies that were surely not totalitarian. Stalin permitted Beria to hold a "fiefdom" founded partly, as we will see, on local particularistic ties, and Stalin permitted Beria to retain, from Moscow, his Georgian allegiances and to solidify them there year after year. Precisely what kind of institution was this fiefdom which Stalin accepted or chose as the best means of governing Transcaucasia?

In answering this question we must begin with the fact that the political status of Transcaucasia as a "fiefdom" was not a formal, institutional arrangement. The three Transcaucasian republics were entirely separate on the formal level; they formed a unit only on an informal basis. Beria had no institutional authority in Georgia, for example, other than his membership, with seventy-four others, in the Georgian Central Committee. What constituted Transcaucasia as a "fiefdom" was the patron-client ties between Beria in the center and his clients in the three Transcaucasian republics. It therefore becomes a primary task, if we want to understand politics in Transcaucasia during the Stalin years, to understand this kind of patron-client relationship and how it functioned. In the following pages we will discuss first the nature of patron-client relationships in Stalin's Russia and then what can be learned from the operation of patron-client relationships in Georgia during 1949-1953.

Patron client relationships, most often called khvosts ("tails"), were a prominent feature of political life in Stalin's Russia. Stalin himself characterized this phenomenon in a classic way in his concluding speech to the February-March Plenum of the CC (1937).

...Most often, workers are selected not by objective criteria, but by accidental, subjective, narrow and provincial criteria. Most frequently so-called acquaintances are chosen, personal friends, fellow countrymen, people personally devoted to <sup>some</sup> one, masters of eulogizing their patrons, regardless of their political and business suitability.

Naturally, instead of a leading group of responsible workers, a family group of intimates, a company [artel] is formed, the members of which try to live in peace, not to offend each other, not to wash their dirty linen in public, to eulogize each other and from time to time to send empty

and nauseating reports to the center about successes.

.....

Take, for example, Comrades Mirzoyan and Vainov. The first of these is secretary of the regional[kraevoi] Party organization in Kazakhstan; the second is secretary of the Yaroslavl Party organization. . . . How do they select workers? The former dragged along with him from Azerbaidzhan and the Urals, where he formerly worked, to Kazakhstan thirty or forty of his "own" people, and placed them in responsible posts in Kazakhstan. The latter dragged along with him from the Donbas, where he formerly worked, to Yaroslavl more than ten of his "own" people also, and also placed them in responsible posts. Consequently, Comrade Mirzoyan has his own company. Comrade Vainov also has his. . . . in selecting personally devoted people as workers, these comrades apparently have wanted to create for themselves conditions of a certain independence both toward the local people and toward the Central Committee of the Party.<sup>6/</sup>

This kind of patron-client relationship was at least as prevalent in Georgia. In April and September 1952 A. I. Mgeladze, newly appointed by Stalin as Georgian First Secretary, proclaimed that:

We will allow no one, whether on the old Committee or the new, to try to exercise the kind of patronage [shefstvo] that for the last few years has prevented the Party from possessing a single will. During this time there have existed only the wills of separate chiefs who have gathered around themselves groups of loyal followers: these un-Bolshevik practices we must wipe out.<sup>7/</sup>

Finally, a word should also be said about the liberal attitude toward various sorts of collusion, nepotism, "localism" and "Patronage" in various areas by officials.



If this anti-Party principle of "localism" and "patronage" had not been properly opposed by the Party, "patrons" would have appeared who would have liked to take "their" special areas "under their wing" and to shield persons who had gotten into trouble there, seeking in this way to increase their authority as "patrons" among the "masses."<sup>8/</sup>

Although Mgeladze had fought his battles under the banner of opposition to patron-client relationships, he himself did the same thing, both before and after his elevation to the Georgian Secretaryship. After Mgeladze's dismissal in April 1953 the Sukhumi gorkom in his old area, the Abkhaz ASSR, held a post-mortem:

The delegates at the conference decidedly criticized "patronage," inadmissible in our Party. They pointed out that Mgeladze practiced the selection and placement of cadres on the basis of personal friendly [priyatel'skikh] relations. In this way there turned up in directing posts in the Republic Comrades Balavadze, Zarandiya, Kandelaki and others.<sup>9/</sup>

In fact, when Mgeladze moved from ruling the Abkhaz ASSR to ruling all of Georgia M. K. Balavadze was named First Secretary of the new Kutaisi obkom (and gorkom); V. K. Balavadze became Manager [Zaveduyushchii] of the Party Organs Department in Georgia, then First Secretary of the Tiflis gorkom; Ya. Zarandiya was promoted to First Secretary of the Poti gorkom, and R. S. Kandelaki became First Secretary of the Komsomol.<sup>10/</sup>

The phenomenon we have been discussing is that known as "clientelism" in political science at large and in anthropology.<sup>11/</sup> Loosely speaking, this term is used to refer to a kind of political association that differs from the relationship of subordination that one bureaucrat has to another insofar as

they are holders of official titles, and from the "categorical" association made up of all people who share the same interests or characteristics (a class,

interest group, professional lobby). A clientelistic "dyad" differs from these in that it is a relation not between titles, but between two specific people who have claims on one another as whole people, in an unlimited way, rather than as roles defined by the division of labor. A clientelistic group is made up of many such dyads linking several people with one person (a patron-client relationship or clientele) or to each other mutually (a case to be discussed later). The reason for the existence of these dyads is exchange of some kind of resources, exchange which cannot take place anonymously as in market exchange, but only by "barter" between the individuals who control the resources. The medieval serf and lord exchanged food for land and protection, for example.

Clientelism is one of the most important aspects of politics in the Soviet Union, and the Soviet Union is one of the most important cases of clientelist politics in the modern world. Of the periods of Soviet history, the Stalin period is the easiest in which to study this phenomenon, for three reasons. First, it would appear that patron-client relationships were somewhat stronger in the Stalin period than they are today and filled a larger place in politics, although they remain very important.<sup>12/</sup> The Stalin period may thus provide a kind of test of the maximum role that clientelism can have in a modern industrial society. Second, we have through the passage of time more information on elite politics in an earlier period. We have memoir sources as well as the Soviet media, and we know not only what seems to be happening but what actually did happen. Third, and most important, the methods we use in establishing the links between Soviet patrons and clients operate most efficiently for the Stalin period. One of the most useful methods used by Kremlinologists in

uncovering clienteles is to note which lower officials are purged when higher officials are purged. The Georgian republic in 1951-53 affords a particularly good opportunity to use this method, since these were four unusually far-reaching purges of the followers of leaders (Beria, Charkviani, Mgeladze, Beria) in two years. Because the treatment of those who were politically unsuccessful was so much harsher in Stalin's time than it is today, more peripheral clients were dismissed with their patrons and thus became visible. This paper will examine what can be said about clientelism in Stalin's Russia on the basis of Georgia in 1951-53, with some inferences also drawn from politics at the national level during the same period. The present study is based on the Russian-language Georgian press of the period and on the collection of the biographies of all officials at the level of raikom secretary and Georgian CC department head or higher. Since the collection of these biographies is not yet complete, the conclusions are more limited than they will eventually be and in some cases tentative. At a later point the investigation of clientelist structures will be extended to other republics as part of a project funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities during 1980-1983. Fortunately, a study of clientelism in the Georgian SSR can begin from the elegant delineation of major factions in chapter seven of Robert Conquest's Power and Policy in the USSR<sup>13/</sup>

Clientelism in the USSR has been studied; the analysis of khvosts and of career patterns is the stock-in-trade of Kremlinology. But it has not been studied as a phenomenon, with its particular regularities and its consequences for the political system as a whole. Nor has it been compared with clientelism in other systems.

