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Protest and Democracy in the Post-Socialist Rump States:

An Exercise in Comparative-Historical Sociology

Thijs Korsten

5935164

Supervisor

Dr. Ralph Sprenkels

Department of History and Art History

Utrecht University

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Figure 1 - 7 October 1998. Rally of workers and veterans of the city of Pereslavl, part of the rare occurrence of a nation-wide protest action by the trade unions. The slogans call for Yeltsin’s resignation (Abdullaev 1998).

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

"Thanks to the plan and clear vision, we managed to bring this people from dictatorship into democracy, without any bloodshed."

– Zoran Đinđić (2001)

"Russia has made its choice in favor of democracy. Fourteen years ago, independently, without any pressure from outside, it made that decision in the interests of itself and interests of its people — of its citizens. This is our final choice, and we have no way back."

– Vladimir Putin (2005)[1]

"For 14 weeks people have been protesting in Belgrade and other cities against the regime [of the ruling Progressive Party] and for a normal Serbia as part of the EU and for the hope for better Serbia. It is right for them to mark the anniversary of Djindjic's murder."

– Zoran Živković (2019)[2]

"The so-called liberal idea … has outlived its purpose. … It has come into conflict with the interests of the overwhelming majority of the population."

– Vladimir Putin (2019)[3]

The 1990s were marked by a belief in the passing of not only Marxism-Leninism, but of ideology as such. Humankind was reaching the Hegelian end-point of ideological development, the "end of history," Francis Fukuyama (1989) argued. But there were also other voices. Humankind faced a dangerous abyss, a conceptual vacuum which would breed dangerous alternatives to Leninism, Ken Jowitt (1991) suggested, as a corrective to liberals' optimism. In hindsight, about three decades later, we can establish that the post-socialist condition unfolded itself in much more complicated ways than many could predict. Between 1989 and 1992, the two primary socialist federations of Eastern Europe, Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union, dissolved. In both resultant rump states, Russia and Serbia, the 1990s turned out to be a troublesome decade marked by territorial, economic, political, constitutional, and broad-sweeping social crises.

Post-socialism began with two different starting points in Serbia and Russia. Boris Yeltsin, Russia's first post-socialist leader, rode to power on a wave of democratic social mobilisation, and embraced a return to the Western world of universality and civilisation. In 1991, he declared in Fukuyamaesque words: "The historical experience accumulated by the world community reaffirms that humane principles—freedom, property, legitimacy, and openness to the world—underlie progress" (Yeltsin 1991:32). In the same year, Milošević framed protesters against his rule as foreign agents, "who want to bring a puppet regime in to power, a regime that would take orders from elsewhere" (as quoted in Engelberg 1991). He would maintain this rhetoric throughout the decade, until his fall from power in 2000. Following the overthrow of Milošević, the Serbian regime celebrated the advent of liberal democracy. This is evident in the quote above from Zoran Đinđić, Serbia's first democratic prime minister. Yeltsin's successor Vladimir Putin seemed to embrace liberal democracy, too, but it soon turned out that his democratic discourse was just that – a malleable discourse, which the Putin regime slowly abandoned. As I will demonstrate in my research thesis, the Russian democratic social movement did not survive the crises of the 1990s; this is mirrored in Russia's regime transformation. Zoran Živković's words quoted above, finally, highlight the relevance of the present study. Social mobilisation led to a regime transformation towards democracy in Serbia

[1] U.S. Office of the Press Secretary (2005).

[2] Quoted by Zivanovic (2019).

[3] Quoted by Al Jazeera (2019).

in 2000, but in 2003 Serbia's first democratic prime minister, Zoran Đinđić, was assassinated. Today in 2019, Serbians are on the streets again to protest against the Vučić regime. Although my thesis will not stretch to the present day, it is crucial to see the connections with the present. Significantly, today's protests can be approached from two perspectives. Is democracy crumbling again in Serbia? Or, how is it that Serbians' have been going to the streets for months without significant outbreaks of violence, while protests in Russia since the last large wave in 2011–12 have been disunited, and have met with considerable repression? Although future developments cannot be predicted, I tentatively take the second perspective to illustrate the relevance of my historical analysis. Yet, at the same time, the instability of the present underscores another of the key underpinnings of my thesis: while the past matters, regime transformation remains a process without teleological finiteness.

After the fall of the Soviet Union, Russia's democratic experiment under Boris Yeltsin (Pres. 1991–99) seems to have failed, with the remaining federation under the authoritarian rule of Vladimir Putin (Pres. 2000–8, and 2012–present, PM 2008–12). Yugoslavia's transformation started with the authoritarian, socialist-turned-nationalist regime of Slobodan Milošević (Pres. 1989–2000), followed by national disintegration (the Yugoslav Wars), and eventually witnessed the peaceful overthrow of the Milošević regime (the Bulldozer Revolution, 2000) and a course towards a semi-consolidated democracy. How is it that the two "rump states" which remained after the fall of the multinational state-socialist federations, had such different post-socialist trajectories? Conversely, in what ways were the regime transformations of Serbia and Russia similar? In my thesis I will concentrate on a specific aspect of these regime transformations, namely how social movements interacted with these regimes. What did political protest look like in the post-socialist rump states, and what possible impacts did it have on regime transformation? Context will be crucial in my narrative – the context of the threefold post-socialist transformation from one-party state to competitive political systems, from state socialism to liberal capitalism, and from collapsing federation to nation-state. My research question is thus: How did social movement trajectories interact with post-socialist regime transformation in Serbia and Russia (the post-socialist rump states) between 1988 and 2004?

A few references to antecedent events aside, I begin my analysis in 1988. This year witnessed the rapid expansion and politicisation of social mobilisation in Russia as a result of the political openings of *perestroika* and *glasnost* (Fish 1991), which eventually would lead to the fall of the Soviet Union and the rise of the post-socialist Yeltsin regime. In Serbia, 1988 marked the beginning of the anti-bureaucratic revolution, a wave of protests which culminated in Milošević's establishment of a new regime, as Yugoslavia began to dissolve (Vladisavljević 2008). The end-point marks both the end of Vladimir Putin's first presidency, and the dissolution of the Serbian democratic social movement. After the decline of democratic mobilisation, Putin's rule further entrenched this legacy from the 1990s.[4] In Serbia, the primary social movement organisation *Otpor!* disappeared when, after a brief period of decline following its major successes in 2000, its last remaining members merged into the Democratic Party in 2004.

To analyse my central concept, social movement trajectories (SMTs), I make use of the classic social movement agenda (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2004), which is a synthesis of political process theory, resource mobilisation theory, and frame analysis. In doing so, I situate SMTs in the broader tradition of the study of contentious politics by scholars like Charles Tilly, Sidney Tarrow and others (McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 1996; Tilly 2001, 2006; Tarrow 2011; Tilly and Wood 2013; Tilly and Tarrow 2015). Thus, I aim to uncover relational mechanisms

[4] Occasional references will be made to later developments in Putin's Russia, since some of the policies which originated in the aftermath of the Yeltsin era only became visible, prominent and salient in later years.

and processes, which can be compared across movements. I use a comparative-historical methodology (Mahoney and Rueschemeyer 2003; Lange 2013; Ritter 2014) to trace these causal processes over time, while providing a condensed historical narrative.

The classic social movement approach consists of three key components. First, political opportunities and threats constitute the political context within which people evaluate whether it is worth mobilising. This relates to changes to five attributes of regimes: changes in (1) the multiplicity of independent centres of power in the regime; (2) the regime's institutional openness to new actors; (3) the stability or instability of current political alignments; (4) the availability of influential allies or supporters for challengers; and (5) the regime's capacity or propensity to repress or facilitate collective claim-making (McAdam 1996:27; Tilly and Tarrow 2015:59). Second, mobilising structures are the informal and formal vehicles for mobilisation (McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald 1996:3). This includes material and immaterial resources, social support bases, social movement organisations (SMOs), and informal social networks and settings. In my historical narrative, organisational dynamics will take centre stage with respect to this component. Third, framing processes are the developments in terms of a movement's meaning-making, in order to achieve collective action. I will zoom in on how movements evaluated the post-socialist regimes and articulated the need for change, in ways which would or would not resonate with their audiences.

Despite similarities in the post-socialist crises the Yeltsin and Milošević regimes faced, I claim that in Serbia the political opportunity structure, mobilising structures, and available cultural framings ultimately evolved more favourably to democratic social movement mobilisation than in Russia. This led to a convergence of labour mobilisation and the democratic movement, coalescing into a general anti-regime movement. Such convergence did not occur in Russia, where the democratic movement underwent co-optation and decline rather than expansion and persistence as in Serbia. In Russia, the troubled 1990s laid the foundations not for democracy but for a turn to increasingly authoritarian rule. In Serbia, the developments of the 1990s led to democratic regime transformation.[5] Yet, the classic social movement approach helps explain the differential impact of social movement trajectories on regime transformation in Serbia and Russia only in part. The particular historical context and post-socialist legacies of both regimes, as well as their hybrid nature need to be taken into account (though not deterministically). Both post-socialist Serbia and Russia combined elements from both democratic and authoritarian systems; formal democratic procedures allowed for political competition, but the playing field was skewed heavily in favour of incumbent elites. If we apply the classic social movement approach to post-socialist hybrid regimes, political opportunity structure ultimately takes precedence over mobilising structures and framing processes. This can be expected on the basis of two factors: (a) the stability of hybrid regimes depends to a large degree on the maintenance of elite coalitions, in order to avoid linkages between counter-elites and dissatisfied social groups (see Ekman 2009); and (2) the absence of a well-developed autonomous sphere after the fall of state socialism meant that the organising and framing of collective action independent of the power, resources, and organisations of elites was near-impossible.[6] Ultimately, the post-socialist "management" (see Robertson 2011) of key elite

[5] As suggested above, contemporary protest waves in Serbia demonstrate, on the one hand, that democracy is not a fixed, teleological outcome and that regime transformation is thus an ongoing, multidirectional process, and, on the other hand, that such regime transformation can still be relatively openly contested in Serbia without highly repressive regime responses, as in Russia.

[6] Especially since in both cases in question, *nomenklatura* elites from socialist remained in power after the fall of state socialism – to a larger degree in Serbia than in Russia – together with selected new elite groupings. This stands in contrast with many cases in Central-Eastern Europe, where the fall of state socialism was much more

alignments and their linkages to social groups was more successful in Russia than in Serbia, so that the former evaded regime transformation in the face of social mobilisation where the latter did not. However, in the end, small differences in the second factor (2) also mattered: historical legacies explain why there was ultimately somewhat more space for independent social organisation in Serbia than in Russia, and why the Serbian regime was more vulnerable to it. Finally, once social mobilisation was possible, its success was in part dependent on the forging of culturally resonant collective action frames. In Serbia, social forces were united by "polysemic" frames with multiple meanings for multiple audiences. In Russia, the principal challengers to the regime, a neo-communist counter-elite, failed to make such tactical use of the ideological confusion and ambiguity of post-socialism to instigate mass mobilisation.

This thesis is structured as follows. In Chapter 2 I elaborate on my analytical framework and comparative-historical methodology. In Chapter 3 I focus on political opportunity structure. Elite-movement interactions will stand out as particularly important. In Chapter 4 I analyse the organisational dynamics and structures of the SMOs, their resources and social support bases, and the presence or absence of convergence between democratic and labour mobilisation. In Chapter 5 I look at framing processes, particularly how the movements interacted with their post-socialist discursive environment. I show how the Serbian democratic movement forged polysemic frames against Milošević, while the framing of neo-communist challengers to Yeltsin was burdened by the Soviet past. In Chapter 6 I conclude and relate my findings to the larger subject of post-socialist regime transformation.

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of a rupture, due to the power of extra-system democratic elites and their social support bases (e.g. in Poland and Czechoslovakia).

CHAPTER 2: THEORY AND METHODOLOGY

Theoretical perspective and concepts

My comparative analysis will be informed primarily by the historical sociology of contentious politics and social movements. Based on this theoretical tradition I will here briefly define my key conceptual tools – that is, social movement trajectories (SMTs), and regime transformation. A social movement is defined by Charles Tilly and his collaborators on the basis of four components:

> a sustained campaign of claim making, using repeated performances that advertise the claim, based on organizations, networks, traditions, and solidarities that sustain these activities … Social movements combine (1) sustained campaigns of claim making; (2) an array of public performances including marches, rallies, demonstrations, creation of specialized associations, public meetings, public statements, petitions, letter writing, and lobbying; (3) repeated public displays of worthiness, unity, numbers, and commitment [WUNC] by such means as wearing colors, marching in disciplined ranks, sporting badges that advertise the cause, displaying signs, chanting slogans, and picketing public buildings. They draw on (4) the organizations, networks, traditions, and solidarities that sustain these activities—social movement bases. (Tilly and Tarrow 2015:11; see also Tilly and Wood 2013:4-5).

This definition is my starting point for the historical analysis of social movements over time. However, to enhance the explanatory power of the historical narrative, ample attention will also be paid to protest waves which fail to spur sustained claim-making campaigns, or even to the sheer absence of social movement activity. Thus, my analysis of SMTs will include the lead-ups to, and aftermaths of, fully-fledged movements.[7]

Social movements and the organisations comprising them (social movement organisations, SMOs) are far from static. Charles Tilly has pointed to a number of crucial historically changing aspects. First, social movements are not “solo performances” but “interactive campaigns” (Tilly and Wood 2013:12). That is, there is a continuous interaction between movements’ claimants, the objects of their claims, and third parties such as allies, various social groups and categories, state authorities, and formal institutions. Second, the “relative salience of program, identity, and standing claims varies significantly among social movements, among claimants within movements, and among phases of movements” (2013:13). Third, social movements develop in relation to larger societal and political processes, the prime example of which is democratisation (also in the context of my comparative analysis). Fourth, “modelling, communication, and collaboration” lead to the spreading of social movements across social and geographical space (2013:14). Finally, as political environments change, movements interact with their social context and adapt incrementally, and participants communicate, the “forms, personnel and claims of social movements” (2013:14) change, too.

With this historical perspective in mind, it makes sense to define a social movement trajectory (SMT), as *the evolution of a social movement in terms of (1) expansion, (2) transformation, and (3) contraction, in interaction with its social and political environment* (Oliver and Myers 2003; Koopmans 2007; Perez 2018). Moving beyond early literature on protest cycles (Tarrow 1994/2011; Minkoff 1997), the term social movement trajectory suggests that scholars move beyond cyclical or parabolical models, merely reversing or tweaking the literature on movement emergence.[8] An adequate approach to SMTs puts

[7] See Tilly and Tarrow’s (2015:148-49) stance on the distinction between social movements and contentious politics.

[8] Tarrow (1989) originally defined a protest cycle as the diffusion of protest to multiple sectors of society, and subsequently becoming highly organised and used as an instrument of contentious politics. Later, he similarly

movements in temporal and spatial context, paying ample attention to mechanisms and processes specific to their evolution and relation to other forms of claim-making in society (Koopmans 2007). These mechanisms and processes include, amongst others, movement mobilisation and demobilisation, political opportunity shifts, contentious innovation, repression, competitive and counter-mobilisation, radicalisation, and co-optation and institutionalisation (McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly 2004; Koopmans 2007; Perez 2018). Furthermore, given the "radical unpredictability of contentious interactions during intense protest waves" (Koopmans 2007:29), narratives of SMTs must take seriously contingency and path dependence (Koopmans 2007:32-34; Della Porta 2018; Tilly 2006; see also Mahoney and Snyder 1999; Mahoney 2000; Ermakoff 2015).

As mentioned, a SMT must be analysed not in isolation but in interaction with a regime and possible other opponent social actors. A regime is defined as the "regular relations among governments, established political actors, challengers, and outside political actors, including other governments" (Tilly and Tarrow 2015:240). In my thesis, I will draw from Tilly's biaxial model of regime space, in which a regime is defined in terms of governmental capacity and democracy (Tilly 2006:25-29). Governmental capacity is the "degree to which governmental actions affect distributions of populations, activities, and resources within the government's jurisdiction, relative to some standard of quality and efficiency" (Tilly 2006:21). Democracy is defined by Tilly (2006:21) as the "extent to which persons subject to the government's authority have broad, equal rights to influence governmental affairs and to receive protection from arbitrary governmental action," or, in short, "protected consultation." Regime transformation is *the movement of a regime within this biaxial regime space – in other words, changes in levels of capacity and democracy* (see Figure 2).

Both regimes under scrutiny in this thesis constituted hybrid regimes. Hybrid regimes take up a peculiar position in the model of regime space, standing in between democracy and authoritarianism. Such regimes fall in neither the zone of authoritarianism nor that of democratic citizenship (see Figure 3). Hybrid regimes can often be equated with cases of competitive or electoral authoritarianism. Elected incumbents will use their position of power to skew the playing field of nominally democratic institutions to maintain it (Levitsky and Way 2002). Put simply, "authoritarian control coexists with legally sanctioned, if limited, competition for political office" (Robertson 2011:5). Political protest is overall a normal political strategy in democracies, and a highly dangerous and repressed activity in closed autocracies. Protest in hybrid regimes reflects this very hybridity, displaying a combination of the direct, spontaneous and confrontational protest repertoires typical to authoritarian contexts, and the routinised and normalised protest politics of democracies. Because of their competitive element, hybrids do provide opportunities for contention; at the same time, the regime avoids losing power by heavily influencing these opportunities. In sum, then, it can be expected that hybrid regimes, in particular, aim to "manage" – that is, to steer, gauge, control, manipulate,

defined a cycle of contention as (Tarrow 2011:199): a phase of heightened conflict across the social system, with rapid diffusion of collective action from more mobilized to less mobilized sectors, a rapid pace of innovation in the forms of contention employed, the creation of new or transformed collective action frames, a combination of organized and unorganized participation, and sequences of intensified information flow and interaction between challengers and authorities." Tarrow moves on to argue that, "Such widespread contention produces externalities, which give challengers at least a temporary advantage and allow them to overcome the weaknesses in their resource base. It demands that states devise broad strategies of response that are repressive or facilitative, or a combination of the two. And it produces general outcomes that are more than the sum of the results of an aggregate of unconnected events" (2011:199). Tilly and Tarrow (2015:119) elsewhere write that, "Cycles of contention consist of many episodes in the same or related polities, some of them intersecting, but many responding to the same changes in opportunities and threats." A tide or wave of contention is then usually defined as such cycles diffusing across the borders of polities (Beissinger 1996).

and influence, rather than to simply repress or freely allow – protest politics (Robertson 2011; Tilly 2006; Tilly and Tarrow 2015:75-93).

Tilly (2004:19-22; see also 2002:3) has defined three elaborate sets of mechanisms which change the interrelationships between trust networks, public politics, and categorical inequality, and consequently explain democratic or de-democratic regime transformation. Tilly groups the mechanisms into eight processes:

> *Segregation of public politics from categorical inequality*
> 1. equalization of categories
> 2. buffering of politics from categorical inequality
>
> *Integration of trust networks into public politics*
> 3. dissolution of insulated trust networks
> 4. creation of politically connected trust networks
>
> *Alterations of public politics that change interactions between citizens and governmental agents*
> 5. broadening of political participation
> 6. equalization of political participation
> 7. enhancement of collective control
> 8. inhibition of arbitrary power
> (Tilly 2004:22).

It is thus through the analysis of the interaction of social movements with these specific regime processes that we can assess their impact on regime transformation (or, in Tilly's terms, on democratisation or de-democratisation). Based on his historical analysis of contentious politics and democratisation in Europe between 1650 and 2000, Tilly (2004:22) claims that, "at least one of the processes under each of the first two headings (categorical inequality and trust networks) and *all* of the processes under the third heading (alterations of public politics) must occur for democratization to ensue." Both democratic and labour movements in the post-socialist context can be expected to indeed broaden and equalise

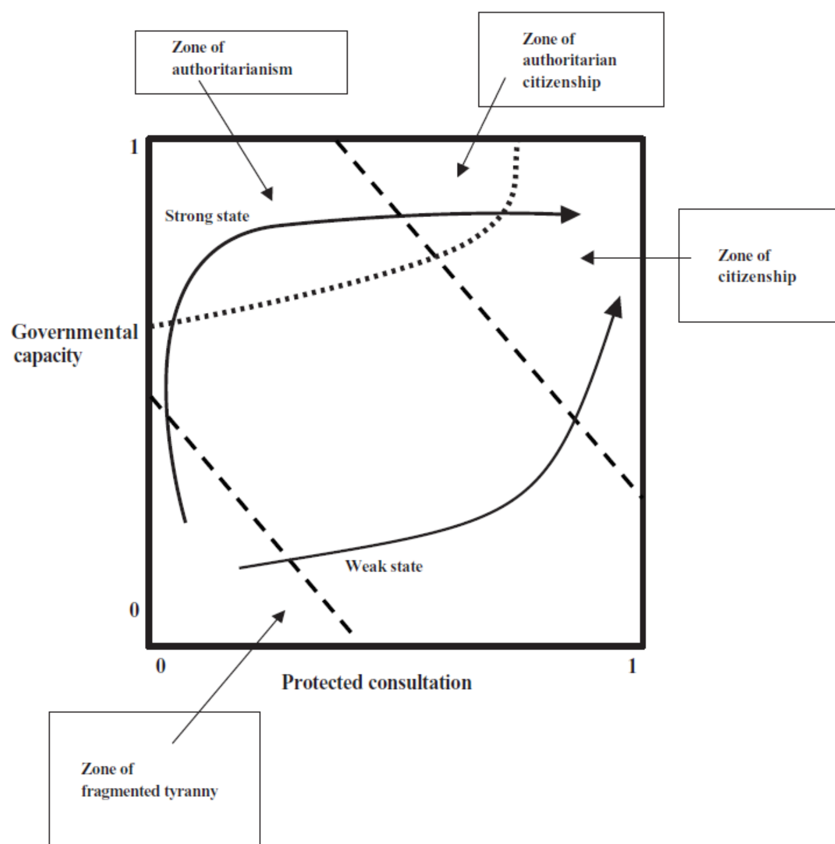

Figure 2 - Ideal-typical paths to democracy through regime space. Most actual historical cases took the form of neither the strong state nor the weak state path, but fell somewhere in between, with many sudden reversals and shifts (reproduced from Tilly [2004:53, see also 2002])

political participation, increase collective control, decrease arbitrary rule, dissolve insulated trust networks, and separate categorical inequality from public politics. Mobilisation may force governments to abandon the exclusion of certain political actors, lead to the brokerage of coalitions cutting across unequal categories, weaken governmental control over the repressive apparatus, and create wider political trust networks, to name but a few possible mechanisms (Tilly 2004:13-23; 2002:9-12).

