will draw most benefit from its brief survey of Russian theology and the biographical information about Afanasev.

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Organizations have a life of their own, in the Soviet case largely independent of Lenin and Stalin. This is one of Don Rowney’s main arguments in this original study of the bureaucratic phenomenon across the divide of 1917. Bureaucracy is surely at the heart of the Soviet experience whether one wishes to speak of politics, economics, institutions or social history. Surprisingly to this date there have been few major studies of Soviet bureaucracy, apart from the pioneering works of T. Harry Rigby, Sheila Fitzpatrick, and N. Rosenfeldt that focussed on specific institutions. Rowney searches for both continuities and transformations in the transition from pre-revolutionary to early Soviet administration. In so doing he sets out a provocative thesis about the emergence of a “Soviet administrative state” that sheds much light on crucial social dynamics across the divide of 1917. He argues that bureaucracy under the Old Regime featured a mixture of landed noble and non-landowning (professional) elements. The professional non-landed types predominated in the drive to emancipate the peasantry and develop the other Great Reforms, but the high social status landed nobles still had much power as the revolution approached. A new kind of specialist emerged, however, at the turn of the century, non-landed, lower social order technicians and managers who claimed increasingly greater shares of power and influence in the course of the industrialization of the country on the eve of World War I. The revolution consisted of a social/bureaucratic transformation that swept away the landed generalist aristocratic officials and put firmly in the saddle (as a transitional elite) the middle and lower level technocrats and specialists. War Communism and NEP alike absorbed them all into an expanded bureaucratic socialist state. Revolution therefore meant, in addition to the victory of the proletariat, the triumph of the experts (in an occupational sense). It is important to remember, however, that the social origins of experts and white collar workers remained an open question. The revolution may thus be seen as a plebeian revolution that also embraced the technical intelligentsia, officialdom and white collar workers who are in a symbiotic relationship with early Soviet industrialization and modernization programs. For the technical plebeians, to build socialism was a natural agenda that furthered their own social and political power and gave them a legitimate place in the new proletarian society. It is this nexus that produces a new Soviet administrative state. It is to Rowney’s great credit (and perhaps the book’s greatest strength) that he recognizes the power of bureaucracy as a social force, one that transcends and helps to shape even the agendas of Lenin and Stalin.
There is an abstract quality to Rowney's work. This derives in part from his reliance on quantitative sources, *adres kalendary* and the like for the Tsarist period and various published Soviet statistical compilations for the post-1917 era. This leads to several problems. First, there is the lack of context. Politics and the deep social and cultural dimensions of the officials in question rarely appear, though it could be argued that the modernization or socialist state building agendas of the technical specialists constitute a form of ideology. Second, he tends to confuse or conflate social origin, social status and occupation, three very different things. Third, and this is particularly important for the Soviet period, Rowney relies too much on the categories of analysis served up by the official statisticians and academics of the 1920s. Thus he tends to view the emerging Soviet society in the terms sanctioned by the contemporary official discourse, which of course is a highly charged Party discourse meant to promote certain values and conceptions of society and create boundaries around those who were and were not acceptable to the new regime. Take the employees (*sluzhashcie*) for example. At one point he sees them as a "curious creation of the Soviet political mind," and "not a true social class but an employment category," who were pre-revolutionary minor functionaries and who held down posts in the 1920s eventually giving way to workers and peasants in the massive upward mobility of the Stalin revolution at the end of the decade. The *sluzhashchie* had a long and vital history as a social movement in the years 1905-17, and in fact they played a major role in the revolutions of 1905 and 1917 and in building the political and economic infrastructure that would become so important to Soviet power after October. Rowney views them as specialists by virtue of their education (p. 164), when in fact they were by and large plebeians themselves, people of minimal education who spent much of the early years of Soviet power trying to accommodate or fit into the new society so as not to lose the precious cover of proletarianism. They did constitute a social formation of considerable size and power. Was it a class? Probably not. But they were also something much more than a footnote. Rowney misses (p. 198) the fact that this social group replenished itself throughout the 1920s. It was not simply as he argues a large group, or pre-elite that persisted through 1917 to be overtaken in the late 20s when they were in their forties or fifties. Further, it is not at all clear, as he argues (p. 131), that blue collar workers during the 1920s welcomed the chance to become white collar *sluzhashcie*. Until the great change of 1929-31, this was not a welcome reward for factory workers who resisted such advancement. My data show that whole new youthful cadres from plebeian white collar backgrounds rushed to fill white collar positions in the early and mid twenties. The 1920s produced a new social power (via occupations in the expanding bureaucracies) for youth.

How does all this play out in the narrative (or practice). Rowney clearly shows how the early Soviet state (1917-19) opted for ministerial and technocratic bureaucracy. For the 1920s, he makes fine use of the available published statistical compendia to reveal numbers of holdovers, age differentiation and the impact of Party membership and "affirmative action" programs (*vyduzhение*). He very sagely observes (p. 169) that the peasants provided the social pool for most of the upward mobility (into