This neglect is somewhat surprising, given the major efforts in recent

years to bring social science concerns and methods to the study of the Soviet Union, and given the fact that there exists a major body of social science literature on clientalism. In fact, the authors who have been most active in bringing social science to the study of the Soviet Union have devoted little attention to patron-client relationships, and sometimes argue that they are not important.<sup>14/</sup> The understanding of the Soviet Union that tends to emerge is an understanding of politics that emphasizes "categorical" interest groups and the informal working of formal governmental institutions determined by the division of labor at the expense of informal, personal groupings that exist within bureaucracies or straddle them. As Jerry Hough writes of the post-Khrushchev period, "decisions do largely seem to be those that the respective specialized ministerial-party-scientific complexes could be expected to favor in the various policy areas." It is perhaps appropriate that Hough calls his model of Soviet politics institutional pluralism.<sup>15/</sup>

This tendency in the analysis of the Soviet Union is paradoxical, since one of the effects of modern social science in general has been to create an added awareness of the extent to which political life is rooted in social life, of how informal relationships (including patron-client relationships) in the society penetrate and pervade governmental institutions. The attempts to bring contemporary social science to the study of the Soviet Union have, however, been based to a great extent on comparing the Soviet Union with social science analysis of liberal-democratic regimes in the modern West—precisely those regimes in which we know clientalism to be weakest. In order to appreciate fully how Soviet political life resembles and differs from other forms, we ought to compare the USSR not only with modern liberal-democratic regimes but

with modernizing nations and with wholly pre-modern systems as well.

If we do look at Soviet society, we find it differs from American society in that kinship and friendship have a greater practical role, and in the frequent formation of informal relationships to obtain various kinds of goods and services by exchange. From recent emigrés we are beginning to be much more aware of the extent to which these social realities carry over into the official work of Soviet bureaucracies. What we have not done is to relate the evidence of informal groupings in Soviet society to the evidence of patron-client relationships at the top that we have from Kremlinology.

Let us look briefly at the conditions in Soviet society during the Stalin period that could give rise to patron-client relationships. A typical piece of evidence is an Izvestia article of February 1953 titled "Friendly Circle." <sup>16/</sup> The story runs as follows. A certain Golovin was appointed head of the Restaurant Trust—the department managing all local restaurants and cafés—in Ryazan, a provincial city. Like many bureaucrats, Golovin is worried that he will have trouble with his subordinates. He is surprised to find them extremely friendly, their smiles "servile." Golovin finds that they also laud each other to him. The situation he finds at Café Number 8 is typical.

Here, the moment that production superintendent Komarova was mentioned, Selezneva, the cafe's bookkeeper, undertook to paint Komarova's virtues in such rosy colors that you would have thought Komarova knew more about the art of cooking than anyone else in the entire world.

Komarova also held up her end. When she had a minute she told the director confidentially: "I've worked with Selezneva for five years and can't say enough about her bookkeeping. She should be working in the trust, not in a

café!"

The warm friendship of the two women, whose interests in their work would usually clash, pleased Golvin very much...

In this case the relation of Komarova and Selezneva constitutes a kind of exchange: each supports the other before their superior in return for similar support. One of the things they seek is visible in this short excerpt: Komarova unobtrusively suggests that Selezneva be promoted. Elsewhere in the article we see other interests that are served by this kind of exchange: the hiring of one's relatives by the trust, protection for employees who are caught stealing and ordered dismissed from above.

Golovin remarks that in this group Selezneva and Komarova support each other although their "interests in their work would usually clash." This point to one of the most important distinctions between clientelistic politics and pluralist politics of the American type. In the American system people's interests tend to be determined by the division of labor: the interest of a bookkeeper is to have balanced books, while the interest of a café manager is to make a profit even if it creates difficulties for bookkeeping. The divergent interests created by the division of labor can be satisfied by political action (budgets, other legislation, bureaucratic rule-making) that benefits an entire category of people: farmers, teachers, Air Force officers. In Soviet society of the Stālin period, and perhaps today, the interests of people such as Komarova and Selezneva can be satisfied not only through the operation of rules that provide similar benefits for all others in their general category, but also through the action of members of their "friendly circles" or patron-client relationships to benefit themselves personally. It has long ago been

shown that political systems where clientelism is strong tend to accomplish their tasks by "particularistic" rather than "categorical" decisions, and that the interest groups constituted by the division of labor have much less role there.<sup>17/</sup>

In considering the "friendly circle" portrayed in the Izvestia article, we have scarcely considered the chief of the restaurant trust, Golovin himself. Golovin is initially surprised by the harmony among his subordinates, but he soon makes himself a part of their circle, to the point of dismissing the restaurant managers Smirnov and Petrusev, who "catch their colleagues red-handed, write letters to the editor and the trust and demand that old and tested personnel be held accountable."

In exchange for thus supporting his subordinates Golovin will be supported by them:

Certain of the unanimous backing of the offended crooks and loafers, who eagerly trumped up all kinds of charges against the hated Smirnov and Petrusev, Golovin did not even find it necessary to consider reasons for their dismissal.

What the article never makes clear is how Golovin benefits from this arrangement--and for a good reason: the Izvestia writer does not want to admit that groups of this kind, which are sometimes called "family circles" in Soviet sources, can help in administration. The existence of the family circle can help Golovin do his work--meet his norm, for example-- in three ways. First, Golovin can expect efficiency rather than obstruction from his subordinates when he needs it. A second factor is distinctive to the case we are considering. For an official to perform well in the Stalin period (or in the USSR today) normally requires bending or breaking rules, as in the



"suspicious cucumber deal" that caused the downfall of Golovin's predecessor. The article cited shows how a "family circle" can help an official cover up these rule violations. Third, a major problem of bureaucracy in the West is its lack of responsiveness to the political leadership. Orders come down to subordinate officials through the pyramidal hierarchy of administration, but the subordinates usually have no personal motive to carry out these orders, which may be in conflict with the bureaucrats' group interests, with their professionalism or their own conception of the public good. (Consider the reaction of the U.S. Navy to its bosses' proposals to build smaller aircraft carriers.) In a family circle or patron-client relationship, on the other hand, your boss' interest is your own interest; if he advances because of the successful implementation of a policy demanded from above, you can expect to be helped out in turn. When Brezhnev was in charge of Kazakhstan the success of the Virgin Lands policy became his most vital interest because it was the major policy initiative by which his patron, Khrushchev, hoped to advance. Only if Khrushchev prospered would Brezhnev prosper.

A distinction is sometimes drawn between "factional loyalty" and "ability" as criteria for appointment to positions in the USSR.<sup>18/</sup> In the context of clientelistic politics, this is a false dichotomy. Someone personally indebted to you is precisely the appointee likely to show the greatest ability as measured in terms of getting what you want done. After all, even under American conditions, within the group that has minimal credentials to hold a position, the amount of possible variation in job performance due to varying commitment to the task is likely to be greater than the possible variation in performance due to differences in native ability. In any case, to distinguish the one

best appointee within a small group of qualified applicants requires long and intimate personal knowledge, making it easy to prefer someone personally close. These generalizations hold most strongly at the lower levels--there is every reason to expect that your friend's (or client's) husband or wife will make as good a short order cook as someone taken off the street. The restaurant trust manager Golovin might argue that an obstinate refusal to face these facts underlies the American aversion to clientelism.

The article we have been discussing lays bare the basis in Soviet society out of which political clienteles, like Beria's in the Transcaucasia, develop. The group that arose spontaneously within the Ryazan restaurant trust is a "friendly circle" or "family circle" rather than a khvost ("tail") because the members are relatively equal. If Golovin is promoted to a higher position, he will have more to offer his subordinates, and this will change the terms of the tacit bargaining that exists between members of such a group. In a higher position Golovin will be likely to promote the more competent members of the old family circle; the family circle will turn into a khvost or clientele.