Analytical framework

My analysis of social movement trajectories and regime transformation will take its framework from the classic social movement agenda, which is in turn largely based on political process theory (McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 1996:1-20; McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2004:14-18; see Figure 3). First, for political opportunity structure (POS), I will use Koopman's expansion on Tarrow's (2011:163) definition:

> "political opportunity structures are consistent—but not necessarily formalized or permanent—dimensions of the political environment that affect the outcomes by which people judge the success or failure of their own collective action, and the information that becomes available to them about the nature and outcomes of other collective action that is relevant to them." (Koopmans 2005:27).

The core elements of POS I will focus on are the changes in (1) the multiplicity of independent centres of power in the regime; (2) the regime's institutional openness to new actors; (3) the stability or instability of current political alignments; (4) the availability of influential allies or supporters for challengers; and (5) the regime's capacity or propensity to repress or facilitate collective claim-making (McAdam 1996:27; Tilly and Tarrow 2015:59). In my thesis, it will become clear that elite-movement relations take a particularly prominent place in the explanation of movement trajectories and regime transformation in the post-socialist context.

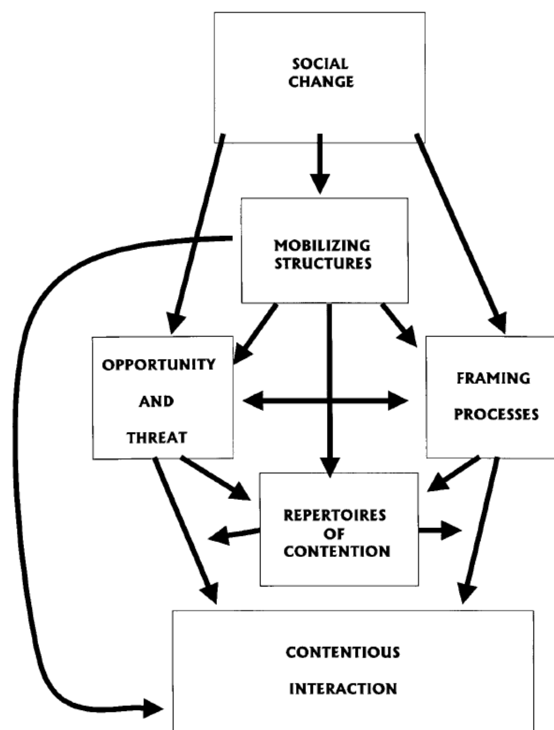

Figure 3 - The classic social movement agenda for explaining contentious politics (reproduced from McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly [2004:14])

Second, mobilising structures are the "collective vehicles, informal as well as formal, through which people mobilize and engage in collective action" (McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald 1996:3). Quite simply, this aspect encompasses the resources, both tangible and intangible, available to the movement, its organisational structure, as well as its embeddedness in informal social networks and settings which connect it to the rest of society (McCarthy and Zald 1977; McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald 1996). Three common processes within SMOs are "goal transformation, a shift to goal maintenance, and oligarchization" (Zald and Ash 1966:329), that is, the concentration of power in the hands of an internal elite. However, *contra* Robert Michels

(1911/2001), Zald and Ash (1966) posit that such processes are not "iron laws", but greatly dependent on, and are intertwined with, general tendencies in society, leadership factors, internal divisions, and relations with other movements. Further elaborating on organisational development, Hanspeter Kriesi (1996) has created a typology to show that,

> An SMO can become more like a party or an interest group; it can take on characteristics of a supportive service organization; it can develop in the direction of a self-help group, a voluntary association or a club; or it can radicalize, that is, become an ever more exclusive organization for the mobilization for collective action. (Kriesi 1996:156).

These processes can be termed institutionalisation, commercialisation, involution, and radicalisation, respectively, and depend on the directness of the participation of the constituency, and on whether the movement develops its goals more in terms of political access and influence or in terms of direct provisions for its constituency (see Figure 4).

Third, "Mediating between opportunity, organization, and action," McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald (1996:5) write, "are the shared meanings and definitions that people bring to their situation." Framing processes are the shifts in this meaning-making dimension which relate to a social movement's attempt at collective action. Drawing from work done by Snow and Benford, McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald (1996:6) define framing as "the conscious strategic efforts by groups of people to fashion shared understandings of the world and of themselves that legitimate and motivate collective action." Snow and Benford (1988:198) highlight that movements not only transmit mobilising beliefs and ideas of a general nature, but also specifically "assign meaning to and interpret, relevant events and conditions in ways that are intended to mobilize potential adherents and constituents, to garner bystander support, and to demobilize antagonists." Ultimately, framing aims at the social-psychological linkage between individual interests, values and, beliefs and a social movement's ideology, goals and action – that is, "frame alignment" (Snow and Benford 1988; Snow et al. 1986). Framing can be subdivided into three sub-functions: diagnostic framing, which interprets a problematic event or situation; prognostic framing, which suggests a certain solution, strategy, tactic or target; and motivational framing, which articulates the necessity of collective action to reach this solution. A particularly important aspects of frames I will pay attention to is resonance. A frame's resonance with its audience is a function of its credibility and its salience. Credibility can be explained in terms of a frame's consistency, its perceived empirical credibility, and the perceived credibility of its articulators. Salience is determined by a frame's centrality (its alignment with the salient values of its target audience), experiential commensurability (a frame's congruence with people's everyday experience), and narrative fidelity (a frame's resonance with widespread cultural narratives) (Snow and Benford 1988; Benford and Snow 2000). Two important framing processes which will feature in my historical analysis are frame bridging and frame extension. Bridging entails "the linking of two or more ideologically congruent but structurally unconnected frame regarding a particular issue or problem," and can occur "between a movement and individuals, through the linkage of a movement organization

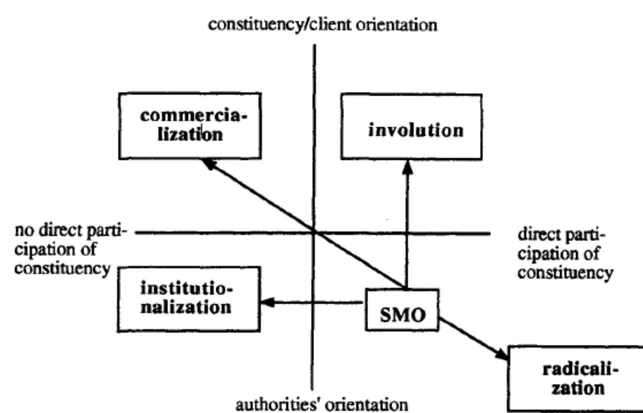

Figure 4 - Typology of transformations of goal orientations and action repertoires (reproduced from Kriesi [1996:157])

with an unmobilized sentiment pool or public opinion cluster, or across social movements" (Benford and Snow 2000:624). In my thesis frame bridging will relate primarily to the possible convergence of democratic and labour mobilisation. Frame extension refers to the widening of a movement's frame to reach potential adherents. In practice, frame extension and bridging can occur hand-in-hand in an overall frame shift. Much of the success of such potential framing shifts depends on a movement's successful exploitation of post-socialist ideological confusion and ambivalence, by forging what we may call a "polysemic" master frame, whose ambiguity causes it to mean different things for different audiences (see Gamson et al. 1992; Entman 1993;[9] alternatively, from a discourse analysis perspective, we might use the term "polyvalent" [Foucault 1990:100-102]). Finally, it must be noted that all framing processes are contestable and contested. Counter-framing refers to the employment of frames by movement opponents. Furthermore, frames can be disputed within movements, or can come to stand under pressure by exogenous events (Benford and Snow 2000).

Comparative-historical analysis

The methodology of my study of social movements and regimes in the post-socialist rump states is comparative-historical analysis (CHA), a tradition frequently used in the fields of historical sociology, political sociology, and comparative politics. CHA is particularly suited to my research question, in combination with the classic social movement agenda. Together, they steer my research to an emphasis on macro-sociological processes, historical context, and political structure, while also allowing for internal movement dynamics. It is precisely the historical-political approach that then brings out the importance of contingent, contextual, and temporal factors.

CHA uses the comparison of a small number of cases (small-N) to provide answers to specific, contextualised questions, which are ultimately concerned with "big" questions,[10] such as, the impact of contentious politics on the development of states and regimes in Europe or the general sufficient and necessary conditions for democracy. As succinctly put by Mahoney and Rueschemeyer (2003:6), CHA is "defined by a concern with causal analysis, an emphasis on processes over time, and the use of systematic and contextualized comparison." CHA is neither interested in ahistorical generalisations, nor in mere interpretative understanding of cultural meaning-making, but stands in the middle between these two objectives by looking for generalisable answers in specific contexts. Second, CHA is concerned with specific temporal issues, and thus pays careful attention to the duration, timing, and sequence of events. Third, CHA carefully balances causal explanation and historical narrative. Historical context serves to give the analysis of variables greater specificity and conceptual and measurement validity (Mahoney and Rueschemeyer 2003; Mahoney 2004; Lange 2013). Summed up differently, CHA combines idiographic and nomothetic modes of explanation. The former is aimed at demonstrating case complexity and uniqueness, whereas the latter is aimed at achieving generalisable findings. Some comparative-historical analysts ultimately tend more to idiographic explanation (e.g. Bendix 1978), whereas with others, the balance is tipped slightly towards nomothetic explanation (e.g. Skocpol 1979; see Lange 2013). Tending more towards the former work than the latter, my thesis will be somewhat stronger in terms of within-case explanation than in terms of poignant comparative answers relevant to bigger concerns of protest politics and democratisation. This relates to my reading of the cases, which suggests

[9] See also Snow, Tan, and Owens 2013; Béland and Cox 2016. For applications of polysemy, see Edgerly, Toft, and Veden (2011), Desrosiers (2015), and Siles-Brügge (2017).
[10] See also Tilly (1989).

that context, contingency, and path dependency ultimately prevail over structural and easily generalisable factors.

The comparative dimension of my methodology consists of small-N comparison. In employing this, I compare the causal processes of my cases, and the relations between different and similar context and different and similar processes. In order to come to such comparative insights, a great deal of within-case examination is required first. CHA rarely employs specific within-case methods such as ethnography, oral history, or historical (primary source-oriented) methods. Taking both a comparative-historical and an ethnographic approach would in many cases be unmanageable in terms of time and resources. Instead, like CHA prescribes, I concentrate on a large secondary source corpus, based on books and articles concerned with my cases from various disciplines either with an interpretative-descriptive objective or with a theoretical underpinning different from mine. Some sources I use have a similar theoretical basis to my thesis, but lack the comparative interest. I also use a limited number of primary sources to provide additional evidence. In addition, whenever possible, I have tended towards secondary sources written close to the events in the 1990s themselves, rather than texts concerned with past sequences to explain events closer to the present. Using these sources, I have followed the three primary prescriptions of case-study analysis in social movement research. First, I have defined my scope by selecting cases which represent a bounded social phenomenon, viz., political social movements in the context of the post-socialist rump states, Serbia and Russia. Second, I have aimed to use the source base to provide detailed, and contextualised description. Third, I have used multiple data sources from different methods to create generate a rich picture of the movement trajectories against which the usefulness of theoretical concepts can be tested (Snow 2013). Had I had more time and resources, I could have used further primary source collection (primary material collection, archival methods, semi-structured interviews) to improve on this triangulation.

Finally, I have chosen to compare two cases for two reasons. The first is pragmatic. A paired comparison of two cases is the most manageable way to conduct comparative analysis within the constraints of a project such as this thesis. Besides, I had prior historical knowledge of Serbia and Russia to serve as a stepping stone for this research. The second argument for paired comparison has been clearly formulated by Sidney Tarrow:

> The moment we go from one case to two, I would argue, we are in the realm of hypothesis-generating comparative study, while also enabling ourselves to examine how common mechanisms are influenced by the particular features of each case; as we increase the number of cases, however, the leverage afforded by paired comparison becomes weaker, because the number of unmeasured variables increases. (Tarrow 2010:246).

Methodological tools

As within-case methods, process tracing and path dependence are the pre-eminent tools to reconstruct the how, why, and when of a historical trajectory. Ultimately, statistical research can only improve causal claims based on a statistical association with more statistical associations, using intervening variables. To properly analyse causal mechanisms and processes, we need qualitative evidence and theoretical understandings. Hence, process tracing breaks larger processes down into constituent mechanisms, and looks for causal linkages by means of detailed description of sequences of events and general theoretical principles (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2004; Goldstone 2003; Mahoney 2004; Tarrow 2010; Collier 2011). To illustrate, in my case studies the objective is not to statistically establish that regime outcomes are linked to movement-elite dynamics, but to provide a rich account of how this may have occurred. Indeed, we may also say that the processes and mechanisms with which this

study is concerned are of such an interactive nature, that dividing them into clearly distinct and measurable independent and dependent variables is not particularly useful.

Within this process-oriented approach, the concepts of path dependence, contingency, and conjuncture (critical juncture) are important. The convergence of separate processes in particularly influential historical points in time, critical junctures, may be contingent – that is, the outcome of such conjunctures cannot be explained or predicted by theory. However, such contingencies set in motion path-dependent, self-reinforcing sequences. That is to say, when one outcome results from certain initial conditions, there are often mechanisms at play which keep this outcome in place, and "push away" competing options (Mahoney 2000, 2004; see Figure 5).[11] More concretely, this means two things. First, for my analysis of regimes and movements, particular attention must be paid to the early stages and initial conditions. It is the often contingent outcomes in this phase which lead to powerful reproductions which both regimes and movements later struggle to overcome. In other words, time and timing matter. Second, given my particular context of post-socialism, it is important to consider legacies from the era of state socialism. It would be an analytical mistake to consider the collapse of communism in the late 1980s and early 1990s *a priori* as only a rupture. Instead, self-reinforcing mechanisms may also straddle the dividing line between socialism and post-socialism, which will indeed show in my analysis.

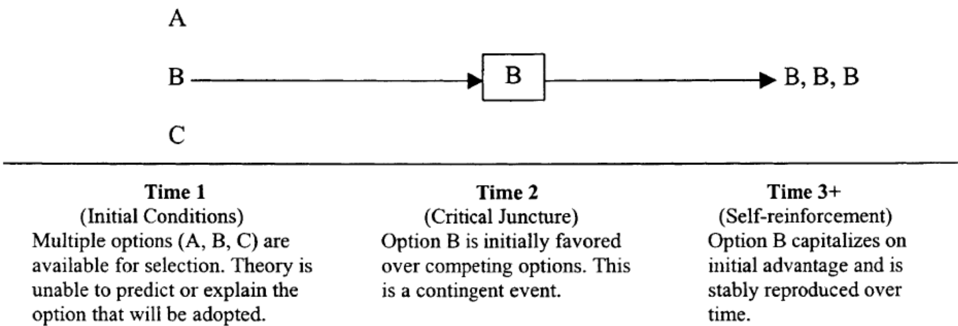

Figure 5 - Contingency, critical junctures, and path dependence in a self-reinforcing sequence (reproduced from Mahoney [2000:514])

Methodological steps

I use Daniel P. Ritter's (2014) guidelines for a CHA approach to social movements to structure my research. This approach consists of five steps. First comes the formulation of the research puzzle and the design of the study. Following the acquisition of broad historical knowledge of a number of interesting, potential cases, this then includes the steps of case selection and periodisation. Theoretical insights should guide the periodisation to avoid infinite regression into the distant past, and to establish when the explanation of a process may reasonably end.

As a second step, the data is identified and compiled. Ritter (2014) suggests compiling annotated bibliographies based on other researcher's bibliographies, starting with key books written about the case.

Third, the data is to be mined. The most important part of this step is the reading process itself. The researcher should use three types of texts: country texts, topic texts, and cause texts. The first type serves to provide the researcher with a general familiarity of the case studies,

[11] For further theoretical understanding of the concept of contingency, see Ermakoff (2015).

without a specific emphasis on the research objective. The second type focuses specifically on the phenomenon under scrutiny, in this case the social movements, and especially the social movement organisations, as well as specific historical events and periods. The third type of source specifically addresses the specific causes relevant to the analytical model, such as, in my study, certain aspects of the political opportunity structure. In the process of reading these texts, systematic note-taking is crucial. This includes copying and annotating passages from the material, and writing down ideas that follow from this process.

The fourth step of the research is data analysis. This primarily consists of coding and organising notes thematically and chronologically to form the basis of a future structure.

The final, fifth step is the composition of a historical narrative, in which theory and history are to be interwoven. The point here is to construct, in Stryker's (1996) terms, a "strategic narrative."

> Concrete and specific historical events and configurations are conceptualized in terms of abstract concepts and sensitizing frameworks. The concepts and frameworks are used to select, to order, and to interpret chunks of primary and secondary data, rendering them intelligible as both historical narrative(s) and historical comparisons. (Stryker 1996:310-11).

Formed by a process of "selecting and constructing history in response to a clearly developed theoretical backdrop," a strategic narrative does not examine history for its own sake alone, but situates cases within an abstract framework (Stryker 1996:313). To arrive at such narratives which are at once historical and theoretical, process tracing and path dependence are suggested as methodological tools (Ritter 2014; see subsection above). Finally, to intertwine history and theory, "scholars often embrace a writing style that prioritizes themes over cases, and that is organized thematically and chronologically rather than by treating the compared cases one by one" (Ritter 2014:111).

Further methodological choices

Two further methodological remarks have to be made. First, I have selected only two social movements (or, more accurately – since at times the protest waves did not constitute a sustained campaign – streams of contention) for my thesis for reasons of scope. I follow the trajectories of the democratic and labour movements in both cases. This is based on my evaluation of the specific context of the post-socialist rump states. Namely, Serbia and Russia underwent three crucial transformations: the fall of the Party-State and the advent of competitive political systems; the restructuring of the economy from state socialism to market capitalism; and, lastly, the collapse of multinational federations into new nation-states. The democratic movements are directly concerned with the first transformation process. Labour was evidently very affected by the second. For reasons of scope I do not deal with ethnonationalist mobilisation, in relation to the third transformation process, separately, but I interweave the factor of nationalism into my discussions of the movements, as well as in my discussion of political opportunity structure, since nationalism as both strategy for mobilisation and demobilisation and as frame became part of the political-cultural context within which the other movements operated. Had there been more space, however, ethnonationalist mobilisation in places like Kosovo and Chechnya and their impact on regime transformation (especially on state capacity), as well as anti-war movements which followed from the escalation of ethnonationalist mobilisation, could merit further elaboration.[12]

[12] See for instance Dević (1997), Derluguian (1999), Treisman (1999), Caiazza (2002), Vladisavljević (2002, 2004), Lyall (2006), Lonkila (2008), Bilić (2010, 2011), Giuliano (2011), Giuliano and Gorenburg (2012).

Second, I have limited myself by choosing one SMO per movement. These two represent the most crucial and prominent organisations within the SMTs of both cases – *Otpor* (Resistance) in Serbia, and *DemRossiia* (Democratic Russia) in Russia. It was *Otpor* which mobilised masses of people to protest electoral fraud in Serbia in 2000, which led to Milošević's fall, and it was DemRossiia which propelled Yeltsin to power but failed to transform into a sustained democratic movement or institutionalised party during Russia's harsh 1990s. An important note with regards to the organisations' respective timelines must be made. *Otpor* grew out of recurrent protest waves from 1991 to 1996-7. These protest waves had been parallel: one strand organised by the political opposition, one strand organised by students. *Otpor* was founded in 1998 to re-structure the protest movement and use pressure "from below" to force the opposition into unity. *DemRossiia*, by contrast, had its origins in the burst of social movement activity in the late 1980s. It was officially founded in 1990 as an electoral bloc. In the early 1990s it veered between an electoral alliance and a social movement organisation. Where *Otpor* finally dissolved in 2004, *DemRossiia* already left the stage in the mid-1990s, when its members left political activity or joined small democratic or liberal parties. Hence, a large section of my historical narrative will be devoted to explaining not only *DemRossiia*'s downfall, but also the lack of new democratic movement activity after 1994. Overall, the two organisations demonstrate two clearly distinguishable trajectories, one of persistence and expansion, and related to democratic regime transformation, and the other a trajectory of co-optation and decline, and related to a regime's authoritarian turn.

CHAPTER 3: POLITICAL OPPORTUNITIES

Introduction

In this chapter of my comparative-historical analysis, I will outline the structure of political opportunities for, and threats to, social movement development in Serbia and Russia from 1988 to 2004. I will show the importance of the interaction between movements and political contexts in explaining Serbia's democratic turn and Russia's authoritarian turn. I will concentrate on the multiplicity of centres of power in the regimes, the institutions and their openness to challengers, political stability among the elites, potential elite allies for movements, and the regimes' repressive capacities. In all of these factors, it will become evident that political instability, elite crises, and multiple levels of power are useful variables to explain patterns of political protest in these two post-socialist hybrid regimes, but that they do not necessarily translate into successful nation-wide social movements. In order to examine such an outcome, we have to carefully look at the details of elite-movement interaction in the political structure.

I will begin my narrative with the initial opportunity structure during the fall of the state socialist federations, Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union. The Serbian case will concentrate on elite-movement interactions during the anti-bureaucratic revolution, while the Russian case will explain the rise of the Yeltsin regime as a product of elite rifts and social mobilisation during *perestroika*. I will pay particular attention to the rise of virulent ethnonationalism in the Serbian regime and its absence in Russia. The second subsection of this chapter will deal with the interaction between social mobilisation, the political elites of the new regimes, and economic and political structural factors during the 1990s. I will examine the features of the two hybrid regimes, including their political party structure, elections, level of centralisation, and relations with their mass base In the final section of this lengthy chapter, I will show how developments among the political and economic elites of both regimes largely explain why in Serbia, social mobilisation led to regime change, while in Russia such change was avoided.

Initial political opportunities and the rise of social movements

The rise of Milošević and the eclipse of democracy

While economic reform in the Soviet Union was accompanied by a significant political opening, *glasnost*, which led to the formation of nascent organisations independent from the Party-State, this was less the case in Yugoslavia. Instead of creating a political opportunity structure favourable to liaisons between actors outside and within elite politics, as in Russia, change in Yugoslavia happened primarily from within elite politics, and in response to sporadic nationalist mobilisations from below. Slobodan Milošević, who climbed the ranks of the League of Communists throughout the 1980s, supported rebelling ethnic Serbs in Kosovo in 1987. Withstanding allegations of nationalism, Milošević manoeuvred skilfully within the party to rid himself of competitors and former allies.[13] At this stage, what mattered was not so much Milošević's party programme or any sort of nationalist stance on the Kosovo question, but primarily the dynamics of internal competition for leadership (Vladisavljević 2004, 2008:51-77).

[13] Eric Gordy (1999:25) has described Milošević's ascent as an "intraparty coup involving neither elections nor the political participation of any people outside the leadership of the Serbian Communist party." As another scholar puts it, at the time "the rise of Milošević was little more than an episode in communist power politics" (Vladisavljević 2008:52).

In 1988–89, Montenegro and Serbia, especially its autonomous provinces of Kosovo and Vojvodina, witnessed a wave of popular protest termed the “anti-bureaucratic revolution,” which, according to Nebojša Vladisavljević (2008), we should evaluate neither as solely a spontaneous event, nor as an instance of elite manipulation. A variety of protest claims – related to socio-economic conditions, political participation, ethnic relations in Kosovo, constitutional reform, and industrial relations – merged into this wave, as Yugoslavia liberalised and grew increasingly instable. In the context of elite conflict in a highly decentralised federal structure, the Yugoslav political class failed to suppress or channel the protest wave (Vladisavljević 2008:5-7). The anti-bureaucratic revolution expanded as initial mobilisation laid bare “rifts between higher- and lower-ranking officials, as well as an important shift in state–society relations” (Vladisavljević 2008:109). This failure led to many at both the mass and elite levels to abandon their belief in the federation, and see Yugoslavia as an obstacle to the progress of individual republics and nations. Milošević and others within the Serbian elite used the anti-bureaucratic revolution as a populist springboard for power. They aimed to channel it to suit their programme of constitutional reform, which would strip Kosovo and Vojvodina of most of their autonomy and thus give Serbia a better position in decision-making at the federal level.[14] As Serbia’s elite groups sought links with protest groups to bolster their legitimacy in an era of uncertainty, elite splits multiplied and demonstrations spread. Milošević gradually became the populist leader of the protest wave, and used it to his advantage: mass rallies in Vojvodina, Montenegro, and Kosovo allowed him to force the replacement of old leaderships with allied politicians, who would support him in Yugoslav decision-making.

While solidarity with the Kosovo Serbs united disparate groupings from the start of the protests, nationalism only became more salient in early 1989. Throughout 1988, the anti-bureaucratic revolution united not only workers, students, and Kosovar Serbs, but also nationalist intellectuals, people who had lost faith in the communist cadres’ ability to reform, those upset with the position of minorities outside their titular republics, and critics of Yugoslavia’s lack of central power (Vladisavljević 2008:145-78). The working classes were a crucial power base behind the anti-bureaucratic revolution. Strikes became more and more common towards the late 1980s, as repression against social mobilisation in Yugoslavia loosened. There was also a gradual shift from localised strikes to large-scale demonstrations in Belgrade. Workers demanded not only higher wages and a reduction in bureaucracy, but later also a re-centralisation of Yugoslavia’s internal market structure, the resolution of Serbia’s constitutional status, a halt to the nationalist mobilisation of ethnic Albanians in Kosovo, and the creation of a body to represent workers in parliament. Milošević capitalised on these populist demands to rise to power in Serbia, and then used the nationalist demands to mask his neglect of the labour-related demands (Vladisavljević 2008:111-119; Meszmann 2009). Once Milošević and his allies recognised the power of grassroots mobilisation, and began to steer the protest wave from the top down,

> blue-collar demands were dissolved into a broader program of the political struggle of Serbian bureaucracy against the rival political nomenclatures in other republics, which began flirting with the idea of separation from Yugoslavia. Class identity and economic strikes were substituted with calls for national unity, allegedly needed to prevent the break-up of the country. (Musić 2013:17).

When interethnic strife escalated in Kosovo, Milošević’s elite rivals in other republics used the media to highlight and vilify the nationalist component of the 1988–89 protests, and when an elite dispute emerged between the Serb and Slovene leaderships over the nature of

[14] The autonomous provinces of Kosovo and Vojvodina had one vote in the collective leadership of Yugoslavia, just like much more populous central Serbia (Bunce 1999:224).

constitutional reform, nationalism took full swing in the anti-bureaucratic revolution (Vladisavljević 2008:176-79, 189-94). Milošević's nationalism was thus not merely a political strategy, but also a logical outcome of complex elite-mass interactions, through which nationalism gradually became salient. This is not to neglect the importance of nationalism in Milošević's rise to power and subsequent rule, but to see nationalism as a consequence of his populist authoritarianism in tandem with the grassroots context, rather than authoritarianism as a consequence of his personal nationalism.

Yugoslavia's institutional make-up further explains why it collapsed in a more violent manner and initially produced a more nationalist post-socialist rump state. Valerie Bunce (1999) stresses that the fall of socialism in Yugoslavia took place in a highly decentralised confederal context, after the adoption of the 1974 constitution. This factor was exacerbated in 1980, when Josip Broz Tito died and a system of collective decision-making at the federal level was introduced, in which the republics, autonomous provinces, and the military each had one vote. Furthermore, the constituent republics of the federation started drifting apart in terms of economic development by the early 1980s. Consequently, the republics turned into "virtually independent economic and political agents" (Bunce 1999:220), whereas the federal centre became ever weaker. Yugoslav decentralisation went unaccompanied by democratisation, leading to the creation of ethnified "proto-states" (Vejvoda 2014:15-20). The Yugoslav communists responded to popular pressure by giving republican elites, rather than individual citizens, more power. This move constituted "micro-centralisation," the concentration of power into the hands of the communist elites of each republic (Malešević 2017:149, 156-57). Politics in confederal Yugoslavia became horizontal, amongst the republics, rather than between the republics and the centre. With the republican elites pursuing independent political and economic strategies to protect the resources and power which had accumulated in their hands, inter-republican bargaining was likely to become conflictual (Bunce 1999). No wonder, then, that nationalism was a meaningful ideology for the republican elites to acquire popular legitimacy, rather than democracy.[15]

Two further factors must be noted. First, nationalism was more likely to take a virulent ethno-nationalist form in Serbia than in Russia, because of Serbia's institutional position. On the one hand, Serbia, unlike the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR), had powerful resources (including control over the regional party branch, mass media, state-owned enterprises, and police and security forces) to protect its interests. The RSFSR, designed as a weakened centre, lacked institutions and rights separate from the Soviet level. On the other hand, Serbia lacked the political dominance that Russia had within Soviet political decision-making; relative to its population, Serbia was significantly underrepresented. As Serbia had no official control over the federal level, it stood much to lose in terms of institutions and resources. The RSFSR, by contrast, would inherit the institutions and resources of the Soviet Union. Lacking such a guarantee, Serbian were thus more in need of an ideology to mobilise the masses to defend their resources and powers (Bunce 1999; Oberschall 2000b).[16]

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[15] From a political economy standpoint, Susan Woodward (2003) comes to the same conclusion. The confederal system of equality and consensus was paradoxically the institutional foundation for conflict. "Thus," Woodward (2003:81) argues, "claims for republic-level control over economic assets were difficult to refute if made in the language of national rights, while invoking the veto power of republics in federal forums was an effective way to prevent the emergence of alternative political formations and coalitions (worst of all, ones that might cross republican lines, such as labour organizations or social movements at the all-country level)."

[16] This problem was aggravated by Serbs' historical perception of themselves as both liberators of the South Slavs, and victims of foreign invasions and collaborationism on the part of other South Slav peoples, leading to a sense of both entitlement and injustice

Secondly, it must be underscored that in Yugoslavia, the first multiparty elections happened at the republican level rather than at the federal level. This incentivised the creation of programmes based on regional, ethnic-based claims, rather than a federal agenda. Indeed, to avoid the success of an overarching democratic, reformist agenda, first the Slovenian leadership, followed by Serbia's and other republics', blocked multiparty elections for the Yugoslav federal parliament (Linz and Stepan 1992; Pavković 2000:101-103).

Milošević faced little competition to maintain his position of power once he had achieved it. The political opportunity structure left little room for a democratic social movement in late-Yugoslav Serbia. Within Serbia, few elite divisions remained, after Milošević consolidated his personalistic and populist rule. What could have weakened Milošević and strengthened a democratic alternative would have had to occur on the federal, Yugoslav level, but the principal platform of this level, the League of Communists, had dissolved. The last Yugoslav prime minister, Ante Marković, could have been a significant ally for a democratic movement. In 1990, Marković still enjoyed great popularity, both at home and abroad, for his drastic efforts at economic reform. However, Milošević used his institutional powers to undo Marković's economic achievements, and pre-empt Markovic's attempt at establishing a reformist, all-Yugoslav political party (Lazić and Sekelj 1997; Sell 2002; LeBor 2003; Gagnon 2010).[17]

The last possibility for political instability in Milošević's newly born regime was the Yugoslav People's Army (JNA). Although to a degree the army was the last bastion of Yugoslav identity, it was also divided between ethnicities, with the Serbs being clearly overrepresented, as well as between hard-line, anti-democratic communists and reformists (Bunce 1999; Sell 2002:120-24; Malešević 2017). Moreover, the army was divided into militias strongly linked to the constituent republics, and weakly to the central military command and the federal political level (Bunce 1999). Hence, a powerful coalition between the Yugoslav army or its Serbian branch, Prime Minister Marković, and ordinary non-nationalist Serbs was unlikely.

Finally, a note has to be made with regards to the international context of the domestic political opportunity structure. According to Susan Woodward (2003:75), Yugoslav socialism depended to a great degree on a "particular balancing act between East and West," creating credibility in the world system through economic openness and non-alignment in the Cold War. However, Yugoslavia's strategic position in the Cold War also meant a great deal of dependence on Western funds and access to Western markets, as well as Western imposition of economic policy in times of crisis. IMF conditionality of aid packages in the troubled 1980s meant that the federal centre of Yugoslavia had to undertake measures which required recentralisation of the Yugoslav economy, which in turn would entail a curbing of republican elite's power over local resources and redistribution of wealth from wealthier to poorer parts of the federation. This, in turn, provided the perfect opportunity for republican elites to accuse the socialist centre of exploitation of their people (Woodward 2003). Furthermore, the end of the Cold War meant that the West was less interested in Yugoslavia's strategic position and, consequently, in its territorial integrity. Nor was the West interested enough to aid Ante Marković's reform programme to the extent that was necessary. Besides, individual states in the West, most notably Germany, were less constrained in their choices by the strict Cold War order, and thus recognised the declarations of independence of Slovenia and Croatia. The international regime had become more polycentric, less stable, and more open to new actors. On the discursive-ideological level, the idea of a stable, bipolar global order had been replaced

[17] Milošević turned Marković's reform achievements meaningless, by introducing internal tariffs against goods from other parts of Yugoslavia, and by securing an illegal loan with the National Bank of Yugoslavia to pay off Serbs' goodwill right before the elections. He used his control over the media to block Marković's attempts at establishing a wide popular basis for his newly founded political party

by an order whose security would be guaranteed by neoliberal political economies. Slovenia and Croatia made use of such prevailing sentiments in the West to construed their secession as a legitimate "return to Europe" rather than a danger to domestic democracy and stability (Woodward 2003; Hansen 1996; Lindstrom 2003).[18]

The burst of social movements in Russia from *perestroika* to the August coup

We have already indicated that Russia took a different position within the Soviet Union than Serbia did in Yugoslavia. This resulted in a weaker set of resources and mobilising structures for Russian nationalists.[19] Liberal reformism at the Soviet federal level, in contrast to Yugoslav reformism, on the other hand, was institutionally powerful. Although the era of *perestroika* was far from peaceful on the Soviet peripheries,[20] anti-communist protest in the centre, Russia, was never overshadowed by a question of ethnic rights and violence. There was never, say, a longstanding Crimean equivalent of the Kosovo issue until long after the fall of the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union was not dominated by uniform anti-Russian conflicts across its periphery, throughout the 1980s, the way the Yugoslav federation faced anti-Serbian sentiments. In addition, as we have seen in the introduction, Russian nationalist sentiments were weaker and less widespread due to a history of ambiguous, if not negative, state–society relations in Russia (see Vujačić 1996a, 2004, 2015; Lieven 1999). Importantly, thus, virulent nationalism did not gradually come to overshadow social movement activity in Russia after Gorbachev's introduction of *glasnost*.

If the central authorities adopted reformism (though Gorbachev's efforts were despised by hard-line factions in the CPSU) and social movements in the central republic, Russia, were not overshadowed by nationalism, whence the absence of an all-Soviet democratic social movement? The first factor is, still, strong anti-Soviet nationalism at the periphery, for which I will refer to Mark Beissinger's extensive sociological work (1995, 1996, 1998, 2002; see also Suny 1993; Tishkov 1997). Importantly, this nationalism was directed primarily against the Soviet imperial centre, not necessarily at ethnic Russians.[21] Second is Russians' gradual alienation from the Soviet empire (Beissinger 2002:385ff.; Vujačić 2004). Thirdly, we ought to point to the Soviet Union's sheer size. While *glasnost* had given democrats extensive reach through Soviet television, they failed to build grassroots networks across the federation (Derluguian 2005).[22]

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[18] See also Crawford 1996; Gowan 1999.

[19] Russian nationalism was mostly prominent at the Soviet level (among those politicians with a statist, imperialist, Soviet-restorationist attitude), at a time when the Soviet Party-State and military were already crumbling (Vujačić 1996a; Bunce 1999; Kuzio 2003).

[20] See Beissinger (1996, 2002).

[21] Compare with the Yugoslav case, where the centre and Serbia became equated.

[22] Georgi Derluguian's conversation with intellectual-turned-nationalist Musa (Yuri) Shanibov is illustrative: "Shanibov, in one of our conversations, frankly admitted that he admired the Academician Sakharov and envied the high-profile democrats in Moscow. But from his position in Kabardino-Balkaria *they looked no closer than the Moon*. In other words, Shanibov's turn to nationalism came after he despaired of becoming usefully associated with the oppositional celebrities on the rise in Moscow, who addressed their pleas and criticisms to Gorbachev instead of building up political support down in the provinces" (Derluguian 2005:204). See also Derluguian's comments on the failure of building ties between workers and intellectuals in the periphery, as well as on the lack of change on the federal level due to the conflict between the conservative *nomenklatura*, Gorbachev's reformist camp (marked by infighting), and the leaderless democratic intelligentsia. Consequently, in the face of political stalemate and unravelling state capacity, nationalism was the logical choice for peripheral elites to which the likes of Shanibov belonged (Derluguian 2005:202-206).

In the context of failed all-Soviet democratic mobilisation and increasing alienation with the Soviet Union on the part of both Russians as well as the peripheral nationalities, Boris Yeltsin rose to power. He first rose through the ranks of the CPSU, before leaving it and turning against it, claiming that Soviet reformism came too late, and amounted to too little. A wave of democratic social movement mobilisation from the mid-1980s to 1991 propelled him to the position of president of the RSFSR (and of independent Russia after 26 December 1991). Within this democratic social movement I will concentrate on one principal SMO: Democratic Russia (*DemRossiia*). I will relate their rise to the establishment of a tentatively democratic post-socialist Russia in the early 1990s, paying particular attention to the regime and social movement dynamics of the August coup attempt of 1991.

Perestroika and, particularly its companion *glasnost*, constituted the primary political opening for both the democratic movement in Russia and a rise in labour mobilisation (see Butterfield and Sedaitis 1991; Brudny 1993; Clarke and Fairbrother 1993; Duka et al. 1995; Gordon 1996). Under Gorbachev, the Russian Soviet elite split across a spectrum from democratic nationalists through reformists to hard-liners. Gorbachev's abandonment of the Brezhnev doctrine also meant that the Soviet military and security forces' propensity to repress diminished drastically. In combination, this meant that political dissidents could organise and mobilise more freely than ever before, and links between intellectuals, ordinary people – especially the professional middle ranks (Garcelon 1997) –, and political elites could be forged.

M. Steven Fish (1991) divides the rapid expansion of social movement activity into four phases. During the first, from early 1985 to mid-1987, partial liberalisation of the public sphere led to the formation of relatively apolitical organisations, as well as a few explicitly political exceptions, such as Memorial, concerned with the unveiling of the crimes and legacy of Stalinism, and Democratic Perestroika, a political discussion club. The second phase, lasting until late 1988, exhibited further expansion and the beginning of street demonstrations. Some organisations emerged which were radically democratic and anti-communist, such as Democratic Union, while others such as the Leningrad's Popular Front were less radical. The organisation Moscow Tribune, which included famous dissident Andrei Sakharov, was more loyal to the reformist ranks within the regime (Fish 1991; Brovkin 1990).

In the third phase, from late 1988 to late 1989, a new political opportunity presented itself: elections were held for the Congress of People's Deputies of the Soviet Union. This spurred the formation of the Moscow Association of Voters (MOI) and other pro-democratic voter clubs, and the organisation of election-related rallies in bigger cities. 1988 witnessed the beginning of the process of alliance-building and political differentiation among the organisations and with elite allies (Brovkin 1990). One such elite ally was Boris Yeltsin, who had recently stepped down from the Politburo after disagreement with Yegor Ligachyov, a hard-liner still powerful in the upper ranks of the CPSU. Getting closer to the election time, democratic organisations began to support Yeltsin. This was the first instance of clear coordinated action, with both liberal and socialist democratic-oriented organisations organising a large, united rally in Moscow on 21 May 1989. During the rally,

> speakers called for the end of the *nomenklatura* system, separation of the party and the state and introduction of a multi-party system. […] For the first time, the leaders of these groups spoke to tens of thousands of people. Thanks to TV coverage they became known to even broader strata. The rally marked the transition from discussion groups politics to mass politics. (Brovkin 1990:252-53).

As the delegate for Moscow, Yeltsin won decisively over the CPSU-preferred candidate with his radical pro-reform platform in the elections to the Congress of People's Deputies. Simultaneously, loosely organised clubs of intellectuals developed into "proto-parties" during this phase (Fish 1991:304). During this phase, the CPSU still actively aimed to discredit

democratic initiatives for being "confrontational" and "anti-socialist" (Fish 1991:306). Other counter-tactics included the introduction of legal restrictions on rallies or the establishment of counter-organisations, supposedly independent but in reality elite-controlled, with the aim of fragmenting the social movement (Duka et al. 1995:93).

In this phase not only the democratic social movement grew, but labour mobilisation sprang up, too. Most significantly, coalminers struck in Eastern Ukraine (Donbass), and southern Siberia (Kuzbass). The strike wave was a consequence of the new political openings available to the expression of workers' grievances. Gorbachev actively tried to draw the working classes into *perestroika* by opening up channels for workers' representation in enterprise management and by verbally supporting the strikers. He did so in order to create a support base for his reformism, against hard-line factions in the CPSU. However, the strike wave quickly radicalised beyond Gorbachev's intentions (Fish 1991; Mandel 1990; Clarke and Fairbrother 1993).[23]

In the fourth and last phase, from early 1990 to early 1991, SMOs underwent further radicalisation of demands, and multiple organisations declared themselves political parties. The CPSU response was divided; some independent organisations were treated favourably, others were not. This led to internal discord within the CPSU. This division, in turn, provided the organisations with *nomenklatura* allies, defecting from the CPSU. Eventually, this was followed by a repressive turn again by the Soviet regime in the autumn and winter of 1990–91, but this came too late to halt the democratic social movement (Fish 1991). At the same time, workers' mobilisation reappeared. By the time of the renewed strike wave in March and April 1991, the demands of striking miners had politicised. They called for "the abolition of the administrative-command system, the resignation of Gorbachev and the Supreme soviet, and the effective abolition of the power of the Communist Party" (Clarke and Fairbrother 1993:8). The workers changed their alliance and rallied behind the cause of Boris Yeltsin.