We have now seen two types of dyadic exchange relationships in Soviet officials' life of the Stalin period: the family circle and the khvost or clientele. In the importance of the former kind of relationship Soviet clientelism differs from that of many other countries, where strict patron-client relationships are so predominant that Carl Landé defines his major category in the explication of clientelism, the "personal following," as a web "bound together by the fact that the followers have a common leader."<sup>19/</sup> The reasons for this difference are easy to discern. Clientelism in societies that are still heavily traditional has its base in a context where there are long-standing inequalities

of power and wealth and the traditions of deference that protect them, so that the first exchange relationships to arise are those between a patron and clients. In Soviet society of the Stalin period, on the other hand, there are more opportunities for relatively equal relationships to arise, as well as opportunities for such relationships to be transformed into clienteles by the truly enormous differences in power between the top officials and their lower subordinates. It is my impression that family circles were relatively more prevalent at the bottom of the Stalinist administrative hierarchy, clienteles in its upper reaches. This would make sense: a family circle rests on some comparability of needs and resources among its members. A relationship of this type could continue only if several of its members were simultaneously promoted to positions of the same rank. Except for this rare case promotion will tend to turn a family circle into a clientele. Nevertheless, Soviet clienteles sometimes show behavior that shows the continued influence of the habits characteristic of a family circle. Beria was the client of M.D. Bagirov, the boss of Azerbaidzhan in the later Stalin period, but when Beria was promoted higher than his patron the relationship reversed with Beria as the patron and Bagirov as the client. Another possible case can be found in the interrelationships of three important Byelorussian political figures, Mazurov, Masherov, and Zimyanin. Zimyanin was in the Stalin period the most important of these, having been Second Secretary of Byelorussia, then briefly First Secretary in 1953. Then Zimyanin was punished for having taken the side of Beria by being sent to the relatively low and apolitical position of head of the South-Eastern Europe desk at the Foreign Ministry. Mazurov and Masherov advanced to the Politburō, far above their former boss, and Zimyanin eventually came back, finally to the positions of

Pravda editor and of CC Secretary. While Zimyanin must have shown ability acknowledged by the leadership in general, it may be, as Tatu suggests, that Mazurov and Masherov brought him back up in their wake.<sup>20/</sup> Of course, other personal relationships are disrupted by a shift in the relative rank of their members. Khrushchev, originally a client of Kaganovich, became his bitter enemy after rising to equal status and then to a more powerful position.

We have seen that clientelism in Stalinist elite politics is rooted in a social climate that promotes the growth of family circles and patron-client relationships. What are the factors that produced this social climate?

One important influence is surely the continuity of traditions that existed before the revolution, particularly peasant traditions. The places where patron-client relationships are not most studied by political scientists are areas such as Southeast Asia, Latin America, and the Mediterranean basin, in the peasant substratum of society. Because of the late modernization of Russian rural society and the depth of the social upheaval that took place during the revolution and after, the attitudes and habits of a pre-modern peasant substratum have had far more influence on the entire society than in most modern states. When one compares the elites of the USSR and the Eastern European states, for example, it is striking how much more the former are marked by attitudes of peasant origin. History also shows that patron-client relationships tend to arise or grow stronger in disorganized societies--early medieval Europe or northern Nigeria before the British occupation--where people need protection. The continuous disorganization of Russian society produced by revolution, civil war, invasion and terror had this effect. It has been noted by those who lived under Stalin's terror:

Back in Nikopol, I went to the City Committee offices to transfer my formal Party affiliation to Taganrog. Secretary Kondrashin was stickily affable. He informed me, in a whisper, that he had resisted bravely Dorogan's pressure for my arrest. He wanted to make sure of the credit. Who knows? Some day this battered Kravchenko might be in a position to save him in return. In the new Russia one hoards credits against a rainy day, politically speaking.<sup>21/</sup>

The randomness of the Great Terror must indeed have taught Soviet citizens that they could not hope for security through the operation of "categorical" laws, but only through "particularistic" favor. Soviet society did settle into somewhat greater security, but the relationships established earlier naturally tended to perpetuate themselves, particularly in the absence of the market economy that seems to have been responsible for the disappearance of feudal and clientelist practices in the West.

There are also causes lying in the system of government. The Stalin system imposed on all officials enormous demands, crushing penalties for failure to perform, and a rigid centralized allocation system that often made it difficult to carry out the task prescribed. In order to be successful, we have suggested, an official needed to violate rules, and to protect himself from the consequences of these infringements. Philip Stewart describes how such protection can be arranged in the Soviet system:

... the successful obkom secretary must create a sufficiently cohesive network of mutual relationships among the leading officials of the oblast that his inevitable errors and violations of established rules may be kept from the watchful eyes of his superiors.<sup>22/</sup>

Violation of rules does not, of course, mean that a vast jungle of detailed

regulations does not exist, nourished by the Stalinist disinclination to delegate authority. One way of getting things done in spite of excessive paperwork is to use personal ties and exchange relationships that cut across the grain of formal organization. This mechanism already seems to have been at work in Tsarist times, when the attempt to impose a highly organized and routinized bureaucratic system on a society that was not "ready" for it created serious problems of efficiency. Commander Vladimir Semenov, second-in-command of the auxiliary cruiser Angara during the Russo-Japanese war, tells how these problems were overcome:

We also had a certain amount of work in which the assistance of the dockyard was necessary. As regards the latter, every supporter of time-honoured red-tape habits would have been beside himself with joy if he had seen the calm of the dockyard routine. It was as if the war did not concern the dockyard. When a captain sent in a defect list of the most urgent and important kind, it still took, as formerly, from seven to ten days before all formalities had been complied with. One might have thought that it was not a case of war between Russia and Japan, but that two South American Republics were at loggerheads.

There existed certainly one way of eliminating these delays, which were caused by adhering to the regulations. It was freely used in time of peace, and was not at all a creation of war. One had only to address oneself to <sup>an</sup> old acquaintance. I was already serving in the squadron when Port Arthur was first occupied, and had witnessed the founding of the town and port. In consequence, I was enabled to render the Angara many a small service by the above method. . . .<sup>23/</sup>

All of these factors creating patron-client and family circle relationships can work far more effectively because of their context: the fact that the USSR did not have a professional civil service of the kind that grew up in Britain and in the United States after the 1870s to reduce favoritism and partisanship in public administration. This trait is crucial. Some informal promotion and tenure routines have grown up since the Stalin years, but there was then little to prevent Soviet higher officials from promoting and dismissing their subordinates according to desire. This structured all bureaucratic incentives quite differently than they are in the West and allowed free play to patron-client and family circle relationships.

### III.

In this section we will go through what happened in the administration of the Georgian SSR during 1949-53 and then, in the following section, use this evidence to answer some questions about the nature of clientelism in Transcaucasia during the Stalin period.

On Beria's departure for the national arena in 1938 formal leadership in Georgia went to Kandid Nestorovich Charkiani, who was promoted from Third Secretary to First Secretary of the Central Committee; V. M. Bakradze was the Chairman of the Council of Ministers until 1946, when he was replaced by Z. N. Chkhubianishvili (who later turned out to be a client of Charkviani) and demoted, although he remained in the Bureau.<sup>24/</sup>

We can begin our systematic account of the political changes in Georgia at the end of 1951. In the Secretariat inherited from the XIV Congress in January 1949 Charkviani was First Secretary, M. I. Baramiya Second Secretary in charge of organization and cadres. The third- and fourth-ranked Secretaries were V. G. Tskhovrebashvili and R. S. Shaduri (for Ideology). On the state side the Chairman of the Council of Ministers Chkhubianishvili, the Deputy Chairmen Bakradze, S. M. Ishkhanov, Z. N. Ketskhoveli, and V. B. Gogua, the Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, were full members of the Bureau. K. S. Tsimarkuridze, Deputy Chairman of Gosplan, and N. M. Rukhadze, the MGB Minister, were candidate members of the Bureau, as were Kochlamazashvili, the trade union Chairman,



and Lelashvili, the Chairman of the Tiflis Ispolkom. The other important territorial officials were G. N. Zambakhidze, the First Secretary of the Tiflis gorkom (and a full member of the Bureau); A. I. Mgeladze, K. G. Bechvaya, and A. G. Imnadze, First Secretaries of the Abkhaz, Adzhar and South Ossetian obkoms. A final organization that seems to have played an important political role, though none of its members were on the Bureau, was the Komsomol. Its First Secretary was I. S. Zodelava, the Second Secretary D. Z. Romelashvili.