Democratic Russia (*DemRossiia*), the SMO central in my story of democratic social mobilisation in Russia, was established in this fourth phase in the run-up to the elections to the Congress of People's Deputies of the RSFSR in spring 1990. Its earlier origins, however, lay in the informal organisations of the late 1980s, mainly staffed by the discontented urban middle ranks of Soviet society, who Gorbachev had wanted to mobilise behind his reformist cause. Gorbachev, however, had miscalculated his ability to remain in control of the mobilisation his policies had spurred. Urban activists soon threw their weight behind the primary democratic candidate for the upcoming elections, Boris Yeltsin. Once Yeltsin had been elected to the Congress of People's Deputies of the Soviet Union, he and fellow democrats within the political elite established a parliamentary bloc to steer the democratic social movement in Russia. The importance of this counter-elite within the Soviet system must not be underestimated. The counter-elite, already positioned inside official politics, forged links with grassroots voter clubs united by the aforementioned MOI. In spring 1990 this alliance-building led to the formation of *DemRossiia*. Initially it was founded as a loose electoral alliance of pro-democracy candidates across Russia, circulating pro-*perestroika* leaflets, organising mass rallies, and publicly advertising its candidates (Brudny 1993; Garcelon 1997; Gill and Markwick 2000:83-86; McFaul 2002:69-81).

DemRossiia essentially functioned simultaneously as an intra-system electoral bloc and as an SMO. At the heart of its unity was *DemRossiia*'s support for Boris Yeltsin. Indeed, *DemRossiia* was more concerned with Yeltsin's personal rebellion against the old *nomenklatura* elites than with democratic institution-building. Yeltsin provided *DemRossiia* with multiple political opportunities for mobilisation in 1991. First, in late 1990 and early 1991,

[23] See also Rutland (1990), Friedgut and Siegelbaum (1990), and Crowley (1997).

the Soviet regime took an increasingly reactionary turn to undo some of the instabilities produced by *perestroika* and *glasnost*. *DemRossiia* mobilised in support of Yeltsin, who broke with Gorbachev and began to staunchly criticise the regime. *DemRossiia* also organised rallies protesting Soviet repression in the Baltics. Openly defying Gorbachev, Yeltsin then ran as an independent candidate for the RSFSR presidential elections in June. With the support of *DemRossiia*'s campaigning across Russia, Yeltsin won by over 58 per cent of the vote. However, Yeltsin began to detach himself from *DemRossiia* right after the elections, and signed policies contrary to *DemRossiia*'s goals.

Despite movement-elite relations becoming more strained *DemRossiia* effectively mobilised in support of Yeltsin again in August 1991. This was Yeltsin's last step to power. When CPSU hard-liners headed by Gennady Yanayev staged a coup attempt in Moscow, while they kept Gorbachev under house arrest in Crimea, Yeltsin famously climbed on top of a tank in front of the Russian White House and called for resistance on part of the military and the Russian people. *DemRossiia* played a crucial role in organising mass protests against the coup attempt. It also organised the mass distribution of Yeltsin's decrees in response to the coup in the form of leaflets. In the face of mass resistance, part of the military and the KGB defected, and the coup collapsed. The defeat was primarily caused by resistance in Moscow, not across the entire Soviet Union. The failed coup thus served to bolster the power of the republics, especially Russia, at the expense of the Soviet elites of the federal centre. Yeltsin's legitimacy and power were now undisputed, so that he could go ahead and ban the CPSU and arrange the dissolution of the Soviet Union. By 26 December the Soviet Union was no more (Brudny 1993; Garcelon 1997; Gill and Markwick 2000:104-11; McFaul 2002:85-97, 105-10).[24]

Movements, elites, and structures throughout the 1990s

Milošević and competitive authoritarianism in Serbia

Based on an uncritical, cursory Western reading of the late socialist Yugoslavia and its break-up, Milošević's regime might be expected to be hyper-repressive and, thus, unfavourable to social mobilisation from below. However, from previous sections we have learned that Milošević's regime itself was based on a careful steering of social mobilisation. Unlike Yeltsin's Russia, Milošević's Serbia was initially largely based on populist political strategy, electoral victories, and an extensive network of organisational and informal connections. Additionally, Milošević's regime strength depended largely on the ex-communist party in power, the Socialist Party of Serbia. Milošević and Yeltsin both came to power amidst the breakdown of the federal level, but Milošević was elected as the head of a well-developed political machine, whereas Yeltsin's power rested on a combination of individual charisma, plebiscites, and skilful elite alliance-building. Moreover, this political machine had its roots in the social mobilisation of the 1980s which in the case of Yugoslavia was broader socially and less elite-based, giving it a long-standing legitimacy and leading to a renewal of the communist party cadres.

Milošević emerged victorious from the first multiparty elections in Serbia in December 1990, winning 65.3 per cent of the popular vote (Vladisavljević 2016:40). Both the election campaign and the electoral system were heavily skewed in favour of Milošević's former communists. Yet, "Despite the governmental control of the media, public administration, and economic and security resources, political opposition did exist and opponents could participate

[24] For primary sources related to the August 1991 coup, see the edited collection by Bonnell, Cooper, and Freidin (2015 [1994]). For a study of the mass attitudes of demonstrators during the events see Gibson (1997).

in elections" (Bieber 2003a:74). Milošević's regime subsequently depended on a skilful manipulation and fragmentation of the opposition, to assure sustained electoral victories. "National questions" to do with the wars in Bosnia and Croatia took centre stage in the early 1990s, which allowed the SPS to play off the radical nationalist and the moderate democratic opposition parties against each other (Bieber 2003a; Vladisavljević 2016).

However, already in March 1991 and June 1992, the regime weakened as a result of political protests. In 1991, the opposition organised rallies against the regime's anti-opposition propaganda. Police repression led to escalation and chaos, after which Milošević sent the army with tanks into the streets of Belgrade. This repressive move in turn spurred student protests, which forced the resignation of the Minister of the Interior and the directors of the state-controlled Radio Television of Serbia (RTS). This "undermined the regime's populist credentials" (Vladisavljević 2016:42) – a regime based on social mobilisation in the late 1980s needed tanks to keep the country in its grip only a few years later – and brought the opposition to the foreground. When, in 1992, Milošević reformed the constitution and called snap federal parliamentary elections without consulting the opposition, he provided these opposition parties with a clear political opportunity for mobilisation. This time, the opposition united in a coalition called Democratic Movement of Serbia (DEPOS), boycotted the elections, and staged protests. In a parallel protest wave, students went on strike. Milošević, however, made tactical concessions and made use of the fact that the coalition was still very divided (Sekelj 2000; Bieber 2003a; Vladisavljević 2016). The regime remained strong, but its nature – dependent on frequent elections and divide-and-rule tactics towards the opposition – also allowed for repeated political opportunities for the opposition and for students to mobilise. Overall, the political opportunity structure would only hold up against mobilisation, so long as Milošević maintained the regime's repressive capacities, acted quickly when elite arrangements destabilised, and prevented durable alliance-building between opposition parties, civil society, students, and other social groups.

Yeltsin, parties, and super-presidentialism in Russia

Yeltsin, in sharp contrast to Milošević, founded his regime less on popular mobilisation and increasingly on elite coalitions and compromises. Yeltsin aimed to stand above political parties, and thus did not support *DemRossiia*'s transformation into a political party. In 1991, after coming to power and dissolving the Soviet Union, Yeltsin decided not to organise parliamentary elections. Yeltsin prioritised Russian independence and economic reform, and largely neglected democratic institution-building based on the idea that the Russian state and society were not ready yet; elections, he and his inner circle feared, could even risk communist restoration (McFaul 2002; Gel'man 2015). Consequently, there were no avenues into politics for potential democratic activists. The first true multiparty elections were only held in 1993. The Soviet-era elites which had been elected in 1989 and 1990, either as independents or as CPSU members, had by this time consolidated their power and resources. This entrenchment closed the system significantly to members of the demobilising democratic movement, and it also disincentivised the formation of a new democratic movement.[25]

Aggravating this problem was Yeltsin's decision to create a "super-presidential" system, with the executive greatly overpowering the legislature. This constitutional move in 1993 led to the outbreak of violence in Moscow between presidency and parliament, won by the former. Democrats sided with Yeltsin, believing that the parliamentary forces headed by Alexander Rutskoy and Ruslan Khasbulatov represented reactionaries who aimed to impede necessary

[25] My thanks go to Ivan S. Grigoriev for a large part of this argument.

economic reform. Yeltsin's weakening of the national legislature and the strengthening of his own office ultimately hampered the prospects for democracy-oriented social mobilisation. Democracy became equated with the leadership of the "democratic" president; his handling of deeply controversial socioeconomic reform was thus also associated with democracy. Furthermore, the super-presidential system reduced the multiplicity of centres of power in the political structure significantly. Democratic activists were once again disincentivised from mobilising for political influence, now that the ultimate prospect of becoming a widely-supported political party meant very little with a weak parliament (Fish 2005). Ironically, *DemRossiia* supported Yeltsin's creation of a super-presidential system, which greatly hampered future access to, and influence on, the political regime (McFaul 2002).

Not only the weakness of parliament after 1993 impeded the creation of a meaningful multi-party system in Russia. Due to institutional designs, the structure of the federation and the nature of the electoral systems, budding political parties also failed to penetrate Russia's regions from their bases in the large cities. In the regions, electoral candidates association with local governors' political machines or with important financial-industrial elite groups replaced party affiliation as the primary electoral strategy (Golosov 1997, 2003, 2004; Hale 2005; Gel'man 2015). This is not to say that there were no opposition parties at all. At the national level, liberal-capitalist parties were largely co-opted by the regime itself. Democrats who did not join the liberal semi-opposition, mostly joined Grigory Yavlinsky, Yury Boldyrev, and Vladimir Lukin's Yabloko. Yabloko from the very beginning faced marginalisation, as it was caught in the middle between the parties loyal to the executive and the Communist Party of the Russian Federation (KPRF). The main elite force against the Yeltsin regime emerged from the neo-communists of the KPRF. Despite their attempts at concerted opposition until the 1996 presidential elections, they could ultimately not face up against Yeltsin and his resourceful elite allies. In addition, the KPRF was burdened with legacies from the Soviet past and a radical ideology which antagonised too many ordinary Russians (see Chapter 5) (Gel'man 2005).

In short, the Yeltsin regime transformed into a system with highly personalist and centralised rule, and an underdeveloped party system. Nevertheless, Yeltsin's popularity was greatly diminishing, so he had to resort to numerous compromises with old as well as new industrial, political, regional, and economic elites. An infamous example is the loans-for-shares scheme, which allowed the new business elite to cheaply acquire state-owned property through rigged auctions, in return for funds to support Yeltsin's 1996 re-election campaign. For these and other elites, too, organisation into political parties was unnecessary; direct lobbying with the executive was a more attractive political strategy. The influence of regional governors and economic elites greatly diminished central state power, which further spurred extreme elite fragmentation. This disunity allowed the regime to apply divide-and-rule tactics before instability would signal a political opportunity for mobilisation from below, whether labour-oriented or democracy-oriented. Russian post-socialist politics being so elite-centred, this entailed that when social mobilisation took place, it was often a top-down case organised by elite groups in order to bargain with the federal centre (Fish 2005; Robertson 2011; Gel'man 2005, 2015).

Regime and labour quiescence in Serbia

During the first half of the 1990s, Serbians had to cope with extreme economic conditions. The gross national product declined tremendously, hyperinflation reached world record heights, the economy de-industrialised, and people resorted to autarkic agriculture. Privatisation was largely blocked after the initial privatisations under the last Yugoslav government. Some strategically important enterprises were even re-nationalised. Whatever formerly state or "socially-owned"

property was privatised, typically ended up in the hands of Milošević's inner circles. Meanwhile, in a context of civil war in the former Yugoslav sphere and international economic sanctions, the Serbian black and grey economy grew rapidly. While much of the economy remained in the regime's grip, as a consequence of the political and economic chaos and the initial reforms in the 1980s, the gradual growth of competitive economic elites could not be prevented wholly (Lazić and Sekelj 1997; Upchurch 2006; Uvalić 2010; Music 2013; Mladenović 2014; Lazić 2015).

Despite the socioeconomic havoc, Serbia did not experience widespread labour unrest during most of the 1990s. This can be attributed to a number of factors. First, in Serbia socialism had not been discredited among workers as much as in Russia. The anti-bureaucratic revolution had never been an anti-socialist revolution. Hence, Milošević retained the language and symbolism of socialism (Meszmann 2015). Milošević skilfully pacified the workers by merging ethno-nationalism with a rejection of market reforms, which "transformed workers into Serbs" (Stanojević 2003:296). Although disastrous in the long run, Milošević's blocking of capitalist transformation effectively blurred the line between nationalism and socialism. Second, workers stayed dependent on the redistributive role of the state. For instance, the regime subsidised bread during the international sanctions, and it prohibited mass lay-offs. Instead, employees were sent on "forced leave," which meant they retained a partial wage as well as access to social amenities such as free healthcare, without working (Lazić and Cvejić 2010; Music 2013; Meszmann 2015). Third, whenever workers in strategic sectors of the war economy seemed inclined to organise and strike, the regime undertook a policy of anticipatory repression, vilifying active labour leaders as foreign agents (Music 2013; Meszmann 2015). Fourth, the state purposefully allowed the semi-criminalised informal economy to flourish, so that workers could take up a side-job in order to survive. Fifth, the regime retained control over the largest trade union federation, although it faced increasing competition from independent unions towards the late 1990s.

Nonetheless, a footnote has to be placed to the regime's grip over the working masses. As socioeconomic hardship increased and promises of improvement turned into disappointments, support for the regime declined. In 1991, Milošević could rally a hundred thousand supporters in a counter-mobilisation effort against the opposition-led demonstrations. In 1996, the regime struggled to produce a demonstration of fifty thousand. It must also be noted that such counter-rallies were never spontaneous in the first place: workers from outside Belgrade were given a free day off, and transported to the city without knowing exactly what the opposition protests were about (Music 2013). Strikes also became more common again from the mid-1990s onward (Upchurch 2006).

Elites, centre-periphery dynamics, and labour in Russia

Ordinary Russians did not only experience an extreme rise in poverty and unemployment, declining class mobility, growing income inequality, wage arrears, deindustrialisation, demonetisation, declining life expectancy, and hyperinflation, but also witnessed how, through a process of "insider privatisation", state assets transferred into the hands of a select few, composed of *nomenklatura* directors and the *nouveau riche*, and how the mafia came to control ever greater swaths of the everyday economy (Burawoy and Krotov 1993; Rutland 1994; McFaul 1995; Kotkin 1998; Klugman and Braithwaite 1998; Milanović and Jovanović 1999; Volkov 1999; Burawoy 2001; Gerber and Hout 1998, 2004; Gerber 2006, 2002; Shlapentokh and Woods 2007). Had Russia not been positioned in a favourable international context adamant about preventing a restoration of the socialist system, economic conditions might have been even worse. In addition, unlike Milošević's socialist regime, Yeltsin's favourably

regarded liberal-capitalist regime avoided economic sanctions over his unpopular war in Chechnya, and instead kept securing crucial IMF loans (Kuzio 1996; Cornell 1999).[26]

Due to three crucial factors, most Russians took up defensive survival strategies amidst economic collapse. First, the weakened federal state continued to provide many Russians with minimal transfer payments. Second, many could fall back on informal networks. Third, like in Serbia, many workplaces stayed open, so that practically unemployed workers could still make use of tools, materials, connections, and certain welfare benefits. Consequently, many Russians got by during this period of drastic economic decline, by means of barter, side-jobs in the grey or black economy, and a partial return to autarkic agriculture (Gordon 1998; Burawoy, Krotov, and Lytkina 2000, 2001; Burawoy 2001).

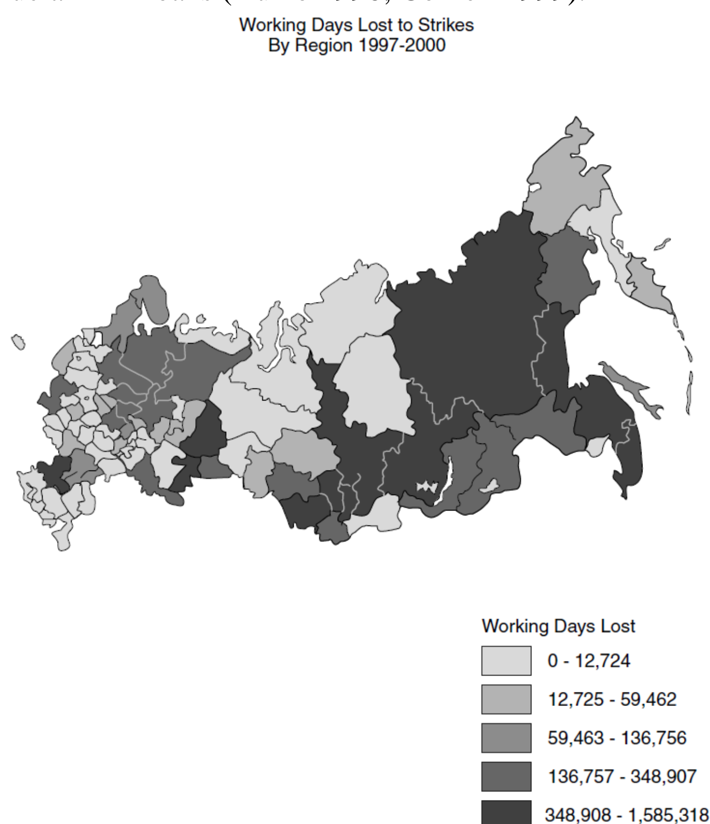

Figure 6 - Regional variation in strike intensity in the Russian Federation, 1997-2000 (reproduced from Robertson [2010:71]).

Yet, labour protest levels could be high at times as well. Graeme Robertson's (2004, 2007, 2009, 2011) extensive research has sought to explain the patterns of labour protest in the latter half of the Yeltsin years, questioning the general narrative of workers' passivity (*cf*. Crowley 1997; Mandel 2001; Kubicek 2002).[27] Robertson (2011) finds that protest varied greatly across time and space, and occurred either in the form of direct, isolated wildcat protests, or as "managed" protests very dependent on the political strategies of regional elites. In Charles Tilly's (2006) terms, Russian labour protest in the late 1990s stayed parochial and bifurcated – that is, the protest claims vis-à-vis the regime remained localised, and were heavily managed by intermediaries in the form of regional elites. Consequently, Robertson (2011:65) writes, "in Russia in the late 1990s, there was plenty of contention, but there never emerged the underlying social networks or collective action frames to maintain sustained challenges across anything but narrow spans of space, time, or population."

As we will see in Chapter 4, Russian labour protest lacked independent mobilising structures, so that it could form a sustained social movement. Instead, it was highly dependent on the political opportunity structure, particularly the bargaining process between the federal centre and regional elites. As much literature on the collapse of the Soviet Union and the emergence of the Russian Federation has shown, provisions of autonomy to regional elites was a key strategy for the early Yeltsin regime to prevent secessionism promoted by regional elites' challenges to the nascent regime (Ross 2000; Golosov 2004; Giuliano 2011). This led to a transfer of power to regional elites, who subsequently aimed to consolidate their control over

[26] For Russia's incorporation in the neoliberal post-Cold War order, see Wedel (1999, 2009), Rutland (2013), and Ganev (2005). For the complicated role of the IMF see Rutland (1999) and Gould-Davies and Woods (1999).
[27] For the ethnic dimension of localised protest in Russia's regions, see Giuliano (2011).

power and resources. The mobilisation of discontented masses became an optional strategy to bargain with the centre.

Examining the geographical distribution of strikes, Robertson (2011) finds that regional differences in centre-periphery relations are indeed a strong explanatory predictor. The remarkable variation is depicted in Figure 6. Where relations with Moscow were positive, regional governors used their political sway over labour unions to keep labour demobilised, through the monetary and nonmonetary welfare role which the labour unions provided for ordinary workers (see Chapter 4). Where relations with Moscow were strained, regional governors permitted or even actively supported the occurrence of strikes. In most cases, regional governors avoided mass mobilisation, due to the risks it could bring when escalation would cause unintended consequences. However, when other bargaining strategies failed, it worked as an effective tool for leverage, especially for economically and political weak regions, as measured by industrial output and population size. In politically strong regions, where governors were less inclined to resort to mobilisation as a bargaining strategy, the relationship between economic hardship and protest levels was indeed weaker. This suggest that, when regional governors were able to, they obstructed workers' mobilisation by means of their control over the labour unions. Where workers were less organised into the elite-controlled unions, we find displays of direct, wildcat protests. Where governors were weaker, we find patterns of elite-managed, well-organised protests (Robertson 2011:67-97).

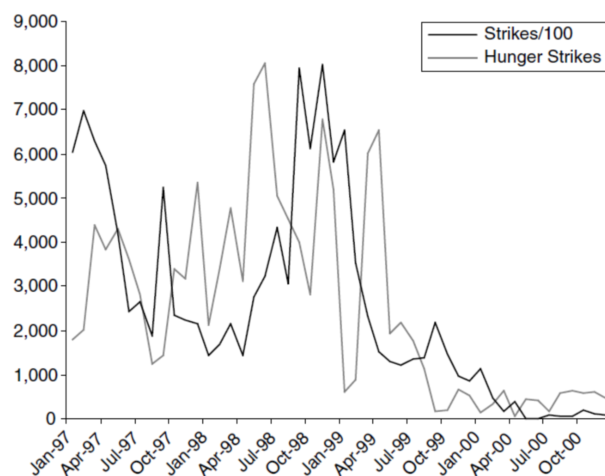

Figure 7 - Patterns of days lost to strikes and hunger strikes in the Russian Federation, 1997–2000 (reproduced from Robertson [2010:103]).

The patterns of labour protest across time varied greatly, too, as depicted in Figure 7. Robertson (2011) demonstrates that these fluctuations were greatly influenced by critical moments in the elite composition of the Yeltsin regime. Those governors allied with elite opposition factions would use top-down mobilisation to increase political pressure. This became particularly visible after instability and unpopularity forced Yeltsin to appoint Yevgeny Primakov, an opposition leader. Demobilisation occurred in the regions which had previously been at the forefront of labour mobilisation, while regions whose leaders were aligned with Yeltsin's Kremlin clique saw a spike in labour protest. Economic crisis provided the necessary condition for labour protest, but centre-periphery patterns were the crucial intervening variable. It is not so much that a divided elite merely led to more protest, as the classic social movement agenda would suggest; instead, elite divisions specifically explain the top-down patterns of mobilisation across space and time (Robertson 2011:100-23). We will later return to this issue, to see how elite divisions in the late 1990s led to protest decline.

The political structure of expansion and decline

From the neo-patrimonial turn to the end of the Milošević regime

In the second half of the 1990s, the political opportunity structure of the Milošević regime changed in favour of the democratic social movement. The protests of the first half of the 1990s

had a constitutive effect on the Serbian regime, eroding its populist ideology and appeal and its electoral base. Yet another protest wave erupted in the winter of 1996-7 over the electoral fraud denying the new opposition coalition, *Zajedno*, of its victories in municipal elections. Like in 1991 and 1992, students and opposition parties organised parallel, largely separate protests. Mass mobilisation caused splits among the political elites. "Belgrade's SPS mayor openly acknowledged opposition victory," Vladisavljević (2016:44) writes, "while the army chief met student protest leaders and stated publicly that forces under his command would keep out of the events. The BK TV network, which had long supported Milošević, now defected to the opposition." As he saw that his regime's elite unity and repressive capacities had declined Milošević made tactical concessions, giving in to opposition victories in major cities. The opposition demobilised, so that the student protest wave also dwindled down. By the presidential elections of 1997, discord within the opposition coalition erupted again, allowing Milošević to weather the storm. After he had served his maximum years as president of Serbia, Milošević had his party select him as President of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the remaining confederation of Serbia and Montenegro.[28] Milošević took many of his former powers along to his new office (Vladisavljević 2016).

The 1996-7 protest wave was not without lasting consequences. Serbian society further polarised into two black-and-white camps, pro- and anti-regime. The opposition used its local victories to consolidate resources, and civil society grew in size. The regime was forced to turn towards more arbitrary and personalist rule. Milošević's earlier populist political strategy based on a well-educated party cadre, electoral victories, control over the trade unions and the state-led economy, and extensive client-patron networks faded away. By the mid-1990s, Milošević's party ruled in a coalition with two small fringe parties, one of which was his wife's Yugoslav Left (JUL). Milošević thus diminished the power of his own party, and thereby the risk of intra-party challenge to his rule. In the long term, however, this "neo-patrimonial turn" – away from populist politics, broad electoral victories, and bureaucratic vehicles inherited from state socialist times and towards reliance on a narrow "insider" clique and the imposition of personal authority and coercion – was unsustainable (Pavlović 2000; Vladisavljević 2016).[29]

In addition, the regime failed to maintain elite unity among the economic elites. By the mid-1990s, "insider privatisation" had transferred much state and social property into the hands of the pre-1991 political elites (*nomenklatura*). After this, this elite was interested in the safeguarding of their capital rather than in criminalised capital accumulation. Thus, it started opposing Milošević's blocking of market-oriented reform and the establishment of "normal" capitalist relations. Indeed, even important sections of the mafia clans associated with the regime began to defect to opposition politicians, because they had lost an interest in their insider status and because it seemed Milošević was intent on reducing their power. Moreover, when the war with Bosnia ended in 1995, economic sanctions were lifted, and international trade was re-legalised, favourable conditions for "wartime entrepreneurs" and political insiders decreased, and economic opportunities increased among the small middle class. The growing

[28] From 1992 to 2006, Serbia was still part of a union with Montenegro. Until 2003, it called itself the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY), though this name was not recognised by the international community, since it opposed the FRY's aspirations to be recognised as the legal successor to socialist Yugoslavia. For most of the 1990s, Serbia, despite being part of the FRY operated largely as an independent entity. For the sake of simplicity, I leave Serbian-Montenegrin relations within FRY/Serbia and Montenegro to the side.

[29] *Contra* Vladisavljević (2016) one may also conceptualise this shift differently. From a Weberian perspective one may argue that the Milošević regime had been neo-patrimonial all along, but that the patrimonial charisma and patron-client networks around which it was organised began to erode, and failed to routinise into a more legal-rational kind of authority system. In Russia, by contrast, neo-patrimonialism developed into prebendalism (Szelényi 2016), where elite groups become increasingly dependent on the leadership for the benefices they receive.

middle strata flocked to the anti-Milošević opposition. Thus, changes in the economic structure greatly weakened Milošević's grip over the political structure (Gagnon 2004; Gould and Sickner 2008; Lazić and Cvejić 2007; Lazić 2015).

In 1998, veterans from earlier protest waves organised a youth movement to organise concerted anti-regime resistance and force the opposition into unity, so that Milošević could be replaced by a clear alternative. This SMO, *Otpor* (Resistance), will be examined in detail in Chapter 4. Due to the Kosovo War, renewed mobilisation in 1999 came too early. Many Serbians were preoccupied with survival, and NATO bombings worked into the hands of Milošević's anti-Western conspiracy theories and calls for national unity. Martial law also provided a cover for increased anti-opposition repression.

In the long run, however, the consequences of the Kosovo War were devastating. Milošević's international image had improved following his signing of the Dayton Agreement (1996) ending the Bosnian War on behalf of the Bosnian Serbs (Silber 1996; Hedges 1996),[30] while maintaining that Serbia itself had not been directly involved in the war.[31] When ethnic conflict in Kosovo re-emerged, Western fears of genocide resurfaced and the international context turned hostile again, Milošević being framed as a "Balkan pariah" (Vladisavljević 2016; see also Malmvig 2006). Second, the NATO campaign's destruction of military targets reduced the regime's repressive capacities. Third, the destruction wrought by the bombings also eroded Milošević's promises for socioeconomic improvement after the lifting of international sanctions (Vladisavljević 2016).

In 2000, Milošević made the crucial mistake of providing anti-regime forces with a political opportunity. He changed the constitution, so that the president of the FRY would be directly elected. He called for presidential as well as parliamentary elections to be held on 24 September. The opposition united into the Democratic Opposition of Serbia (DOS), with Vojislav Koštunica as the presidential candidate. DOS and *Otpor* staged effective anti-Milošević campaigns with Western support. Once again, there was electoral fraud and Milošević refused to accept defeat.[32] DOS and *Otpor* subsequently called for nation-wide nonviolent resistance, which merged with a strike wave that had started on 29 September. Protests in Belgrade demanding Milošević to step down escalated, but police and security forces refused to step in and repress. The police was outnumbered, and the military switched sides. In the period of uncertainty surrounding the elections, Đinđić and Koštunica had engaged in talks with heads of special units of the security forces.[33] Rumours that some military and security leaders had defected led to a split elite situation, so that the protests could run their course.

[30] Indeed, on many more occasions has the West been persuaded to prioritise "stability" in the Balkans, a region often perceived as a dangerous powder keg close to "Europe" (see Hansen 2006; Todorova 2009). Milošević also used his policy and image shift to play the Serbian opposition parties against each other (Vladisavljević 2016).

[31] Milošević's regime did in fact provide the Bosnian Serbs with weaponry, funding, paramilitary groups, and political support (see Ron 2000; LeBor 2003; Vivod 2013).

[32] The official results suggested a second round was necessary because neither Milošević nor Koštunica had won an absolute majority, but independent electoral monitors stated Koštunica had won with over 50 per cent of the vote.

[33] Mladen Joksić (2008) has argued two more important things with regards to the security forces. On the one hand, the opposition coalition's behind-the-scenes pact with the security forces made the overthrow of Milošević possible. "Without this pact-making element, the protests of 2000 would likely have had the same destiny as did those of 1996-1997" (Joksić 2008:35). On the other hand, the opposition was forced to agree to promise the security forces a maintenance of their autonomous position of power. Consequently, when post-2000 governments attempted to implement extensive political and economic reform packages, the security services responded by violently protecting their "reserved domain," which in turn has structurally impeded democratisation.

Eventually, the military sided with the protesters to ensure its interests would remain protected in a smooth turnover of power, thus avoiding revolutionary violence and demands for structural changes. On 7 October 2000, after about a week of sustained protests, Milošević resigned. A man who steered his engineering vehicle into the building of the state television gave the Bulldozer Revolution its name (Gagnon 2004; Vladisavljević 2016; Upchurch and Marinković 2016:Ch. 1; Nikolayenko 2017).

From Boris Yeltsin to Vladimir Putin

Despite continued economic and political turmoil, the late 1990s witnessed further decline in social mobilisation. With increasing electoral victories in the Duma from 1993 to 1995, the Communist Party of the Russian Federation under the head of Gennady Zyuganov came to lead the political opposition. In 1996, there was widespread fear that Zyuganov, who had forged a broad opposition coalition of nationalists and leftists, would defeat Boris Yeltsin in the presidential elections. Despite Yeltsin's extremely low approval rating, however, he managed to win. Yeltsin won due in large part to the polarisation of Russian politics. The absence of a well-developed multiparty system and democratic institutions meant that people voted not so much on their individual interests, but more so on the issue of democracy and reform itself. The election turned into the last referendum on the "transition" to democracy. Moreover, Yeltsin won the weight of the new economic elite behind his cause. In return for the infamous "loans-for-shares" scheme which transferred enormous state industries into the hands of a small circle of bankers and other *nouveau riche* through rigged auctions, Yeltsin obtained funds and positive media bias for his bid for re-election (McFaul 1996, 2002; Fish 2005). Other opposition factions, meanwhile, were either marginalised in the political landscape or co-opted by the ruling elite (Gel'man 2005).

In 1999–2000, at yet another critical juncture, elite instability failed to serve as a political opportunity for social mobilisation. Yeltsin's previous cartel-like deal with political and economic allies broke down and spurred fierce elite conflicts around the coming parliamentary and presidential elections. There were two camps: on the one hand, the Fatherland–All Russia bloc headed by Yevgeny Primakov and Moscow mayor Yuri Luzhkov, and supported by various regional governors, and on the other hand, the Kremlin side headed by Sergey Shoigu and Yeltsin's prime minister, Vladimir Putin, with a security services background, and supported by Boris Berezovsky's media conglomerate (Robertson 2011; Gel'man 2015). Despite the fierce competition between the two sides in view of the upcoming parliamentary and presidential elections, labour mobilisation declined and no political opportunity was formed for the already marginalised democratic opposition. The decline in protest was due to two factors. First, Putin waged a successful and swift campaign winning over the confidence of regional governors and powerful oligarchs. Putin had learned a lesson from the decentralisation dynamic that had endangered the Yeltsin regime and undermined federal state capacity. As it became likely that Putin would succeed Yeltsin, regional governors refrained from incentivising workers' mobilisation, and instead sought to demonstrate their loyalty to the "heir apparent." Second, the institutional set-up of the Duma elections mattered. The mixed electoral system, combining proportional representation and single-member districts, plus the lack of established parties, meant that the elections turned into "two separate contests; one in which Moscow-based presidential candidates fought a pseudo-primary for the succession, and a second in which regional governors focused on advancing their own, usually non-party candidates" (Robertson 2011:125). The mixed system allowed the regional governors to watch the national elections from a distance, waiting until the elite crisis at the federal level would be resolved, while protecting their local interests (Robertson 2011).

In August 1999, Yeltsin indicated Putin was his preferred successor. After gathering support from regional and economic elites, Putin publicly declared his support for the pro-Kremlin bloc Unity in November. In the end, Unity won 73 out of 226 seats in the Duma. At the end of 1999, Yeltsin abdicated and made his prime minister Acting President. Following thus, Putin only had to maintain his newly gained popularity until the March 2000 presidential elections. This task was further aided by the Second Chechen War (1999-2000, insurgency phase until 2009), which he oversaw much more successfully than his predecessor had in the first war (1994-6).[34] In the early 2000s, Putin continued to consolidate his rule by creating an effective "party of power" in support of the executive, by curbing the autonomy of regional governors, by selectively co-opting political opposition figures, by supporting the formation of semi-loyal (parastatal) opposition parties, by intimidating selected oligarchs, increasing federal control over the ex-Soviet labour union federation, by enhancing state control over the media, and by increasing legislative restrictions on civil society. The early 2000s would see no political opportunities for either labour or democratic anti-regime mobilisation (Baev 2004; Gel'man 2005, 2015; March 2009; Stoner-Weiss 2009; Silitski 2009; Robertson 2011; Horvath 2011).

Conclusion

In this chapter I have shown that political instability, elite crises, and multiple levels of power are useful variables to explain patterns of political protest in these two post-socialist hybrid regimes, but that they do not necessarily translate into successful nation-wide social movements. In order to examine such an outcome, we have to carefully look at the details of elite-movement interaction in the political structure.

I first examined how mobilisation from below, institutions, rifts among socialist elites, and cultural-historical legacies interacted in a contingent manner in the late 1980s to produce two different hybrid regimes in the post-socialist rump states. In Serbia elite-movement interactions during the anti-bureaucratic revolution formed the basis of the new post-1989 regime under Slobodan Milošević. Differences in the institutional make-up of federalism in Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union helped explain why nationalism took a virulent, ethnic form in Serbia but not in Russia. Furthermore, a Serbian democratic movement from below would have lacked powerful elite allies as the Yugoslav federal level crumbled and republican elites moved to consolidate their power. In Russia, we saw how Yeltsin regime was a product of the collusion of a nascent social movement with an intra-party counter-elite. There, institutions and historical legacies made virulent nationalism a weaker alternative, and reformists rather than hardliners would form the elite basis of the new regime.

Both new regimes in Serbia and Russia constituted hybrid regimes. On the one hand, the political structure of both regimes was similar, so that the domestic political opportunity structure could not be the sole explanation for the divergent regime transformations. Indeed, the largely exogenous factor of the Yugoslav wars sets the two cases apart. The Serbian regime's stability fluctuated along with, first, the effects of the war economy, the economic improvements after peace was signed in Bosnia, and finally, the return of economic and political weakening as a result of the Kosovo War. On the other hand, perhaps unexpectedly, the hybrid structure of the Milošević regime was somewhat more conducive for social mobilisation, because of its more developed system of political parties and elections, as opposed to Yeltsin's highly centralised and personalised regime which lacked a well-developed political party system and initially avoided meaningful elections. In addition, the Serbian regime was more depended on the active demobilisation of labour on a national scale. When Milošević's mass

[34] For overviews of the First Chechen War, see Gall and de Waal (1997), Lieven (1999), and Tishkov (2004).

base eroded and his rule took a more personalist and arbitrary turn, this proved unsustainable in the long turn. In the Russian case, by contrast, labour unrest was channelled into the political rifts within the federal structure. It depended largely on the regional governors, who held sway over the local unions, whether mobilisation from below could be used as a tactic to bargain with the federal centre or to demonstrate allegiance to a certain political faction.

In the final episode of the 1990s, while standing under increasing pressure from below and above, Serbia's regime collapsed while Russia's avoided lethal crises. In Serbia, political and economic elites drifted away from the regime towards the end of the 1990s, which Milošević had failed to contain by the time he called for early elections in 2000. In Russia, by contrast, Yeltsin managed to defuse elite crisis in 1996, because the main challenge to his rule, posed by the neo-communists, was ultimately too detached from society at large, and because Yeltsin managed to win the support of powerful economic and regional backers. Similarly, when crisis erupted over Yeltsin's successor, Vladimir Putin skilfully moved to persuade oligarchs and governors to flock to his side before elite crisis could provide an opportunity for protests. Once elected president, Putin moved to make Russia's political opportunity structure increasingly narrow.

Chapter 4: Mobilising structures

Introduction

Expanding over the course of multiple protest waves and eventually converging with labour mobilisation, the democratic social movement overthrew a repressive and nationalist regime in Serbia, while in post-socialist democratic Russia, political and economic grievances abound, social movements underwent processes of co-optation, institutionalisation, and involution. In this chapter I show how these differences can be explained if we pay attention (1) to the initial organisational infrastructures from which social movements in the post-socialist rump states sprang, and (2) to the organisational trajectories they underwent over the course of the 1990s. With regards to the first aspect, socialist legacies matter. With regards to the second, SMO–elite relations are particularly important, as well as how SMOs interact with the changing political opportunity structure.

The chapter starts with the initial organisational infrastructures of both regimes, contrasting Serbia's civil society which emerged during the early Milosevic years with Russia's movement society which dated from before the Yeltsin era. I also show differences in the mobilising structures available to labour mobilisation. Then I proceed to a discussion of the organisational trajectories during the 1990s. In Serbia, the democratic movement returned and expanded with each opportunity it perceived in the political context, eventually culminating in the effectively structured mass movement *Otpor*. In Russia, the *DemRossiia* movement was marked by legacies from the Soviet past and by its co-optation into the new Yeltsin regime. I detail its failure to transform into a sustained mass movement or institutionalised political party. It is crucial to note that *DemRossiia*'s timeline starts with antecedents in the 1980s and ends around 1994, whereas *Otpor* originated in the 1996-7 protest wave, was founded in 1998, and was dissolved in 2004. Lastly, I show how in Serbia organisations collaborated to bring about the Bulldozer Revolution, while in Russia, the lack of democratic social movements or parties was further entrenched by Putin's accession to the presidency.

Initial organisational infrastructures

Nascent civil society in Serbia

The anti-bureaucratic revolution of the late 1980s absorbed most labour and ethnonationalist mobilisation, and provided the basis for Milošević's creation of a post-Yugoslav regime. This also led to the demobilisation of many Yugoslav-era dissidents, as their focus had also shifted to "national" concerns. Although some human rights organisations also became absorbed in nationalist mobilisation, the late 1980s also saw the emergence of what became known as "the other Serbia," that is, a Western-oriented, anti-nationalist group of organisations contesting the Milošević regime (Bieber 2003a, 2003b). Since Milošević came to power precisely due to the emergence of a multiparty system, his regime did not inherit Yugoslav communism's single-party grip over society, and thus could not prevent the emergence of this anti-regime sphere. At the same time, it faced repression from the very beginning, initially "mainly by administrative and financial means," later increasingly by means of violence (Kostovicova 2006:28). In the early 1990s, SMOs in this civil sphere lacked sufficient resources and were too tied to the weak and fragmented political opposition, to challenge the regime (Bieber 2003a; Nikolayenko 2017). Moreover, some organisations were preoccupied with the consequences of war and refugee flows without challenging the regime's policies per se (Kostovicova 2006). At the same time it is important that, throughout the Milošević era, there remained an organisational base

for democratic mobilisation. From the very beginning, such mobilisation was also rooted in social networks among youth in the relatively autonomous universities. Milošević aimed to crack down on universities' independence, but this only led to mobilisational backlashes (Popadić 1999; Vladisavljević 2016; Nikolayenko 2012, 2017).

Given that Serbia's (rump Yugoslavia's) take-over of federal Yugoslav institutions was far from uncontested, there was also space for autonomous labour organisation during this chaotic period. While most trade union activity was absorbed by the Confederation of Trade Unions of Serbia (*SSS*), loyal to the Milošević regime, some independent labour organisation sprang up, too, most importantly in the form of the umbrella trade union confederation *UGS Nezavisnost*. *Nezavisnost* took an explicitly anti-regime stance. Because of being threatened by regime repression, it allied itself to opposition parties. In the short term, this was a weakness as it developed more of an NGO outlook dependent on foreign ties, than a strong support base of Serbian workers. In the long term, as disillusionment with the regime increased, its political involvement led to an increase in membership (Musić 2013; Upchurch 2006).