At the end of 1951 major political changes began to occur in Georgia that were connected with events on the wider Soviet scene. In connection with the arrangement of his succession Stalin began an attack on the sources of Beria's power by replacing Abakumov by Ignatiev as head of the organs of state security, and by placing clients of Khrushchev (Yepishev, Serov, Mironov) in positions there<sup>to</sup> disrupt the control that Beria had over<sup>the</sup> police thru patron-client ties. Another major part of this effort consisted of purging Beria's clients in Georgia. Baramiya and Shaduri were dismissed from the Secretariat; Tskhovrebashvili moved up to the powerful position of Second Secretary in Baramiya's place, and two new Secretaries were chosen, M. K. Balavadze and R. A. Kvirkveliya. The latter came from the very low position (in political terms) of Finance Minister and had ranked forty-ninth among the 75 Central Committee members. Zambakhidze was dismissed from the Bureau and as First Secretary of the Tiflis gorkom, being replaced in the latter position by Charkviani himself. Two new oblasts were created dividing the territory of Georgia not already assigned to autonomous ethnic units: the Tiflis and Kutaisi oblasts.

Appointed as First Secretaries were Lelashvili (Tiflis), who was replaced at the Tiflis Ispolkom by the fallen Zambakhidze, and Mgeladze (Kutaisi)

from Abkhazia.

In January 1952 there followed a purge of the Komsomol in which all its secretaries were dismissed. Kandelaki, a client of Mgeladze, became First Secretary. Romelashvili, the old Second Secretary, was only demoted to be raikom Secretary in Gori. Zodelava, however, was expelled from the Party and arrested. Already at the end of November it had become public knowledge that Baramiya together with A. N. Rapava (the Minister of Justice) and B. Ya. Shoniya, the Procurator of the Georgian SSR, had been expelled from the Party and arrested. They were charged with "extending protection to certain officials who have committed crimes"<sup>26/</sup> — that is, doing what a patron normally does for his clients. The officials were not specified, and up until now their identities have remained unclear. The private charges cut much deeper. Stalin personally dictated resolutions of the CC in November 1951 and in March 1952 about a "Mingrelian nationalist organization" "whose objective was the liquidation of Soviet power in that republic [Georgia] with the help of imperialistic Powers."<sup>27/</sup> Baramiya, Rapava, Shoniya and Zodelava, as well as Beria, were Mingrelians, a Georgian minority with its own language living next to the Abkhazian ASSR as well as within it. Since the attack on these politicians was an attack on Beria's clients, this begins to suggest that some of the clientele in Georgia may have had an ethnic basis — and this again would be a surprising exception to the atomization practiced by the Stalin regime. Such occurrences are not uncommon <sup>in</sup> other autocratic regimes. Syria today is ruled by the Alawis, a small heterodox sect from northwest Syria, while almost everyone at the top level of the Iraqi government is not only a Sunni Arab

(25 % of the population) but from Tikrit, a medium-sized town on the Tigris. One could state in this way the problem in such a regime, or in Stalin's Russia: to secure oneself in politics requires solidarity with others, but the regime makes trust very difficult. Any solidarities that are "given" (ethnic group, family, etc.) can provide the nucleus of a political group. Possession of a language not understood by outsiders, such as Mingrelian, is very useful in maintaining a political group and in keeping its secrets from outsiders. In the Royal Navy before 1914, Maltese were not allowed to sign on as sailors because they could speak together on board in a language not understood by the officers.

With the changes at the top in November-December 1951 there began a purge of the Georgian elite that went down to much lower levels.



Figure 1: Autonomous Ethnic Provinces of the Georgian SSR and Major Historical Regions. (Note that the northern border is incorrect for 1951-53.)

This purge, which passed through several stages, seems to have been most extensive in Western Georgia (the historical Mingrelia, Guria, Svanetia and Imer<sup>a</sup>tia) and in Tiflis and its surroundings. As time went on, the Adzhar ASSR and Kakhetia (extreme Eastern Georgia) were also heavily affected. However, the purge seems to have struck some areas of Georgia much less intensely: the mountain and upland areas of northeastern Georgia, Meskhetia near the Turkish border, the South Ossetian Autonomous Oblast and the Abkhaz ASSR. Some raikom First Secretaries remained through all four of the political upheavals we will describe, while others were changed many times.

The purge of local Party and State officials began, and had its greatest intensity, in Mingrelia. The First Secretaries of the Abasha, Khobi, Gegechkori, Zugdidi and Vani raikoms (see Figure 2), and probably others, were not only dismissed, as elsewhere; they were expelled from the Party and charged with having committed crimes.

What happened in Abkhazia after Mgeladze was transferred from it to take up the job of First Secretary in the new Kutaisi oblast? Sh. D. Getiya, the Abkhaz Second Secretary, was promoted to his former boss' rank (as well as the Secretaryship of the Sukhumi gorkom), but he did not simply inherit Mgeladze's position. It became public in May 1953 that during this period (November 1951-March 1952)

Together with Comrade Getiya a whole series of workers of the Abkhaz obkom of the Party went to decide questions of construction, of the economic and cultural life of Sukhumi in...Kutaisi, where Comrade Mgeladze worked at that period.<sup>28/</sup>

Figure 2.  
Kutaisi Oblast of Georgia (1951-1953)



Samtr. = Samtredia  
Tskh. = Tskhaltubo  
Tsur = Tsulukidze

Source: "Карта Кутаисской области" З.В. 9 Feb. 1953

Boundaries are those of raions (some unclear in original)

In other words, Mgeladze continued to be in effective control of Abkhazia, through his clients, even after he no longer had any formal authority over it. This case illustrates one of the clearest effects of clientelism on public administration: that it replaces formal lines of authority (as recorded in written documents) with informal authority that resides in the personal relationship between individuals. Political authority comes to resemble more closely the kind of authority that is found in the family.

When this example has come to light, it makes us wonder whether clientelism created these informal structures of command and subordination elsewhere in Georgia. This question may provide the answer to something in the Georgian upheavals that has remained a mystery. We have seen the Mgeladze, after becoming First Secretary in April, criticized those who had engaged in "patronage during the last few years." In his report to the September 1952 Congress Mgeladze added that if patronage had not been attacked "Georgia would have broken up into a number of 'province principalities' which would have had the 'real' power, and nothing would have remained of the Communist Party of Georgia and the Government of the Georgian SSR." Mgeladze added darkly:

As is well known, the division and partition of Georgia has always been encouraged by the enemies of the Georgian people from time immemorial. Attempts at this have even been carried out under Soviet rule. Do you remember those enemies of the people, the adventurers Zhvani in Mingrelia and Lakoba in Abkhazia?...No attempts to divide her into

provinces or separate "principalities" can be tolerated in Georgia... All who seek to break up Georgia into separate "provinces" must be exposed as elements hostile to the Party and people, as elements associated with foreign imperialists.<sup>29/</sup>

Mgeladze's fear that the Georgian government would become a nullity is a clear reference to the replacement of formal authority by personal authority through patronage. But what "provinces" is he referring to as potential "principalities?" Prior to the end of 1951 there were no provincial organizations between the raikoms and the CC except for Mgeladze's own Abkhazia, South Ossetia--whose First Secretary, Imnadze, was a firm ally of Mgeladze's throughout this period--and the Adzhar ASSR. In fact we discover that some leaders in the Adzhar ASSR were clients of the Beria clients accused in the Mingrelian Conspiracy:

The delegates [at an April 1953 conference in Batumi] spoke about the fact that as a result of the lack of principle of Comrade Tsintsabadze [appointed as First Secretary of the Adzhar obkom by Mgeladze] some workers were dismissed from work

and excluded from the Party--only because they were "close" to people slandered as the ringleaders of "affairs" [Zachinshchikami "dela"] about a non-existent nationalism.<sup>30/</sup>

The one case of the Adzhar ASSR, however, does not seem sufficient to justify Mgeladze's invective. The fact that only certain Mingrelian raikom Secretaries serving in Mingrelia were made criminally liable seems to fit together with the accusation that Baramiya and other Mingrelians at the

center extended "protection to certain officials who committed crimes." These pieces of evidence suggest that Mingrelia formed an informal "province" supervised through ties of clientage by a powerful Mingrelian follower of Beria's in Tiflis. The same was true, with somewhat less violence to the formal structure of government, of the Adzhara ASSR.

Who was this informal "lord" of Mingrelia and Adzharia? The most likely candidate would be Baramiya, who held the second or third most powerful position in the Georgian leadership and was specifically charged with personnel work. From a number of guesses and vague indications the following picture of Georgia's political organization before the end of 1951 emerges; it must be confirmed or denied by further research. In addition to their functional responsibilities in directing the central government of Georgia the First and Second Secretaries, Charkviani and Baramiya, had informal territorial responsibilities carried out through clientage. Charkviani supervised the Tiflis area through a number of clients holding the offices of raikom First Secretary and gorkom Secretary (not including Zambakhidze, its First Secretary). Baramiya supervised Western Georgia (Adzharia, Guria, Mingrelia, Svanetia, at least some raions of Imeretia). In addition Mgeladze and Imnadze had substantial clienteles in the Abkhaz ASSR and the South Ossetian Oblast; some raikom secretaries seem not to have been affiliated with any major clientele or faction. This very provisional sketch surely understates the complexity of the real situation. If a structure of this type did exist, it probably came into existence as officials (both subordinates and chiefs) established clienteles to carry on their partisan conflicts with one another. But it is also evident that the structure thus set up is not without a certain administrative usefulness.



The next major transformation in Georgian politics occurred in April-May 1952. Charkviani was replaced by Mgeladze as First Secretary. The recently appointed CC Secretary M. K. Balavadze was promoted to First Secretary of Kutaisi oblast in Mgeladze's place and replaced in the CC Secretariat by Melkadze. Kvirkveli was removed from his brief grandeur as a CC Secretary and degraded to Minister of the Forest Industry, a position lower than the one from which he had originally risen. Lelashvili was removed as Secretary of the Tiflis obkom and replaced by K. D. Budzhiashvili, the brother of the CC Secretary V. D. Budzhiashvili. Lelashvili was dismissed not only as Tiflis Secretary but as Chairman of the Supreme Soviet; he was given the paltry post of Representative of the USSR Ministry of Communications for the Georgian SSR.

What most characterized the people newly appointed to Party positions was their rise from virtual obscurity. The 1949 Central Committee and Revision Commission provide a precise list of the 130 most important political figures in the Republic, ranked by importance (not alphabetically).<sup>31/</sup> Mgeladze and M. K. Balavadze had ranked 25 and 32 among the 75 full members of the CC, but Melkadze and the Budzhiashvili brothers had not even appeared among the candidate members or in the Revision commission. At the time of the Congress K. D. Budzhiashvili had been a Tiflis factory director who did not meet his norm.<sup>32/</sup>

On the State side Ketskhoveli was appointed Chairman of the Council of Ministers, replacing Chkhubianishvili, who was demoted to the more ceremonial position of Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, displacing V. B. Gogua. Gogua was in turn exiled from politics as the

manager of the "Gruzugol" coal combine. Lelashvili was replaced as chairman of the Supreme Soviet by G. D. Dzhavakhishvili, Egnatashvili as Secretary of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet by Nina Aleksandrovna Dzhavakhishvili.

What did the dismissed officials have in common? Conquest had shown that the Georgian purges have to be understood not in terms of two groups, but of three: Beria's clients, Charkviani's, and the new Stalin purge group.<sup>33/</sup> Conquest identifies Chkhubianishvili and Gogua as members of Charkviani's clientele. One should add the others demoted in April-May 1952: Lelashvili, Kvirkveli and Egnatashvili. Amplifying Conquest's account somewhat, we can say that the following happened in Georgia in 1951-52. First Stalin arrayed Charkviani's clientele and Mgeladze's against Beria's (or Baramiya's and Zodelava's). At this stage both Charkviani and Mgeladze were allowed to fulfill their obligations as patrons by promoting members of their clienteles. Mgeladze promoted the Balavadzes, Getiya and Kandelaki, the new Komsomol First Secretary; Charkviani promoted Lelashvili, Kvirkveli and some local figures (Kvlividze in Tiflis, Kokaya in the Kutaisi obkom, etc.) In the second stage (April-May 1952) Charkviani's clients were displaced in favor of the appointees of Mgeladze; these included both his clients and people brought up from the bottom.

There was one more important political change in Stalin's life time, the dismissal of Rukhadze, the Minister of State Security who had framed the alleged Mingrelian nationalists, in July 1952. The result of these changes was a Georgia ruled, at the end of Stalin's life, by an extraordinarily tight group of clients and relatives. Mgeladze was First Secretary; his clients Kandelaki and Getiya ran the Komsomol and the Abkhaz obkom. The

and V.K. Balavadze, Mgeladze's brothers M. K. Balavadze, clients, were First Secretaries of the Kutaisi obkom and the Tiflis gorkom respectively; V. K. Balavadze had earlier been placed by Mgeladze in the vital Party Organs Department of the Georgian CC. Another pair of brothers, K. D. and V. D. Budzhiashvili, were respectively Secretary of the Tiflis obkom and of the CC. Givi Dmitrievich Dzhavakhishvili was Chairman of the Tiflis Ispolkom and Chairman of the Supreme Soviet, Nina Aleksandrovna Dzhavakhishvili Secretary of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet. The only members of the top group who were outsiders in any sense were Tskhovrebashvili, promoted to Second Secretary at the time when Mgeladze and Charkviani made their first move, and Ketskhoveli, who owed his exalted position as Chairman of the Council of Ministers to Mgeladze.

In April 1953, after the death of Stalin, Beria restored his fortunes nationally and turned to repairing them in Georgia as well. All of Mgeladze's CC Bureau members were evicted except Kochlamazashvili, the trade union Chairman, a survivor of the nineteen-thirties; Bakradze, a surviving Beria supporter now promoted to Chairman of the Council of Ministers; Dzhavakhishvili, dropped from the Tiflis Ispolkom and the Chairmanship of the Supreme Soviet and appointed one of two First Deputy chairmen of the Council of Ministers, and Tskhovrebashvili, substantially demoted to Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet. All of Mgeladze's obkom First Secretaries also fell into disgrace. Beria's new Bureau was dominated by his clients. In addition to Bakradze, who had survived the earlier purges, these clients consisted of those purged in 1951-52 (Zodelava, Baramiya, and Romelashvili, the new Second Secretary), of "retired" officials from the thirties and forties

(Mirtskhulava, the new First Secretary, and G. F. Sturua) and of men imported from the police (Dekanozov and Mamulov). In the local Party organs as well, Beria clients who had been purged earlier now returned.

With Beria's arrest at the end of June 1953<sup>there</sup> began a further purge that evicted all of Beria's clients (by February 1954). An entirely new leadership was created, in large measure from outside Georgia. Of the figures whose careers we have followed only G. D. Dzhavakhishvili continued in place; Lelashvili returned in the unimportant position of trade union head.

#### IV.

From the available data on Georgia it should be possible to address a wide range of questions about the nature of clientelism in this system. In the space available here we can consider only a few particularly central questions. First, what does this evidence tell us about the importance of clientelism in the Stalinist political system? Looking at the whole pyramid of the Party-State bureaucracy in Georgia, and at the national pyramid of which this is a part, we need to measure the extent of clientelism on two dimensions: (a) the "vertical" extent of clientelism, that is, the range of levels in the hierarchy, from Stalin to the collective-farm chairman, where one finds officials active as patrons or clients, and (b) the "horizontal" extent of clientelism at each level, that is, how many of the office-holders at that level function as patrons or clients (in contrast to other political roles) and are promoted or demoted in accord with the fortunes of their clienteles.