While there was some room for autonomous labour organisation, legacies of the Yugoslav system of self-management initially prevented the anti-regime social movement in Serbia to acquire a broad social support base among workers. Although Yugoslav ideology framed it as a transferral of power from the state to workers, the self-management system, which gave enterprises greater autonomy and rights over so-called "social property," it largely resulted in an increase in power on the part of the enterprise management. As enterprises began to operate more independently, workers began to define their interests more in line with their sector of the economy or individual workplace. Thus, self-management led to vertical cleavages among the working class. We should avoid typifying the newly fragmented working class as weak, however. It was generally in managers' interest to collaborate with workers to bargain with the state. Especially in well-off companies, such a coalition formed to resist state interference. In times of workers' dissatisfaction, however, workers turned to the state elites for help. Such a coalition between elites and workers did not work, however, during the crises of the 1980s. The elites made concession to appease the working classes, but wage increases only led to further economic deterioration. At this critical juncture of political uncertainty, republican elites in Serbia increasingly turned to nationalism as a political survival strategy.[35] In other republics like Slovenia, where reformists were more powerful than socialist hard-liners, where economic crisis ran less deep, and where the republican elites stood less to lose from federal break-down, a less nationalist and more social-democratic road was taken (Stanojević 2003; Grdešić 2008; Lazić and Cvejić 2010; Musić 2013).

The crucial conclusion is that workers in Yugoslavia were a strong, but fragmented social force due to the legacy of self-management, in contrast with their counterparts in the heavily centralised Soviet system. On the one hand, fragmentation meant that the workers could be pacified by the Milošević regime by means of nationalism and selective policies. On the other hand, they had to remain pacified. With the unsuccessful end of the Yugoslav wars, nationalism gradually began losing its broad appeal, the regime could no longer strategically promote the criminalised war economy, strikes re-emerged, and workers began flocking to the independent unions (Upchurch 2006; Musić 2013; Upchurch and Marinković 2016:Ch. 5).

[35] This was not so much a conscious decision, but an "unintended outcome of high levels of mobilization and spiraling social, economic and political conflicts in a complex, authoritarian multi-national state which experienced a severe economic crisis and rapid liberalization" (Vladisavljević 2008:6).

Russia's "movement society"

According to Stephen Fish (1991), *perestroika* produced not so much a civil society with clearly established channels and links with the state, but a "movement society." Most organisations, even self-designated political parties, were more concerned with the overthrow of the old system and its imprints, rather than with specific goals for afterwards. They had little interest in widening the independent social sphere beyond this immediate political goal or in representing concrete social groups. Moreover, the SMOs concentrated on getting their representatives *into* state agencies, rather than on developing relations *with* state agencies as actual interest groups, or on establishing tools and channels for external pressure on the policy-making process. This can be explained by the fact that the dissolution of the old Soviet regime, which gave rise to the emergence of SMOs in the first place, was occurring so rapidly, that developing access to its increasingly powerless institutions became a futile undertaking (Fish 1991).

It is within this context, in the last phase of *perestroika*, that *DemRossiia* emerged. *DemRossiia*'s successful mobilisation in favour of Yeltsin can largely be attributed to its embeddedness in multiple elite networks. Its founding members had been connected to dissident Andrei Sakharov's electoral campaign in the USSR Academy of Sciences, the Moscow Tribune (discussion club of pro-reform intellectuals), and the Moscow Aviation Institute. The Aviation Institute, in turn, linked the elite of the Moscow Tribune with reformist clubs within the CPSU, and with the Moscow Popular Front, an umbrella organisation for small, informal groups (composed of "democrats" and "young socialists"). Ties were also made with the anti-Stalinist association Memorial. It is on the basis of this intricate elite network, in combination with the more grassroots *Moscow Association of Voters* (MOI), that *DemRossiia* was founded. *DemRossiia*, in turn, was linked to the Yeltsin campaign. Because of its elite basis, *DemRossiia* was so strong that many organisations could not avoid joining under its umbrella. *DemRossiia* was weak, however, in the sense that it was only united in its support for Yeltsin and for the destruction of the old communist system (Garcelon 1997). As we will see later in this chapter, *DemRossiia*'s elite basis led to the reproduction of Soviet-era vertical organisational structures, and its co-optation by the embryonic Yeltsin regime led to the escalation of internal discord, particularly after its role was unclear after Yeltsin had solidified his rise to power after the August 1991 coup attempt. Meanwhile, the lack of political opportunities during the Yeltsin years meant that no alternative mobilising structures emerged for nation-wide democratic social mobilisation.

Labour mobilisation, too, had cast its lot with Yeltsin. When, already early in the Yeltsin regime, Russia was hit by sharp economic decline and hyperinflation, neither the *perestroika*-era strike committees nor the Soviet-era labour unions proved to be adequate mobilising structures. The *perestroika*-era strike committees united "a predominantly liberal democratic political leadership, which identified itself politically with the Yeltsin camp, and a rank-and-file base which was primarily concerned with immediate issues of wages and working conditions" (Clarke and Fairbrother 1993:8). This unity was tenuous, however; the leadership only succeeded at mobilisation if its political demands aligned with the economic grievances of the workers. When Yeltsin had come to power, the leadership faced a dilemma:

> On the one hand, if they did not express the grievances of the workers, and provide leadership to the demands for the indexation of wages and social protection, they risked losing their mass base. On the other hand, they were reluctant to sacrifice their political commitment to Yeltsin, and the access to political power which it had provided for them. (Clarke and Fairbrother 1993:9).

This once again demonstrates the trouble of a movement's early co-optation into official politics. In service of the Yeltsin regime, the workers' movement began to negatively frame "excessive wage claims as inflationary, and strike action as anti-government" (Clarke and Fairbrother 1993:9), as a result of which it indeed lost its mass base.

The official labour unions, too, suffered from many weaknesses. They were divided politically, hierarchically organised and detached from ordinary workers' grievances, and burdened by Soviet legacies (Clarke and Fairbrother 1993). Trade unions retained their Soviet-era role as "a structure adapted to monitoring, regulating and controlling the workers through the network of patronage and inspection, which has thoroughly discredited the union in the eyes of its members" (Clarke and Fairbrother 1993:13). Due to their dependence on the management for survival and the lack of responsive central political authorities they could appeal to, the unions could not change their role from a welfare distributor to an organisational vehicle for workers' interests, and almost became a branch of enterprise management itself. Consequently, when workers rose against wage arrears or insider privatisation, they lacked a mobilising structure they trusted and which had mobilising capacities independent of the management and influential towards the regime. At the national level, trade union federations also alienated their membership through their radical institutionalisation into the new system. Independent unions deviating from the norm were few and isolated. This isolation obstructed brokerage, diffusion, coordinated action, and upward scale shift, and thus – in short – the formation of a nation-wide workers' movement (Clarke and Fairbrother 1993; Mandel 2001).[36]

Organisational trajectories throughout the 1990s

Expansion and persistence in Serbia

For much of the 1990s, Milošević retained the support of the working classes and prevented labour mobilisation. Only towards the second half that strikes became somewhat more frequent and that pro-Milošević rallies failed to reach large numbers. However, as we have seen, regime stability also depended on popular support in multiparty elections. These provided repeated political opportunities, which were used by the nascent democratic movement to learn from past mistakes. Over the course of the 1990s, the democratic movement improved its organisational structure and widened its resource base. It was especially the student wing of the democratic movement which realised the need to stay detached from opposition allies, and used its mobilisational strength to force the opposition into unity.

The parallel protests in 1991 and 1992 organised by the political opposition and by students did not leave any lasting organisational structure for later mobilisation. Through a combination of repression, counter-rallies, and concessions, Milošević managed to demobilise the protests. However, later mobilisation would also largely spring from the anti-regime networks among students and teachers in universities. Students gained useful experience in setting up ad-hoc organisations per faculty to manage the protests. In the long run, Milošević's curtailing of universities autonomy after the protests would turn out to be unsuccessful, and students would rise again (Prošić-Dvornić 1993; Vladisavljević 2016; Nikolayenko 2017).

In 1996-7, Milošević's annulling of the opposition's local electoral victories spurred renewed mobilisation by the opposition and by students. Again, the protests had a largely young, middle-class social base, and failed to win over the working classes (Babović 1999). The protests acquired the support of the Orthodox Church, but not yet of any of the labour union

[36] See also Friedgut and Siegelbaum (1990), Mandel (1990), Rutland (1990), Burawoy and Krotov (1995), and Kubicek (2002).

federations (CNN 1996). Unlike in the previous protest wave, this time the student protests left a more lasting impact. A Student Parliament parallel to the university's official structures was set up, as well as the Student Initiative, advocating for students' rights at universities, and the Student Political Club. Finally, in mid-June 1997 an umbrella SMO called the Serbian Student Movement (*Pokret studenata Srbije*) was established to coordinate the student organisations (Vladisavljević 2016; Nikolayenko 2017). A remaining problem is the weak, fragmented political opposition, which is only half-heartedly supported by the students. The *Zajedno* opposition coalition is quickly demobilised when Milošević concedes in part to his party's electoral losses. Cleverly using divide-and-rule tactics, Milošević ignores the students' demands going beyond the electoral fraud (Balkan Peace Team 1997; Vladisavljević 2016).

Although these concessions led to demobilisation, control over certain key municipalities including Belgrade allowed the opposition parties to build up mobilising resources for the last protest wave in 2000. In the last wave, which eventually toppled Milošević, centre stage would be taken by *Otpor* (Resistance). This SMO was founded in 1998 by students and NGO activists, most of them veterans from the 1996-7 protest wave. *Otpor*'s organisational transformation to a large degree explains why the overthrow of Milošević could succeed. Anti-regime protest developed from two parallel strands of opposition-led and student-led mobilisation, to a nation-wide social movement with functional internal structuration, well-developed tactics, and a broader social base.

First, *Otpor*'s protest aims signalled a goal transformation with respect to previous protest waves, where students and the opposition would have specific and often separate demands. *Otpor* abandoned longer specific demands or appeals to the consequences of the regime. Milošević would have to be removed from the scene regardless of people's specific motivations. This also meant *Otpor* would not accept any concessions which would prolong the lifespan of the regime. *Otpor*'s targeting of the man in power, rather than the consequences of his rule widened the movement's social base to include people with various grievances (Nikolayenko 2017).

Second, *Otpor* organised horizontally to increase its legitimacy amongst its social base. *Otpor* did not have visible leaders, but a system of rotating spokespeople who articulated the movement's political message. This created the impression of a widely-supported social movement rather than that of a niche activist bubble. *Otpor*'s leaderless structure allowed it to avoid both co-optation as well as intimidation of an individual or small leadership group by the regime (Bieber 2003a; Farrel, Stoner, and Popović 2010; Nikolayenko 2017).

Third, horizontality was accompanied by great internal structuration. *Otpor* was divided into numerous local cells. At the top stood the central office, which in turn was divided into departments, such as human resources (concerned with recruitment and training), marketing, and press. Additionally, *Otpor* was split into two campaign wings. The "positive" wing was concerned with the get-out-the-vote (GOTV) campaign called *Vreme Je!*, "It's Time!" The "negative" wing staged confrontational anti-Milošević demonstrations and other actions (the campaign was called *Gotov Je!*, "He's Finished!"). There was little communication between the two wings, to avoid that those in the positive wing would face repercussions for the more provocative actions on the part of the negative wing. The positive campaign opened up opportunities for risk-averse people to nevertheless be politically engaged in the social movement. In public, *Otpor* indeed distanced itself entirely from the GOTV campaign (Nikolayenko 2012, 2017; Farrel, Stoner, and Popović 2010).

Fourth, *Otpor* learned from previous protest waves that a successful movement against Milošević needed to bridge socioeconomic, regional, and other cleavages in Serbian politics. Hence, the SMO adopted effective recruitment tactics. *Otpor* used family ties to reach across generations. Repression of *Otpor* activists in Novi Sad spurred the formation of "Otpor

Mothers". When the mobilisation of aggrieved mothers in turn led to their detention, a network of *pro bono* layers sympathetic to *Otpor*'s cause was formed. Furthermore, starting from its networks in Serbia's four main universities in Belgrade, Kragujevac, Niš, and Novi Sad, *Otpor* actively sought to recruit youth from the surrounding countryside. *Otpor* also allowed for much local autonomy. *Otpor*'s cells could concentrate on local issues and local SPS leaders – their "own Milošević", as *Otpor* put it – and freely innovate on the nonviolent repertoire of contention. This further strengthened *Otpor*'s regional outreach (Nikolayenko 2012, 2017).

Fifth, *Otpor* adopted successful tactics towards its allies and towards the regime. It built up an organisational structure independent from the political opposition, so that it avoided co-optation into elite politics and could force the opposition into cooperation. Indeed, *Otpor* actively shamed the opposition for its disunity. *Otpor* furthermore made successful use of foreign donors. The changes in the international context, as discussed in Chapter 3, meant that *Otpor* received large sums of money, for instance to print and distribute campaign material, as well as trainings in civil disobedience from the United States. Towards the Milošević regime, *Otpor* exhibited strict nonviolent discipline in its repertoire of contention, which was enforced through member trainings. This deprived the regime of opportunities for justifiable repression and escalation. *Otpor*'s repertoire of contention continued to humorous, mocking street performances and highly mobile protest walks of earlier protest waves, but combined it with mass-produced symbolism. Making use of contemporary branding and marketing techniques, *Otpor*'s highly recognisable slogans and logo proliferated all around Serbia in the form of graffiti and stickers. *Otpor* also adopted a cooperative, friendly approach towards security, police and military forces, in order to erode the regime's propensity to repress (Nikolayenko 2012, 2017; Farrel, Stoner, and Popović 2010).

In sum, learning and innovating on the basis of previous protest waves produced by the repeated, though narrow, political opportunities in the Milošević era, the democratic social movement in Serbia produced a highly structured SMO with well-developed tactics and a wider support base than ever before.

Co-optation and contraction in Russia

We have seen that the labour movement lacked working mobilising structures and that it was heavily influenced by elite bargaining between centre and periphery (see Chapter 3). The democratic movement arose with close ties to the counter-elite inside the Soviet system and later to the Yeltsin regime, which led to movement contraction. In this subsection I will show, first, that *DemRossiia*'s elite basis led to the reproduction of Soviet-era vertical organisational structures, and second, that the SMO's organisational developments and links to the ruling elite, particularly after Yeltsin's ultimate rise to power in August 1991, largely explain its downfall.

Figure 8 shows *DemRossiia*'s initial organisational structure. Marc Garcelon (1997:65) describes the organisation's vertical structure as a "layer cake" structure. The SMO was led by a Moscow-based Coordinating Committee, composed of leaders of the umbrella organisation's constituent parties and associations. This leadership body directed the activities of the central, regional, and local levels, subdivided into political, legislative, and social branches. This verticality was reinforced by the fact that only the central leadership had access to nation-wide press in Moscow.

Unlike in Serbia, where the democratic social movement developed and innovated over the course of multiple protest waves, the initial successes of *DemRossiia* led to its implication in elite politics from an early stage onwards (*cf.* Kriesi 1996), and its inability to shed some important Soviet legacies over the course of the 1990s. Once initial aims are (partially) achieved and a position of socio-political influence has been established, most SMOs tend towards intra-movement elite formation, internal stratification, and professionalisation (in short, oligarchisation), as well as towards more moderate movement goals. Moreover, when a charismatic leader disappears, an SMO is likely to divide into a more moderate core and radical splinter factions (Zald and Ash 1966). Both dynamics apply to the case of *DemRossiia*. Yet, according to Garcelon (1997) these general propositions do not sufficiently explain *DemRossiia*'s demise, since they were significantly exacerbated by the specific historical context and legacies in post-socialist Russia. First, it must be stressed that the Soviet Union had no autonomous public sphere. As a result, most of the social base of the democratic movement, composed of urban professionals and intellectuals, lacked organisational and political experience. This explains the tendency towards an "anti-politics" without clear goals set for after the overthrow of the system, as well as the movement's adoption of a utopian view of market reform, rather than a broader view of democracy (see also Chapter 5). This also explains why little effort was made to establish a wider movement with a mass base. Second, those few members of the movement who possessed organisational and political experience were likely to rely on Soviet-era informal networks, and thus reproduce the vertical patrimonial relations of that time. Hence, we see that the core of *DemRossiia*'s Moscow-based leadership, which had acquired political capital over the course of *perestroika* and which was positioned at the connections between grassroots organisations and elite allies, "replicated the vertical-estate pattern of Soviet political life within the heart of the democratic movement" (Garcelon 1997:67).

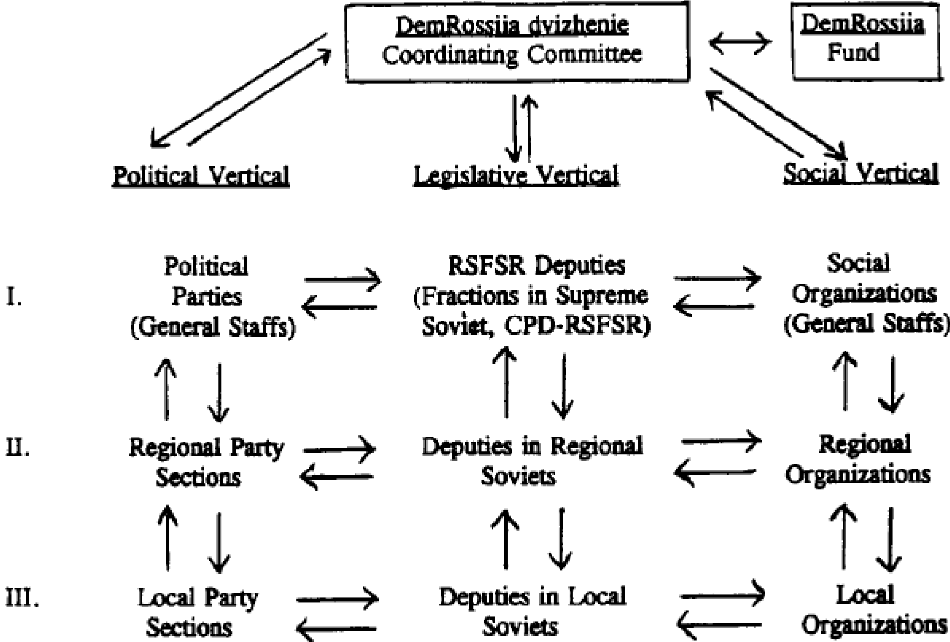

Figure 8 - Proposed organisational framework for the DemRossiia *Coordinating Council, drawn by Victor Dmitriev of the* DemRossiia *Organising Committee, dated September 1990 (reproduced from Garcelon [1997:66])*

The SMO failed to develop a broad program and popular basis, and instead transformed into a co-opted mobilising structure vulnerable to the whims of elite politics. The disappearance of the Soviet system at the end of 1991 made the vertical structure untenable. When the unifying factors of resistance against the Soviet system and Yeltsin's charismatic leadership disappeared, and when the social base of the SMO impoverished, internal divisions and ambivalent relations with the Yeltsin regime led to the movement's demise. *DemRossiia* struggled with internal disunity from the very beginning (Fish 1991). This problem was heightened after it had to redefine its role and find an organisational structure to maintain its existence, following Yeltsin's rise to power in 1991 (*cf.* Michels 1911; Zald and Ash 1966). The SMO faced both internal and external oligarchisation attempts, that is, efforts from both intra- and extra-movement elites to take-over and control the movement as a whole (Flikke 2004).

Moreover, *DemRossiia* failed to transform into a political party due to obstruction by the presidency. *DemRossiia* was thus hampered by its co-optation by Boris Yeltsin. Yeltsin co-opted selected leaders within the umbrella organisation, and temporarily gave them important advisory positions. In the meantime, other elites mobilised in the political space opened by *DemRossiia* (Flikke 2004; *cf.* Tarrow 1996:60). Yeltsin shifted his attention to such elites, while at the same time restricting political opportunities for *DemRossiia*'s continued existence as an SMO or for its transformation into a party, particularly by the postponing of parliamentary elections and the appointment of regional governors by decree (Flikke 2004). I will now zoom in, first, on the development of the SMO's organisational structure and subsequent internal disputes, and second, on the Yeltsin's role in the SMO's demise.

DemRossiia struggled with its organisational structure from the very early stages onward. It did not transform into a political party around the first competitive elections in the Soviet Union in 1989 and 1990, because party-like organisations were not yet legalised. Consequently, the independent deputies supported by *DemRossiia* were inclined to go their own way once elected. In addition, Yeltsin was not in favour of his mobilisational vehicle transforming into a party, because he wanted to remain a unconstrained, charismatic figure standing "above" partisan politics.

Nevertheless, the leaders in *DemRossiia*'s Coordinating Council strove for a permanent organisational structure following Yeltsin's election as Chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet in June 1990. Nikolai Travnik, a prominent leader in the movement, took the initiative to set up the Democratic Party of Russia (DPR). However, this party split already at the founding congress when a group of prominent deputies accused Travkin of "a dictatorial leadership style" (Brudny 1993:147). Prominent people started leaving the DPR, but it also grew rapidly and absorbed smaller organisations, becoming the largest party after the CPSU. Those disillusioned with the DPR re-established *DemRossiia* as a non-party SMO. This re-structured *DemRossiia* would operate as a coordinating umbrella for all democratic organisations, while at the same time maintaining the principle of individual membership. *DemRossiia* adopted a hybrid organisational form, between party coalition and SMO. Travkin was initially sceptical, and wanted his DPR to be the strongest democratic force in Russia. In January 1991, however, his DPR re-joined *DemRossiia*. Not only did *DemRossiia* remain loosely structured from this point onwards, it also failed to set up a substantive program beyond its basic bylaws (which stated little more than its aims to coordinate democratic forces against the CPSU and promote civil society).