To begin with (a), one sees no evidence that by this period Stalin engaged in activity as a patron, unless to a minor degree with members of his personal staff (Poskrebyshev, Malenkov earlier). This is understandable: the most important mechanism of Stalinist clientelism is promotion to higher office, and Stalin cannot promote his immediate subordinates (the sorathniki or companions-in-arms: Beria, Malenkov, Khrushchev, etc.) to his own office. This seems to be a major difference between Stalinist clientelism and other political systems where the official hierarchy was equivalent to a structure of clienteles, such as the emirates of the pre-colonial Fulani Empire in northern Nigeria. In these cases the best evidence suggests the ruler did function as a patron.<sup>34/</sup> There remained autonomous centers of power (rival

dynasties of claimants to the throne, for example) with which the ruler was struggling, and the advancement of his clients was one of the means of struggle. Stalin had eliminated these rival enters.

It is at the level just below Stalin that clientelism begins in earnest. Of the eleven full members of Stalin's Politburo (1949-52) three or four were the heads of major national clienteles: Malenkov, Beria, Khrushchev, and perhaps Bulganin. Zhdanov before his death fell in the same category. By a notable coincidence, these are also the most important Politburo members politically, whether as measured by their participation in administration (in Stalin's four-man dinner group of 1951-52) or in the ability to compete for Stalin's succession after his death. It is difficult to find an appropriate expression to register the very significant difference between this class of Politburo members and the rest; perhaps the distinction could be captured by saying that the possessors of large clienteles had political power, whereas other important lieutenants of Stalin (Molotov, Kaganovich, etc.) had only authority. Such a formulation would surely be somewhat too simple. But it could be supported by the fact that Stalin did not subject any of the heads of large clienteles to the arbitrary arrest of their wives or relatives (as he did Kalinin, Molotov, Mikoyan, and Poskrebyshev) or to sudden or whimsical exclusion from Politburo work (as he did Molotov, Mikoyan, Andreyev and Voroshilov). Rather, when Stalin wished to remove Beria from the leadership he purged his clienteles (in Eastern Europe, in the police, and in Transcaucasia) in a gradual, step by step process that began in November 1951 and was not finished when Stalin died fifteen months later. This gradual purge is a very strange Stalinist technique of rule. Machiavelli mocks one of the Roman Emperors who frequently remarked

to his own bodyguard that he intended to have him killed, eventually provoking a preemptive response; but Stalin would appear to have done virtually the same thing with Beria, continuing to dine with him nightly while openly preparing, in the Doctor-Affair and earlier, the show-trial charges on which Beria would be executed.<sup>35/</sup>

Two explanations of this gradual purge technique suggest themselves, both related to clientelism. It may have been that Stalin considered it imprudent to dismiss Beria by fiat, as he did with ~~other lieutenants~~. This would imply, even more strongly than the foregoing, that clienteles do confer power in the Stalin system. The alternative explanation of Stalin's gradual purge would be that patron-client relationships are such an important mechanism for the coordination of government that it would produce widespread disorganization in administration to suddenly remove the direction that comes from Beria down through his patron-client chains.

In any case, there can be no doubt that Stalin's most important lieutenants were major patrons, and this makes clear an important distinction between clientelism in Stalin's Russia and in other modern political systems where it is important. In the Philippines or Italy the members of the government are beholden to patrons, or even chosen by them, but to a substantial extent in Stalin's Russia the government consists of patrons. In this sense the Soviet <sup>v</sup>government was a purer patron-client system than we find elsewhere in the modern world. This might imply that clientele interests would be represented at the top in a less mediated form than in other political systems.

If we are right in hypothesizing the existence of patron-client links

between Baramiya and Mingrelian or Adzharian raikom secretaries, a linked series of clienteles extended from Beria in Moscow to the rural raion in a Union Republic. Many clientelist systems display this pattern of subclienteles, where a patron is himself the client of someone higher. We know now that Brezhnev and Podgorny had their own clients while they were clients of Khrushchev in the forties. Of course, not all clienteles extended from Stalin's lieutenants to the raikom level. The clienteles of Charkviani and Mgeladze were confined to the Georgian SSR.

If clienteles start with Stalin's companions-in-arms, just how low do they go? This question is difficult to answer, because of the existence of subclienteles and the way they merge into family circles at the bottom. In Georgia a client was considered more tightly bound to his patron when he held a higher office, which makes it difficult to assemble the evidence. In the case of Mgeladze clients did go as low in the hierarchy as R. K. Tsulukidze, who was Director of the L. P. Beria Pedagogical Institute at Sukhumi in Abkhazia, later promoted by Mgeladze to Secretary (for ideology) of the Kutaisi obkom. There were certain groups, particularly at the bottom of society, that probably participated in family circle relations but not in strict patron-client relationships of the political kind we have just been discussing. Given the importance of promotion as a resource exchanged in Soviet patron-client relationships, those who are not eligible for promotion are less likely to form such relationships. Patrons are also likely to be less interested in possible clients who could not be promoted to a more powerful position. In practice this leaves out ordinary workers, almost everyone on collective farms (including their Chairmen),



Russians, Armenians and Muslims (Azeris, Abkhazian Muslims and Lazes, except for some positions of formal authority in their own Republics). These groups seem to have existed largely outside the Georgian clientelist system; perhaps the same would be true of women, with a few important exceptions.

Let us turn to the "horizontal" extent of clientage in the system, that is, the number of the political actors at a given level who are members of clienteles. At the level of the Georgian Central Committee some evidence is provided by the changes from the 1949 to the 1952 Committees. The 1949 CC had 75 full members and 36 candidates. Of the full members only 33 remained in 1952; three were demoted to candidate status. Of the candidates 8 were promoted, 7 kept, 18 dropped. At these higher levels removals seem to have been chiefly of those who belonged to the wrong clienteles, so this indicates something about their presence in the CC. A more precise determination can be made about the extent to which members of the Bureau of the CC were understood primarily as members of clienteles. 43 people served in the Bureau at some time between January 1949 and February 1954. During this time there were five periods marked by the dominance of different leaders in determining the promotion or demotion of Bureau members. That is, appointments were determined largely by: (1) Charkviani and Beria, January 1949-November 1951; (2) Charkviani and Mgeladze, November 1951-April 1952; (3) Mgeladze, April 1952-April 1953; (4) Beria, April-July 1953; (5) Malenkov and Khrushchev, July 1953-February 1954. By studying the continuity of personnel in these five different periods, we can establish the extent to which tenure of office

was based on clientage links to the patrons dominant at the time. The test will be in how many different periods Bureau members were able to maintain themselves without demotion to a lower office than they originally held. The result is as follows:

TABLE I

Number of Distinct Appointment-Determining Periods in Which Bureau Members Maintained or Bettered their Rank

One Period	Two Periods	Three Periods	Four Periods	Five Periods
Topuridze (d. 1951)	Charkviani	Ketskhoveli	Bakradze	
Shaduri	Baramiya	Kochlamazashvili	Tskhovrebashvili	
Zambakhidze	Chkhubianishvili	Lelashvili		
Kvirkveliya	Ishkhanov			
V. D. Budzhiashvili	Gogua			
Melkadze	M. K. Balavadze			
K. D. Budzhiashvili	Rukhadze			
Getiya	Tsimakuridze			
V. K. Balavadze	Mgeladze			
Kundelaki	Dzhavakhishvili			
Mirtskhulava				
Romelashvili				
Chkhikvadze				
Zodelava				
Dekanozov				
Mamulov				
G. F. Sturua				
Yefimov				
Mzhavanadze				
Chubinidze				
Inauri				
Kuchava				
Antonov				
Gotsiridze				
Georgadze				
Guniya				
Mchedlishvili				
Sekhiashvili				
Dzhanelidze				
29	10	3	2	0

(Note: This table does not adequately test the factional affiliation, if any, of those appointed after the fall of Beria, since it does not in many cases extend to the period of their dismissal).

And this is not as extreme a test as dependence on a single patron, since two patrons were active in making appointments during three of the five periods considered. The conclusion to be drawn is that factional affiliation strongly predominated over technical ability in determining tenure of office. And, in this case, factional affiliation meant being a client of a certain patron. Hardly any high officials were able to maintain themselves in the same office, or to advance, without the protection of their patrons. Of the 43 officials there are two whose careers give them the appearance of neutrals or of technicians: Tskhovrebashvili, a CC Secretary through four of these five periods, and Kochlamazashvili, the trade union head. (Bakradze, an apparently similar case, was a clear partisan of Beria, and Conquest is probably right in suggesting that Mgeladze would soon have dismissed him.) Even these two men were demoted by Beria in 1953.

The notion of a political system in which tenure of office is dependent not on "merit" but on factional affiliation tends to make us uneasy. But it is characteristic of many political orders. When the British conquered northern Nigeria they disrupted the local political system by objecting to the dismissal, when the rulers changed, of officials whose performance in office had been faultless. They thus showed their incomprehension of the highly partisan political system with which the Hausa-Fulani were completely at ease. The anthropologist M. G. Smith had the following exchange with a Nigerian informant:

'Why did [The Emir of Zaria] Sambo (1881-90) dismiss the Turaki Karami Dan Manga from office?'

'Ap! aren't they enemies? When you become king, you appoint your own people, dismiss your opponents, appoint your supporters.'

'Yes, but what was his offence?'

'Ap! Is there any need for offence? When you become king, offence is not necessary. You simply dismiss your opponents, and appoint your supporters. That is why there are so many titles.'<sup>36/</sup>

The Nigerian's responses would, I believe, have seemed quite reasonable to Georgian politicians of the late Stalin period.

Of course, this aspect of politics is not unknown in the West. The public did not lose the services of Kennedy, Brown, Bush, Connally, Baker, Humphrey, Jackson, Udall, Muskie, Rockefeller, and McGovern, for example, because they lacked administrative ability, but because they belonged on the losing side in a political or "factional" conflict. What the case of Soviet Georgia suggests is that this partisan aspect of political life can assume vastly greater importance in a modern society than we are accustomed to.

There were limitations on the extent to which clientage determined tenure of office. Within the Party apparatus clients of a losing patron suffered political ruin -- when they were not arrested. In the State apparatus, on the other hand, clients of a losing patron could expect demotion but not ouster from the official world. They could expect to be placed in a job with comfortable perquisites and real policy responsibility, although one far less important than they had occupied. It seems appropriate to call the situation of Party officials "unlimited clientage", that of State officials "limited clientage." This difference may help to explain the fact that Bakradze, Beria's most important client in the Council of Ministers, was not ousted by Stalin and Mgeladze.

The preceding discussion will help us to approach another group of

related questions. How stable is the composition of clienteles and how tightly are their members bound to them? To restate the last question, how loyal are clients to their patrons?

A number of careful observers of modern clientelist systems concur in the judgement that "the shifting of individual allegiance from one leader to another tends to be fairly common." <sup>37/</sup>

Turning to the specific Soviet context, the judgement of Robert Conquest deserves particular respect. Conquest describes the typical member of the Georgian Bureau as "seeking to secure himself (at least in many cases) by a system of reinsurances and ambiguity of position." On the national scene, Conquest remarks, "...allegiances and alliances change. This sort of Realpolitik applies even more to secondary figures, most of whom are practically compelled to live in a world of complicated reinsurances." <sup>38/</sup>

We could thus expect the Georgian clientele to be highly unstable, with many defections, and its borders rather indefinite. These expectations are intuitively plausible. How do they measure up against the evidence? If we look for betrayals of patrons or clients, we at first see a Byzantine profusion of treachery. Beria presided over the purge of his clients in 1952. Bakradze slandered Beria on his fall and served cheerfully in Mgeladze's government. But the Stalin system is one in which it is taken for granted that people have to say and do many things simply out of coercion; an official's visible behavior is not freely chosen. Beria did not punish Bakradze for his first "betrayal," but rather promoted him to Chairman of the Council of Ministers. In these circumstances it is hard to know what constitutes a real change of side, one that is politically meaningful rather

than merely apparent. I would suggest that the signs of such a change of side would be to take the lead in persecuting the members of one's former clientele or accept a promotion (a reward) or continuity in one's prior position from the victorious side. Among the 43 Bureau members only two such cases appear. Ketskhoveli was probably a client of Charkviani, but was made Chairman of the Council of Ministers by Mgeladze when Charkviani was humbled in April 1952. Ketskhoveli took the place of his fellow clientele member Chkhubianishvili. The other case is Rukhadze, who must have had a double subordination to Beria as a Georgian official and as an employee of the organs of state security. Rukhadze then took the lead in trumping up the Mingrelian conspiracy against Beria's other clients. Rukhadze was, however, already discarded by Mgeladze in July 1952.

These two "traitors" should be added to the two "neutrals" or "technicians" Tskhovrebashvili and Kochlamazashvili in compiling the roster of those among the 43 Bureau members who escaped the limits of clientele affiliation.<sup>39/</sup>

These facts suggest that clienteles in Georgia were not unstable but highly stable. Neither the fact that Beria had no resources with which to reward his clients for over a year nor the prospect of the soul-destroying terror visited by Stalinism on political outcasts disrupted Beria's patron-client network in any politically visible way. We could say that in the Georgian clientelist system there was a high degree of functional loyalty of clients to patrons. It should be called functional loyalty because we cannot know what degree of emotional loyalty may have existed. Beria's clients may have betrayed him in their hearts, but if there was no advantage to be gained by doing so their disloyalty would never become a political fact. In fact few politicians managed to change sides to

their benefit. Those who did serve other patrons do not seem to have come to this in the fluid play of court intrigue; rather they can be spotted beforehand as members of categories considered less obligated to their patrons (State officials and those who had thusfar received no high office from their patrons).

In a system where clientage was so important informal rules may have grown up, as in other such systems, discouraging disloyalty to patrons. Conquest quotes an amusing exchange that took place at the December 1958 plenum of the CC of the CPSU:

Z.T. Serdyuk:....the political bankruptcy of the anti-Party group of Malenkov, Kaganovich, Molotov, Bulganin and Shepilov.

N.S. Khrushchev: And Shepilov who joined them.

Z.T. Serdyuk: It becomes very long like that. 40

Here Khrushchev insists on the use of the standard formula for describing Shepilov, a former follower who had joined his opponents. The point is that if it is bad to be a member of the anti-Party group, it is even worse to betray your patron; Khrushchev wants everyone to be reminded of the impropriety of such behavior.

Stalinist clientalism thus takes a form that is more "feudal" or "traditional," in the stability and loyalties of its clienteles, <sup>than</sup> that of many contemporary states where clientelism is important. What accounts for this difference? We can start from the fact that, at the upper levels we have been discussing, the main resource Georgian clients want from their patrons is appointment to public



At some risk of oversimplifying, this suggests that what the patrons seek from clients is less control of independent resources than control of the powers of the offices to which they are appointed. This would be a major difference between clientelism in the Stalin system and most traditional clientelistic systems (West African monarchy is a partial exception). In any case, lack of interest in tapping resources that the clients command personally will lay the basis for the relatively stable and loyal clienteles we have described.

office. If the system is to work -- if clients are to remain clients -- they must believe they will be rewarded. But there are very few high offices available in Georgia. This resource is much less abundant than the government handouts, petty favors and "pull" that patrons most typically provide for their clients in other modern clientelist systems. If offices are to be made available to clients, they must be taken away from the clients of others. It is this crucial fact that sets up the standard practice by which the victor's clients are promoted and the loser's clients demoted, a practice that maintains the integrity of the clienteles. A patron would only rarely have the motive to reward a change of sides at the expense of his own clients. Knowing this, a client would rarely change sides in the hope of such a reward.