In its early years, *DemRossiia* "was besieged by several efforts to coopt its membership into would-be political parties organized by individuals opposed to its remaining only a social movement" (Brudny 1993:154). In yet another attempt at internal oligarchisation, Nikolai Travkin organised another broad democratic party, which once more failed to take over *DemRossiia*. A few weeks later in July 1991, there was a failed attempt at external

oligarchisation. Acting in vain, a coalition of the most prominent pro-reform elites – Gavriil Popov, Eduard Shevardnadze, Aleksander Yakovlev, Aleksander Rutskoy, and others – aimed to persuade the DemRossiia leadership to merge into their new political party, the Movement for Democratic Reforms (DDR). Despite Popov's connections to *DemRossiia*, its leaders saw DDR as an attempt by liberal *nomenklatura* members to demobilise the democratic movement (Brudny 1993; Flikke 2004).

The polarization of politics in 1991, culminating in the August 1991 coup, temporarily unified *DemRossiia*, but after Yeltsin secured his rise to power, debates over its function and structure re-appeared. *DemRossiia*'s leaders wanted to transform their organisation into a mobilising structure to which Yeltsin would listen. However, relations between DemRossiia and Yeltsin started to deteriorate after the August 1991 coup. Prominent *DemRossiia* leaders criticised Yeltsin for allowing too many former communists on his staff and for the slow pace of reform, among other complaints. Yeltsin also did not come to the movement's Second Congress and sent deputy PM Gaidar instead. Ultimately, it seemed, Yeltsin was more interested in intra-elite compromises to stabilise the state than in democratisation. Indeed, Yeltsin only made use of *DemRossiia* when it suited his objectives, and deprived it of its access to political power when it did not (Brudny 1993; Ponomarev 1993; McFaul 2002).

Yet, *DemRossiia* could not afford to criticise Yeltsin for too long. Economic crisis meant that it was dependent on its elite alliance for financial survival. Yeltsin, in turn, sought rapprochement with the movement once he needed a mobilising structure for his increasingly unpopular economic reforms. Responding to the new regime's call for help, *DemRossiia* set up regional branches to support and promote the government's economic reform policies. This rapprochement led to *DemRossiia*'s continued political dependence on Yeltsin, which alienated some of its crucial members. Radical democrats, led by Yuri Afanas'yev and Marina Sal'ye, did not approve of *DemRossiia*'s thorough co-optation and wanted it to form the basis for democratic opposition against the new regime. They were particularly opposed to what they perceived as Yeltsin's preservation of the power of the former *nomenklatura*. The radical and pro-government factions in the SMO failed to find a compromise. The radical democrats appealed to the rank-and-file membership for support, but the pro-government faction had more resources and used its regional branches to counter the radicals' campaign. At the Third Congress in late 1992, the radicals were expelled and the pro-government consensus was carved in stone (Brudny 1993).

From 1992 on, as economic hardship struck Russia, *DemRossiia*'s main task was to combat the political growth of the nationalists and neo-communists. The government steered *DemRossiia* to create a pro-regime electoral bloc. This led to the creation of the party Democratic Choice. Once more, the democratic movement was used by the regime as a vehicle not so much for democratisation but for the implementation of its version of market-oriented economic reform. When tensions between parliament and Yeltsin rose in 1993, the remainder of *DemRossiia* also sided with the regime, since it interpreted the rising strength of the neo-communists and nationalists as a threat to Russia's democratic achievements. *DemRossiia* successfully collected signatures in favour of a constitutional referendum, so that Yeltsin could bypass parliamentary opposition. But Yeltsin did not rely consistently on *DemRossiia*'s popular mobilisation. He swung back and forth between a policy of political compromise with centrist politicians (and getting rid of democrats), and a populist strategy which required *DemRossiia* as a mobilising structure. This inconsistent and ambivalent relationship was ultimately unsustainable for the democratic movement. Yeltsin dropped ideas to create a political party based on *DemRossiia* and other political factions, with himself at the helm. *DemRossiia* mobilised massively for the last time in support of Yeltsin when the presidency and the

parliament clashed violently over constitutional reform in March 1993 (Brudny 1993; Ponomarev 1993; McFaul 1993, 2002).

In the final assessment, *DemRossiia* was co-opted by a liberal elite more interested in state capacity and swift economic reform, than in elections, parties, and other democratic institutions. This, in turn, led to disputes, factionalism, and the failure of organisational transformations. After 1993, *DemRossiia* evaporated. A few of its members were elected to the Duma in 1993 as part of the "Yavlinsky-Boldyrev-Lukin" bloc (the later political party Yabloko). These former *DemRossiia* activists would, however, also split over Yeltsin's controversial economic reform policies. As a result of this split, in turn, the remnants of *DemRossiia* were absorbed by the Union of Right Forces (SPS) party, which was strongly in favour of Yeltsin and his economic reformers Gaidar and Chubais. When these remnants, under the name of Democratic Choice of Russia, were absorbed by SPS, the most prominent remaining member Lev Ponomaryov went into human rights activism (McFaul 1993, 2002:161ff.; Gel'man 2005; Garcelon 2005).

Final stages and aftermaths

Mobilising the Bulldozer Revolution

Thanks to *Otpor*'s increasing mobilisational capacities, the social movement could unite with the Democratic Opposition of Serbia (DOS) without risking co-optation. This unison was further strengthened by the involvement of NGOs. Otpor had created a network with NGOs, which included the Centre for Free Elections and Democracy (CFED) and G17+. The CFED observed the October 2000 elections and monitored irregularities. This was particularly important because electoral fraud had already proven to be an important trigger for popular mobilisation in 1996. The democratic movement could not afford such an opportunity to go unnoticed. G17+ consisted of a group of economists working on economic programmes for post-Milošević reforms. It did not only advise the opposition, but also aimed to mobilise larger groups of people in favour of its proposals, through carrying out local social projects (Bieber 2003a).

Crucially, Milošević could not maintain his refusal of Koštunica's presidential victory after labour mobilisation converged with the post-election demonstrations organised by DOS and *Otpor*. On 29 September 2000, the 7,500 workers of the Kolubara mine went on strike. Since the Kolubara mine provided much of Serbia's power supplies, this was a strategically important strike. The strike was condemned by the regime-controlled union (SSS), but supported by the independent trade unions, most importantly *Nezavisnost*. When the regime sent in police and threatened to arrest the strikers, gradually thousands of people from nearby towns came to support the strikers, creating a crowd of up to 20,000 people. The police was reluctant to respond repressively, as the strike became the centre of political attention and was visited by would-be president Koštunica. Eventually, the police begged down. The Kolubara strike represented the merger of labour mobilisation and the democratic social movement into a wide anti-Milošević revolution. The strike wave, soon joined by workers in Pancevo, Sevojno and Kostolac, dealt a last blow to the regime's crumbling legitimacy (Erlanger 2000; Marinković 2003; Upchurch 2006; Upchurch and Marinković 2016: Ch. 1; Nikolayenko 2017).

After the Bulldozer Revolution of October 2000, the final uprising against Milošević which forced him to accept the election results, *Otpor* slowly went into decline. The SMO divided over disagreements regarding its future function. In the fall of 2000, *Otpor* still campaigned against the parties which had been the basis of the Milošević regime so that they would be defeated in the December 2000 parliamentary elections. Following this, *Otpor*

focused on anti-corruption and democratic accountability. By 2003, some members wanted to transform *Otpor* into a political party. This attempt was unsuccessful, as *Otpor* did not reach the electoral threshold for parliamentary representation. In 2004, some remaining prominent members merged with Đinđić's Democratic Party (Joksić and Spoerri 2011).

Pre-empting undesirable mobilisation

When Putin came to power in 2000, he coupled his consolidation of the political and economic elites with policies aimed at restricting the autonomous civil sphere. Because the increasing restrictiveness of NGO-related legislation was implemented mostly after the first presidency, I here briefly focus on the establishment of pro-Kremlin *ersatz* SMOs (Robertson 2011). In 2000, Walking Together was founded as the first *ersatz* movement. It focused mostly on support for the regime and apolitical concerns such as drug free zones around schools and collecting rubbish. It also aimed to reinvigorate Russian culture and patriotism, and engaged in the public burning of supposedly inappropriate books. Around the transition from Putin's first to his second presidency, ideologically motivated youth opposition movements nevertheless started mushrooming (Hashim 2005; Robertson 2011). To counter this trend – which was reinforced by the youth-led colour revolutions across the post-socialist world, most importantly the Orange Revolution in Ukraine – the Putin regime began more actively to "diffusion-proof" (Koesel and Bunce 2013) the system against grassroots mobilisation. Walking Together was transformed into *Nashi* (Ours), which took up a more virulently ideological stance, identifying "international terrorism" and the United States as Russia's primary threats (Sperling 2016). *Nashi* has taken many crucial lessons from anti-regime movements like *Otpor* in Serbia and *Pora* in Ukraine, and established a wide organisational network across Russia. Other *ersatz* SMOs deliberately organised by the regime include *Molodaya Gvardiya* (Young Guards) and *Otechestvo* (Fatherland). The movements do not only organise pro-Kremlin rallies, especially around election time, but also harass foreign diplomats, organise summer camps, and visit war veterans (Robertson 2011; Koesel and Bunce 2013).[37] *Nashi*'s main preoccupation has been to channel youth discontent "into harmless channels [...] [b]y fabricating and marketing a fashionable alternative to the existing opposition youth groups" (Horvath 2011:16). Thanks to their access to regime funding, *ersatz* movements like *Nashi* have to a large degree out-crowded other youth SMOs.

Labour, meanwhile, also came under greater control of the Russian regime. As a consequence of Putin's re-centralisation of Russia's federal structure, regional elites now used demobilisation to demonstrate their loyalty to the regime, and are disincentivised to use top-down labour mobilisation to bargain with the increasingly powerful federal centre. Besides this, the Putin regime sought to re-establish central control over the labour unions. We have already noted the overall lack of strong independent labour unions in post-socialist Russia. Under Yeltsin these labour unions had developed close ties to regional authorities to maintain their role of social welfare distributor and to survive financially. This meant that the labour unions became implicated in the centre-periphery bargaining process. To put a halt to this dynamic, the Putin regime reformed labour legislation so that the successor to the Soviet-era trade union federation FNPR (Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia) would come under greater federal government control, and alternative unions would be weakened. The new labour law gave the FNPR a monopoly position. Smaller, local or sector-based unions, which could more easily be co-opted into regional politics, were essentially removed from the scene. This

[37] See also Hemment (2009, 2012), Lassila (2011), Atwal and Bacon (2012), Smyth, Sobolev and Soboleva (2013), Cheskin and March (2015).

happened in parallel with the co-optation of regional governors into the political structure, so that the fragmented pattern of elite-led labour mobilisation in post-socialist Russia effectively came to an end in the early 2000s (Robertson 2011:149ff.).[38]

Conclusion

In sum, we encounter two different social movement trajectories throughout the 1990s in the post-socialist rump states. The Serbian story starts from a small space for civil society mobilisation, and a strong grip over labour organisation. However, this showed cracks when *Nezavisnost* emerged as an independent labour union. The Russian case is marked by the failure of democrats to move beyond the *perestroika*-era movement society, as well as the lack of independent labour organisation. In Serbia we see a trajectory of expansion and persistence, whereas the Russian democratic movement faced co-optation and decline. Finally, over the course over multiple protest waves, Serbia widened its social base. *Otpor* realised the need for a broad movement unifying various social groups against the regime. It effectively marshalled resources, including foreign funding, and created an underground organisation with highly effective internal structuration and regional outreach. It eventually merged with labour mobilisation. In Russia, by contrast, *DemRossiia* reproduced the elitist and vertically structured patrimonial politics of Soviet times, and thus failed to turn into a sustained mass movement. Due to its early co-optation by the emerging Yeltsin regime, its trajectory was marred by internal discord, the failure to restructure the organisation, as well as the failure to transform into an institutionalised political party. The aforementioned contrast in terms of social breadth will also be reflected in the movements' framing, as the next chapter will demonstrate.

[38] See also Ashwin and Clark (2003), Grigoriev and Dekalchuk (2017).

Introduction

Milošević's nationalist-socialist regime was the product of a revolt against a decentralising state perceived as dealing inefficiently with constitutional and economic crisis; following this, Milošević failed to resolve the Kosovo issue, and the country plunged even deeper into economic crisis. The Russian democratic movement had concentrated on the establishment of a Western nation-state, the advent of Western prosperity, and the possibilities provided by Western cultural freedoms and capitalist consumerism, rather than on liberal democracy in the broader sense of attitudes and institutions; following this, the Yeltsin era was marked by the shaking of the federal structure of the supposed nation-state, and by the destruction of the economy and any sense of socioeconomic security. It follows logically, then, that anti-regime framing in both post-socialist rump states tended to take the opposite discourse and ideology of the regime. This occurred successfully in Serbia, while in Russia no unifying collective action frame contested the Yeltsin regime until Putin came to power.

In both cases, the 1990s were marked by a lack of ideological cohesion. In the Serbian case the democratic social movement managed to make strategic use of this ambiguous situation and forge successful polysemic frames unifying a variety of social forces.[39] Such framing temporarily overcame social divisions which had previously hampered the democratic movement. In the Russian case, ambiguity had different implications. On the one hand, the Yeltsin regime's adoption of the label "democratic" translated into the lack of an impetus for a new democratic movement, which could question the narrow conception and implementation of democracy by the *perestroika*-era movement and the regime it had brought to power. On the other hand, while Russian society gradually grew disillusioned with the Yeltsin regime, communism had been deeply discredited too. Society split along the long-standing division between Westernisers and Slavophiles; opposition, whether from the bottom up or from the top down, failed to achieve frame bridging. In the end, Yeltsin won the 1996 elections against the neo-communists, but it was his successor Vladimir Putin – crucially, not a social movement! – who managed to forge a polysemic frame combining elements from democratic, statist, and nationalist.

Ideologies and Frames in Post-Socialist Regime Transformation

Milošević's Quasi-Socialist Nationalism

The anti-bureaucratic revolution finalised Slobodan Milošević's rise to power and laid the basis of the ideological frame of his new regime. Solidarity with the Kosovo Serbs, perceived as oppressed by the local Albanian-dominated local government, was initially the dominant frame of the protest wave. When, from September 1988 on, it converged with protests concerning largely unrelated phenomena such as constitutional reform, lack of political participation, socio-economic crisis, and corruption, the dominant "anti-bureaucratic frame" took over. This polysemic frame could unite disparate protest identities and claims due to its specific, antagonised target. This framing of a single antagonist resonated widely with the dominant theme of the oppressive bureaucrat, a wide category of managers and politicians deemed parasitical and incompetent, in Yugoslavia.[40] The idea of excessive administration and

[39] Polysemic frames are frames which may mean different things to different audiences, see Chapter 2.

[40] See also Grdešić (2017).

management could also fuse with the idea that Yugoslavia was failing because it was too decentralised. Only in the spring of 1989 did nationalism take up a dominant role in the framing of the anti-bureaucratic revolution. Even then, the presence of Serbian nationalist symbols meant different things for different people – reassertion of the ethnic nation, recentralisation of the state, or resistance against officialdom in general (Vladisavljević 2008:170-76).

As relations between the constituent republics of Yugoslavia strained, virulent nationalism became a logical political strategy for the Milošević regime to establish its legitimacy. It must not be forgotten, however, that Milošević did not break with communism altogether but rebranded his party as socialist. Combined, this led to an ideological regime type which Marko Grdešić (2016:775) describes as "a hybridization of Serbian nationalism and Leninist socialism under the umbrella of anti-bureaucratic populism," or, in Veljko Vujačić's (2003) words, "post-communist national socialism." This hybrid frame arose from the perception of orthodox communist cadres that – in times of economic and legitimacy crises – they needed to win over nationalist intellectuals, rally mass support, and replace their ideology of class struggle, internal enemies and a single truth, with a comparable framework. The polysemic master frame of "anti-bureaucracy"[41] takes up this function for both socialism and nationalism (Vujačić 2003; Grdešić 2016). Where in the revolutions of the Eastern bloc and the former Soviet Union, liberal democracy went hand in hand with anti-socialism, socialism still held rather broad appeal in Serbia and workers were relatively strongly positioned in the social order (Stanojević 2003; Meszmann 2009), so a strategy for power had to bend and merge with socialism. Nor could Russians be singled out as the external antagonist, since Yugoslav socialism had not been imposed from Moscow but created through an indigenous revolution (see also Vladisavljević 2019).[42]

There are two major implications of the polysemic frame of the Milošević regime. The first is the pacification of workers (Stanojević 2003). Though without abandoning faith in the socialist system and its ideological symbolism as such, increasingly politicised industrial workers' protests had been a key component of the anti-bureaucratic revolution. Workers demanded not only higher wages and a reduction in bureaucracy, but later also a re-centralisation of Yugoslavia's internal market structure, the resolution of Serbia's constitutional status, a halt to the nationalist mobilisation of ethnic Albanians in Kosovo, and the creation of a body to represent workers in parliament. Milošević capitalised on these populist demands to rise to power in Serbia, and then used the nationalist demands to mask his neglect of the labour-related demands (Vladisavljević 2008:111-119; Meszmann 2009). After the Milošević and his allies began to steer the protest wave from the top down, and the new regime started taking shape,

> blue-collar demands were dissolved into a broader program of the political struggle of Serbian bureaucracy against the rival political nomenclatures in other republics, which began flirting with the idea of separation from Yugoslavia. Class identity and economic strikes were substituted with calls for national unity, allegedly needed to prevent the break-up of the country. (Musić 2013:17)

Meanwhile, the Serbian media framed the Serbian nation in the role of victim of bureaucracy and imperialism, formerly reserved for the category of working class, further blurring the line between nation and class (Musić 2013:16-17). This blurring was in turn

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[41] Grdešić (2016) builds on Laclau's (2005) take on "floating signifiers."

[42] For further discursive weaknesses of Serbian liberalism, see Grdešić (2016:794-97). Vladisavljević (2019) is a forthcoming article to be published in *Nationalities Papers* this year; a pre-publication version is available on request from Nebojša Vladisavljević.

precisely the polysemic frame on which the new regime would rest once the masses demobilised.

Second, Milošević's ruling party, the Socialist Party of Serbia, took up a favourable position in the political spectrum. Given the dominance of the party, which can in turn be attributed to its inheritance of the communist party's resources, and its emphasis on "national questions" (Serbian minorities in the rumbling Yugoslavia and, later, renewed turmoil in Kosovo), the political opposition positioned itself not so much on a Left-Right or any other spectrum, but in relation to the ruling regime and these nationalist concerns (Bieber 2003a; Zakošek 2008; Mladenović 2014). The regime, then, skilfully merging quasi-socialism and nationalism, could frame the more radical nationalist opposition (in particular Vojislav Šešelj's Serbian Radical Party) as overly extremist, while framing the more liberal-leaning opposition as anti-patriotic, allying themselves with the inimical West. Indeed, from 1991 to 2000 the regime used ethno-nationalist appeals to discredit protests organised by students or the opposition (Engelberg 1991; Erlanger 2000; Nikolayenko 2017). Milošević framed opposition protests, which took place in March 1991, right before the beginning of war in Slovenia and Croatia, as follows: "The enemies of Serbia want to bring a puppet regime into power, a regime that would take orders from elsewhere" (quoted by Engelberg 1991).[43] Above all, Milošević was thus the reasonable "centrist", "socialist" and "patriotic" choice.

Yeltsin's Liberal-Capitalist Democracy

Developments from the Brezhnev to the Gorbachev era – which yielded an increasingly stratified, patrimonial social structure – led the rise of a reformist stream within the CPSU as well as increasing dissatisfaction amongst the "middle ranks" of Soviet society, the urban specialists.[44] The latter group was politically disenfranchised from the administrative-managerial system, and experienced status erosion because the system lacked employment opportunities while their educational levels were rising. Simultaneously, the Soviet Union experienced a legitimacy crisis as it could not keep up with the West in technological and economic terms (Garcelon 1997).[45] This relative crisis "steered" both partocrats like Gorbachev as well as the urban specialists "in a westernizing direction," (Garcelon 1997:54) so that both social forces took up a democratic collective action frame.[46]

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[43] This discourse reminds of the Stalinist approach to internal enemies, whether defined by class or ethnicity (or positioned on the liminal line in between), linked to the external world of "capitalist encirclement." See Martin (1998), Weiner (1999), and Rieber (2001).

[44] The "middle ranks" were not a class in the sense of a group created by market stratification, but a status group (*Stand* in Weber's [1921 (2010)] terms) of those with higher education and professional occupations, e.g. teachers, technicians, doctors, intellectuals, artists etc. (Garcelon 1997:44).

[45] This was a relative, not an absolute issue. It can be traced back to the change from the Khrushchev to the Brezhnev era, when the Soviet system "embraced the capitalist ideal of open-ended economic growth as an end in itself," and the CPSU thus "explicitly linked the legitimacy of its political monopoly to the realization of consumerist expectations," which were then not met in the 1980s, and coupled with a technological lagging behind the West and a military disaster in Afghanistan (Garcelon 1997:53-54). See also George Breslauer's (1987) characterisation of the Brezhnev regime as "welfare-state authoritarianism." See finally Gill and Markwick's (2000:19-20) account of the "spiritual malaise" of the Soviet Union by the 1970s: The aforementioned middle ranks grew up in the 1960s, benefiting from post-war material improvements while not having ideological connections to the system through war or revolution. Their allegiance to the system was thus solely based on economic benefits, which disappeared as the system slowed down. This was coupled with highly negative perceptions of the corrupted *nomenklatura* system Brezhnev had instituted.