In other office-based clientelistic systems, such as those of West African monarchies, the clienteles also seem to have been relatively stable and there was relatively little changing of sides.

Patrons in most modern clientelistic systems have a motive to tempt other clients to change sides: the desire to tap resources independent of the government (votes, local networks, etc.). While there could not be as many such resources in Stalin's Russia, they might still be a powerful motive in appointment. We can test the importance of this factor by observing whether Georgian patrons made appointments from the top or the bottom of the official hierarchy. Appointments from the top, from those currently holding high office, maximize access to any resources (including sub-clienteles) these officials control. Appointments from the bottom maximize commitment to the patron; the client is totally dependent on the patron and owes everything to him. When we look back at the personnel changes of 1949-53, we see both kinds of appointment, but a surprising number from very low positions or from retired officials. Charkviani appointed Kvirkveliya, Mgeladze the Budzhiashvilis and Melkadze, Beria Mirtskhulava, G.F. Sturua and N. Sturua.

## FOOTNOTES

1/ For Beria's career see Bolshaya Sovetskaya entsiklopedia, Second Edition, s.v., and Thaddeus Wittlin's overly imaginative biography.

2/ Zarya vostoka 29 March 1949. For greetings to Beria see, e.g., Zarya vostoka, Jan. 30, 1949, p. 2; 30 April 1949, p. 1; 1 May 1949, p. 1; 27 August 1952, p. 3; 12 Sept. 1952, p. 3; 5 September 1952, p. 2; 23 August 1952, p. 3.

3/ "Plenum of the Tiflis City Committee of the CP (b) of Georgia," Zarya vostoka, 14 April 1949, p. 2.

4/ Mordechai Altshuler, "Georgia Jewish Culture Under the Soviet Regime," Soviet Jewish Affairs, Vol. V, no. 2 (1975), pp. 32-37.

5/ P. M. Holt, The Mahdist State in the Sudan, Second Edition, (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1970), p. 13. For Ethiopia in the XIX century see R. H. Kofi Darkwah, Shewa, Menelik and the Ethiopian Empire 1831-1889, (London: Heinemann, 1975), p. 138. For the Ottoman Empire under Abdul Hamid II see Harold Gooch and G. P. Temperley, British Documents on the Origins of the War, 1898-1914, (London: His Majesty's Stationary Office, 1924-) Vol. VI, pp. 23-24; for the Ottoman province of Hungary in the XV-XVI centuries see Encyclopedia of Islam, Second Edition, s.v. "BudIn."

6/ I. V. Stalin, Sochineniya, ed. Robert H. McNeal, (Stanford: The Hoover Institution, 1967), Vol. III (XIV), pp. 230-231.

7/ Zarya Vostoka, April 14, 1952, p. 2.

8/ A. I. Mgeladze, "Report of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Georgia," Zarya vostoka, September 16, 1952, p. 3.

9/ N. Novitskii, "Select and Educate Cadres Correctly," Zarya vostoka, 12 May 1952, p. 2.

10/ See Zarya vostoka 30 April 1952, p. 1; 5 September, p. 2; 7 September, p. 2; 17 September, p. 1.

11/ For an introduction to the literature on this subject see Steffen Schmidt, James C. Scott, Carl Landé and Laura Guasti, eds., Friends, Followers and Factions: A Reader in Political Clientelism, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978).

12/ On patron-client relationships in contemporary Soviet politics and their effect on policy outcomes see Charles H. Fairbanks, Jr., "The Soviet Bureaucratic Process," a study prepared for the Office of the Secretary of Defense (Net Assessment), September 1979, pp. 106-121.

13/ New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1967.

14/ See, e.g., Jerry Hough, The Soviet Prefects: The Local Party Organs in Industrial Decision-Making (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1969), pp. 174-177 and passim; ibid., The Soviet Union and Social Science Theory (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1977), p. 64; Ibid., How the Soviet Union Is Governed, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1979), pp. 241, 536-543.

15/ Hough, The Soviet Union and Social Science Theory, pp. 119; cf pp. 22-24, 33, 43-36, 69-70.

16/ N. Serzhahtov, "Friendly Circle," Izvestia, Feb. 6, 1953, p. 2.

17/ Carl M. Landé, "Networks and Groups in Southeast Asia: Some Observations on the Group Theory of Politics," American Political Science Review, Vol. 62, no. 1 (1973), pp. 104, 116.

18/ Hough, The Soviet Prefects, p. 177; but Hough approaches the interpretation given here on pp. 276-77. Compare How the Soviet Union is Governed, p. 541.

19/ Landé, "Networks and Groups," p. 122.

20/ Michael Tatu, Power in the Kremlin: From Khrushchev to Kosygin, translated by Helen Katel, (New York: Viking Compass Books, 1970), p. 465.

21/ Victor Kravchenko, I Chose Freedom, (London: Robert Hale, 1947), p. 276. Kravchenko was, I believe, the highest ranking figure from the Soviet Ministerial bureaucracy to defect.

22/ Phillip Stewart, Political Power in the Soviet Union, paperback ed., p. 171.

23/ Vladimir Semenoff, Raspiata (The Reckoning): His Diary During The Blockade of Port Arthur and the Voyage of Admiral Rojestvensky's Fleet, trans. by L.A.B., (London: John Murray, 1910), pp. 51-52.

24/ Unless otherwise noted, the facts in this section are derived from personnel information in Zarya vostoka and from Conquest's account.

25/ See Zarya vostoka, 14 January 1952, p. 2.

26/ See the text of the announcement in Conquest, Power and Policy, p. 139.

27/ Khrushchev's Secret Speech at the XX Congress, quoted in Conquest, Power and Policy, p.435.

28/ N. Movitskii, "Select and Educate Cadres Correctly," Zarya vostoka, 12 May 1953, p. 2.

29/ Zarya vostoka, September 16, 1952.

30/ P. Shurov and M. Rusieshvili, "Boldly and Decidedly Expose and Eliminate Inadequacies," Zarya vostoka, May 27, 1953, p. 2.

31/ "Composition of the Central Committee...", Zarya vostoka, 30 January 1949, p. 2.

32/ Zarya vostoka, 16 December 1948, p. 2 (cf. 28 November 1948, p. 1.).

33/ Power and Policy, pp. 150-151.

34/ M. G. Smith, Government in Zazzau 1800-1950, (London : Oxford University Press, 1960), pp. 40, 245.

35/ See Charles H. Fairbanks, Jr., "National Cadres as a Force in the Soviet System: The Evidence of Beria's Career, 1949-53" in Jeremy Azrael, ed., Soviet Nationality Problems and Practices, (New York: Praeger, 1978).

36/ Smith, Government in Zazzau, p. 105; for the British, see pp. 208-209, 228. Ap is a Hausa exclamation expressing astonished surprise.

37/ Landé, "Networks and Groups," p. 125. See also William Foltz, "Social Structure and Political Behavior of Senegalese Elites" in Schmidt, Guasti, Landé and Scott, Friends, p. 246; James C. Scott, "Patron-Client Politics and Political Change in Southeast Asia" in Ibid., pp. 130, 138; Susan Kaufman Purcell and John F. H. Purcell, "State and Society in Mexico: Must a Stable Polity be Institutionalized?", World Politics, January 1980, pp.207-209.

38/ Conquest, Power and Policy, pp. 135, 72 (cf. p. 152).

39/ The Russian generals Yefimov and Antonov, who were added to the Bureau after Beria's fall, should be added to the "neutrals", although they did not properly belong to the Georgian political system. There may have been others among the diverse elements brought in after Beria that our methods have not enabled us to distinguish.

40/ Conquest, Power and Policy, p. 66; cf. p. 13.