[46] For a balanced account of the social, economic and political legacies of the Brezhnev era, see the edited volume by Bacon and Sandle (2002). For an interesting (though, for Garcelon [1997], overly structural-functionalist) account of the social origins behind Gorbachev's reformism, see Lewin's *The Gorbachev*

Unlike his counterparts in in rapidly decentralising Yugoslavia, Gorbachev and his reformist allies could wield powerful federal resources (Bunce 1999). However, the extensive impact of *perestroika* also led to frictions within the CPSU. Moreover, the increasing social mobilisation of the urban specialists polarised emerging splits between reformists and conservatives in the party. Subsequent intraparty struggles led reformist Boris Yeltsin to leave the party and radicalise the pluralist democratic frame into a virulently anti-communist democratic frame. Yeltsin began to assemble an intraparty counter-elite, while at the same time linking himself to the nascent democratic movement. By the time *DemRossiia* was formed it was intricately linked to the counter-elite, as we have seen in Chapters 3 and 4, and eventually aided greatly in Yeltsin's definite rise to power.

Yeltsin's regime became founded upon a triadic frame of liberal democracy, national independence, and capitalist market reform. We have already seen how the Russian democratic movement took a "westernising" turn. Unlike in Yugoslavia, it was demands for pluralist democracy which overshadowed other claims in the mushrooming "movement society" (Fish 1991, 1995) opened up by *glasnost*. However, importantly, the democratic frame was dominated by a negatively articulated anti-communism ("anti-politics," even),[47] oriented solely around the breakdown of the system and democrats' utopian perceptions of, and expectations from, liberal capitalism, rather than a broader conceptualisation of liberal democracy (Fish 1991; Garcelon 1997; Lukin 1999, 2000). According to Marc Garcelon (1997), this minimalist conception of democracy was ultimately a reflection of Soviet legacies. Due to the patrimonial logic of the late Soviet system, politics became conceptualised as a battle of competing patrimonial elite networks, rather than "exercises in democratic institution-building" (Garcelon 1997:69). As we have seen in Chapter 3, the lack of new democratic institutions and Yeltsin's decision not to hold elections in 1991, then allowed Soviet-time notables elected in 1989 to consolidate resources and power by 1993. This prevented younger democrats to enter parliament, who were further disincentivised to go into politics when the political system further centralised in 1993. The superpresidential system furthermore dangerously linked perceptions of democracy to the political performance of a single leader. The narrow democratic frame and the political opportunity structure thus formed a vicious cycle excluding broader democratic frames. Hence, "liberals" (first market reform, then democratisation) came to dominate the democratic post-socialist regime at the expense of "democrats" (first democratisation, then market reform).[48]

Phenomenon (1988). For an account of the origins and impact of Gorbachev's reformist ideas, see Archie Brown's classic *The Gorbachev Factor* (1996).

[47] However, so long as the goal of the movement was to effectuate the downfall of the communists, it must be conceded that the minimalist "anti-communist frame" produced a highly effective repertoire of contention. After the 1990 elections, a Communist official described the successes of *DemRossiia* as follows: "Democratic Russia, while taking part on the pamphleteering, placed its bet on forms of agitation significantly more incisive and popular, and consequently more effective: pre-election rallies; people with megaphones in underground passageways and on the streets; posters that hit the target head on, showing not only the merits of the candidates supported by the bloc but criticizing their rivals, and sometimes discrediting them; support groups acting in the *mikrorayony*, in sections of apartment houses, at traditional places of congregation of city dwellers; and sound trucks. Let us be frank about it: all this made an impression" (quoted in Colton 1990:314-15). The CPSU, by contrast, just used posters, which, "with their boring portraits of each candidate, faceless biographical texts, and indistinguishable programs, naturally could not captivate the voters" (CPSU official, quoted by Colton 1990:314). Thus, the repertoire of *DemRossiia* was much more innovative. In Tilly's terms (2006:40), we can speak of a strong repertoire of contention, since *DemRossiia* merged familiar techniques known from the early perestroika SMOs, with new methods of political campaigning.

[48] My thanks go to Ivan S. Grigoriev for this idea. See also Vladimir Gel'man's (Gel'man and Travin 2017; Gel'man 2018) explanation of this dynamic in terms of Soviet generations. The democrats of the more idealist

It ought to be explained why Yeltsin aimed for national independence without espousing virulent ethno-nationalism. The *perestroika* wave which brought Yeltsin to power hardly included mobilisation of a pronounced ethno-nationalist character.[49] First, there was no Kosovo equivalent in the Soviet Union around which Russian mobilisational frames would unify; indeed, when Ukraine became independent and took Russian-populated Crimea with it, ethnonationalist mobilisation on the part of Russians across the former Soviet Union was a remarkably absent (Lieven 1999). Second, Russians had gradually become alienated with the Soviet Empire (Beissinger 2002). Perceptions of the Russians as occupiers in their empire has caused feelings of shame among the intelligentsia so that it came to espouse the cause of the rebelling nationalities at the Soviet peripheries. When the CPSU took a conservative turn during perestroika and cracked down on civilians in places like Tbilisi (April 1989) and Vilnius (January 1991), this re-invoked memories of totalitarian Stalinism. Yeltsin, furthermore, tactically used the frame of the suppression of Russian culture at the hands of the Soviet imperial centre. This was very different from the Serbian situation; most Serbs identified very positively with the Yugoslav state, and saw it to an extent as the continuation of their nation-state (Vujačić 1996a, 2004). As a final important historical legacy, Russians, unlike the Serbs, also did not face mass ethnic violence during World War II perpetrated in part by collaborationist minorities (Vujačić 1996a). Where experiences of mass violence provided Milošević with a cognitive "crisis frame" (Oberschall 2000a; Denich 1994), communist hard-liners in Russia lacked such an ethnic frame in order to mobilise support for their attempts to save the Soviet Union (Vujačić 1996a).

The above also explains why, among Russian workers, the communist system had become more discredited than among their Serbian counterparts in Yugoslavia. Consequently, after workers initially mobilised in support for Gorbachev's reformism, their demands quickly radicalised, so that they came to support Yeltsin's campaigns (Mandel 1990; Friedgut and Siegelbaum 1990; Clarke and Fairbrother 1993; Fish 1995; McFaul 2002).[50] However, workers' support for Yeltsin must not be overstated. While in late 1990 and early 1991 workers struck in favour of *DemRossiia* and Yeltsin, and against Gorbachev, by the coup of August 1991 Yeltsin call for a general strike was largely ignored. By then most workers had taken up a wait-and-see attitude (Fish 1995; McFaul 2002).

Legacies, Cultural Resonance, and Anti-Regime Frames

Polysemy and the Frame Shift Against Milošević

Milošević's polysemic frame only held up so long as there was minimal congruence with Serbians' perception of empirical reality (see Benford and Snow 2000:620). When the political opportunity structure changed, as outlined in Chapter 3 – that is, lack of promised economic improvement (*cf.* socialism) and the loss of Kosovo (*cf.* nationalism) – the regime's polysemic master frame crumbled and could be used against itself (see Nikolayenko 2017; Babović 1999).[51] Dragica Popović, mother of an *Otpor* activist, phrased her support for Milošević until

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and less pragmatic *perestroika* generation were ultimately "defeated" by the *semidesiatniki* (the generation of the 1970s), which was overall less guided by principle and more by the consolidation of power and resources. See finally Simon's (2010) Gramscian analysis of perestroika as a two-phased passive revolution which ultimately enabled Soviet-era elites to advance their interest in capitalist transformation.

[49] The SMOs *Pamyat* and the National-Patriotic Front were exceptions.

[50] See also Rutland (1990), Burawoy and Krotov (1992, 1995), and Crowley (1997).

[51] Already in the 1996-7 protest wave, 23.8 per cent of the participants cited the "overthrow of communism" as their reason for joining the winter protests. 17.8 per cent declared the "overthrow of the personal rule of

the late 1990s as follows: "If Milošević goes, everything will fall apart. Somebody will bomb us, the Kosovo Albanians will take our land, all hell will break loose. So we voted to keep him" (as quoted by Cohen 2000). But then, NATO bombs came anyway, Kosovo was lost anyway, economic decline returned anyway.

The protests in 1996-7 already used polysemic diagnostic framing strategically. While the early protests of 1991 and 1992 were in part anti-nationalist (Burns 1992; Prosić-Dvornić 1993), the winter 1966-7 protest wave avoided taking an explicit stance on "national questions" (Popadić 1999). Hence, the protests could bring together "nationalists who blamed the *communist* Milošević for Serbia's decay, and anti-nationalists who blamed the *nationalist* Milosevic for bringing war and poverty to the whole of former Yugoslavia" (Jansen 2000:395). This allowed for mass support, but framing failed to provide a clear alternative to Milošević's narratives (Jansen 2001).[52]

Many of the protesters in 1996-7 shared pro-Western sentiments (Cvejić 1999; Vuletić 1999). The student-organised as well as the coalition-led wing of the protests often framed their actions, as well as the future they strove for, in terms of "the other (civil) Serbia" or a "return to Europe". On the one hand, framing Milošević's rule as backwards oppression resonated with the long-standing narrative of Serbs as victims (one protest banner indeed framed life under Milosevic firmly within the historical mythology of Serbia, as it stated: "Those were good times under the Turks!" [Jansen 2000:402]). On other hand, however, such frames weakened the social breadth of the appeal of the protests. They tied in to a culturally resonant narrative of Two Serbias – the First Serbia being nationalist, traditional, rural and suburban, the "other" Serbia (their sphere) being urban, civilised, and Western (Jansen 2001; Naumović 2005; see also Živković 1997; Gordy 2000; Lazić 2003; Jansen 2005; Meszmann 2015). For many of the Belgrade protesters, the urban nature of the protest fitted with a general discourse of Western, civilised urbanity versus the backwards countryside and suburban working class. The "liberated" parts of Belgrade occupied by the protests reminded many middle-aged nostalgic Belgraders of the times when Belgrade was the cosmopolitan capital of Yugoslavia, as opposed to the Serbia under Milosevic's rule, which they (*gradjani*, "urbanites") perceived as backwards (backed by *seljaci*, primitive "villagers") (Jansen 2001). The political opposition's virulent anti-socialism from 1991 through 1997 similarly alienated the working classes (Music 2013; Meszmann 2015). Thus, the framing of the protests waves up to 1996-7 resonated with a cultural dichotomy which, on the one hand, was widely understood and, on the other hand, limited the inclusivity of the protests.[53] Unsurprisingly, suburban workers were absent from the protests (Babović 1999:56).

Milošević" as their primary motivation (Cvejić 1999:63). At the same time, 10.3 per cent of protesters noted the "outstanding national question" as their main objection against the Milošević regime, and 14.8 per cent held Milošević personally accountable for the break-up of Yugoslavia (Babović 1999:43).

[52] As Balkan Peace Team (1997) reported, nationalist opposition figure Vuk Drašković used the protests as a political platform. At the same time, he was not at all the undisputed "alternative" to Milošević for most protesters.

[53] For sociological and historical analyses of the role of the urban-rural cleavage in Yugoslavia, and particularly for their role in the nationalist origins of the Yugoslav wars, see Ramet (1996), Bougarel (1999) and Allcock (2002). The cultural urban-rural distinction between *gradjani* ("city-dwellers") and *seljaci* ("villagers") was not only significant as a collective identity (protagonist vs. antagonist) frame in the 1996-7 protests in Serbia (Jansen 2001, 2005), but has also been employed in Bosnia in order to create a framing basis for social movement mobilization reaching *across* ethnic cleavages (see Touquet 2015). A similar discursive dichotomy was also articulated in the public debate around the murder of Zoran Đinđić (12 March 2003), Serbia's first non-socialist Prime Minister (since 2001), and the subsequent mobilisation in Belgrade to mourn his death. Hundreds of thousands of people joined his public funeral (see Greenberg 2006).

In 1996-7 anti-regime framing had not reached its full efficacy yet. By 2000 protesters in *Otpor* had learned from past mistakes (see Nikolayenko 2017). First, in their strategic framing, *Otpor* and the opposition made use of people's desire for a return to normality. Second, Otpor re-appropriated Milošević's socialist symbolism. Third, while engaging with both global and local narratives, *Otpor* and the opposition reframed nationalism from unity and sacrifice to patriotic resistance. Fourth, *Otpor* forced the political opposition to unite itself behind a single, moderate candidate, Vojislav Koštunica, whose political discourse presented a reasonable middle-ground. Last, *Otpor* framed itself as a mass movement rather than as an activist bubble of students and teachers.

Nancy Meyers (2009) argues that *Otpor* made strategic use of the fact that, while nationalism did not decline particularly, people in Serbia increasingly began to frame their political preferences as the desire for the return to a "normal life." It tapped into people's memories of the past, when Yugoslavia was the only communist state which could travel freely to the West and enjoy consumer goods – as opposed to the economic hardship and international isolation Serbia now faced. Second, *Otpor* emphasised how it stood for dignity and morality, which deeply resonated with many people, observing a criminalised economy, clandestine state involvement in wars, missing sons, extreme income inequality, and a lack of rule of law. Third, *Otpor* framed the current state of affairs as depriving people, especially the youth, of a "normal" future not marked by the risk of renewed warfare, and unemployment. By referring to both the past and the future, *Otpor*'s frames resonated across generational divides. *Otpor* symbolically sent an empty telegram to Milošević on his birthday, while providing a statement to the media which diagnostically framed the regime as solely responsible for a situation of "emptiness" (Meyers 2009:340):

> The person who is responsible for worker's empty paychecks, people eating from empty plates, the emptiness of Srpska Krajina, part of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Metohija without Serbs, Serb passport without western seals, students empty looks towards the West, does not deserve anything better than an empty telegram for the empty politics he has been leading for the past ten empty years.

Instead of positioning itself in direct opposition to the socialist symbolism of the Milošević regime, *Otpor* included the regime's symbols and narratives in its own frames. It changed their meaning and thereby subverted the regime frames. *Otpor*'s iconic symbol – the black-and-white clenched fist – did not only function as an easily recognisable "brand" and communicate unity, but also recognisably appropriated and subverted the red fist of communist times (Partisan symbolism which Milošević had retained) (Cohen 2000; Ilić 2000; Farrel, Stoner, and Popović 2010).[54] To appeal to the wider public, *Otpor* abandoned the virulent anti-communism of earlier protest waves. The activists even tapped into Partisan traditions, for instance by celebrating Uprising Day with rock concerts and other festivities (Ilić 2000).

Otpor and its opposition allies framed themselves and their actions both within a local and a global context. Rather than avoiding national narratives altogether, framing was used to contest their appropriation and use by the regime. Already in 1996-7, protesters made ironic use of the history. Although humour persisted with *Otpor*'s protests, *Otpor* and the political opposition now went beyond it. Rather than to merely ridicule and "carnivalise" nationalism (Petronijewić 1998; Dragićević-Šešić 2001), nationalism was purposefully reframed as patriotic resistance.[55] *Otpor*'s posters stated: "Resist! Because I love Serbia" (Meyers

[54] The fact that it was black-and-white was meant to convey the message that one was either with Otpor or against it, either with Milošević or in resistance against him; this was also to mark a contrast with the political opposition, which *Otpor* portrayed as "grey", that is, not radical and activist enough.

[55] Vladimir Marković (2001) provides a critical alterative to my argument, suggesting that *Otpor* and its opposition allies were still limited by the dichotomous frame of Two Serbias. As a result, it failed to develop a

2009:318). *Otpor* did not focus on Serbian war crimes in Bosnia or Kosovo (Cohen 2000), for instance, but instead engaged with Milošević's appeal to sacrifice for national salvation, and turned this into the question: "how great the sacrifice?" (Meyers 2009:312). A harsh slogan also engaged with Milošević's appeal to sacrifice, as well as with the common knowledge that both of his parents had committed suicide: "Slobo, save Serbia and kill yourself" (Waisanen 2013:167).

Important politicians joined *Otpor*'s reversed patriotic frame. Formerly a romantic nationalist, Vuk Drašković argued that the international community should be welcome in the resolution of the Kosovo issue. Zoran Živković, mayor of Niš, said: "Patriotism does not mean dying for any idea or part of territory. Patriotism means securing a future for your fellow citizens" (quoted by Meyers 2009:313). According to Meyers (2009), this framing tapped into the stereotype of the cool-headed, down-to-earth Lowlander peasant in Serbian national stories, who values life over sacrifice (see also Živković 1997). Thus, a reversal of Milošević's nationalism worked because it found resonance in an alternative cultural trope (opposite to that of the emotional Highlander who would be willing to give his life for the nation). Perhaps even more strikingly, Zoran Đinđić (quoted by Meyers 2009:316) merged the ideas of survival and sacrifice by framing continued protest in the face of police brutality as sacrifice:

> We must make this sacrifice so our country may live …We as a generation must do it now. We shouldn't allow our children to be beaten in the future. It's better if we take the blows on our own backs now. Somebody must.

Otpor skilfully embedded itself within a global discourse of nonviolence to attract wide appeal in the international community. This occurred at a time when Milošević's international image was greatly deteriorating due to the war in Kosovo, as we have seen in Chapter 3 (see Hedges 1996; Silber 1996). At the same time, it engaged with local issues. For instance, it exploited the beating of a local *Otpor* activist in Požarevac to change the framing of this city from being Milošević's mythical hometown, to a symbol for the regime's injustice (Waisanen 2013). Similarly, to contest Milošević's self-identity framing of a national hero, which resonated with a widely-shared frame of a mythic strongman, *Otpor* began to treat activists arrested by the police like national heroes (Meyers 2009; Nikolayenko 2017). When the regime tried to exploit *Otpor*'s transnational links to counter-frame them as foreign mercenaries or terrorists, *Otpor* exaggerated funding from Serbian diaspora and understated funding from the West. Indeed, it denied any connection to the US (Nikolayenko 2017).

If *Otpor* was still too often associated with the West, this problem was offset by presidential candidate Kostunica's discourse. Kostunica did not challenge the underpinnings of Milošević's nationalism but stressed the latter's failure to deliver on any of his nationalist promises. Most painful was of course the loss of Kosovo. Moreover, Kostunica blamed Milošević for "bringing foreign armies onto Serb territory" (quoted by Meyers 2009:320). Although generally friendly towards Europe, Kostunica also took up a very negative attitude towards the United States (Meyers 2009).

Finally, *Otpor* literally communicated its broad appeal and outreach to society (in a sense, this frame operated as a self-fulfilling prophecy). One of *Otpor*'s main activists, Sdrja Popović, explained how *Otpor* saw the need to avoid bubbles of like-minded radicals, and reach out to the undecided centre of society (Popović and Crawshaw 2015). *Otpor*'s tactics, for instance its outreach to people beyond the big cities (see Cohen 2000; Waisanen 2013) and its horizontal,

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unifying identity frame for Serbians, instead still drawing on Orientalist themes and overly easily adopting Western neoliberal ideology. See also Šuber and Karamanić (2012) for a critical view of the aftermath of Otpor's symbolism.

leaderless organisational structure (Nikolayenko 2012), as we encountered in Chapter 4, communicated this frame of inclusivity. To an extent, this horizontality was more a frame than an organisational reality (see Ilić 2000; Waisanen 2013). At the same time, *Otpor* truly had an effective agenda to create wide visibility through outreach into small towns (see Marović 2010). As Greenberg (2014:63) puts it, *Otpor* aimed, and succeeded, "to reach beyond Belgrade to produce a sense of a nonelite, national movement."

In sum, we can see that *Otpor* made quite successful use of polysemy to subvert the multiple components of the regime base, frame itself in relation to both the local and the global, and achieve the image of a widely-supported mass movement. Whether *Otpor* truly overcame the division of the Two Serbias is up for debate; this was probably only a very temporary achievement (see Naumović 2005; Greenberg 2006; Cvetičanin and Popescu 2011; Cvetičanin 2012; Šuber and Karamanić 2012; Russell-Omaljev 2016).[56] Moreover, the socio-political breadth *Otpor* achieved and its singular focus on Milošević also constituted its main weakness: *Otpor* split over prognostic and self-identity frames, that is, the function and organisational form to be adopted in the post-Milošević era (see Arens 2008; Nikolayenko 2012).[57] The *Otpor* experience reveals a dilemma that is probably applicable to political social movements at large: appealing to a broad public often means adopting polysemic frames targeting a single antagonist; such a collective action frame loses political relevance after regime change, to achieve (further) systemic change, which then leads to dis-identification with the movement's self-identity frame and, eventually, demobilisation.

Frames and Cultural-Ideological Disunity in Russia

Like in Serbia, post-socialist economic crisis dealt a large blow to the legitimacy of the ruling regime in Russia. We already saw in Chapter 3 how socioeconomic grievances led to a pattern of fragmented labour protest during the Yeltsin years. Although Chechnya did not play such a crucial role in Russian national identity as did Kosovo in Serbia, the Yeltsin regime also lost a war (First Chechen War, 1994–6). Consequently, we should expect considerable disillusionment with the Yeltsin regime on the part of ordinary Russians. There is a striking and ironic parallel with Soviet history here. When, during the Brezhnev era, socialist ideology became tied to economic expectations and military-technological comparisons with the West, this turned into one of the main factors for the Soviet Union's lethal legitimacy crisis. When democracy became tied to the economic expectations of utopian "market bolshevism" (Reddaway and Glinski 2001),[58] did this also cause the Yeltsin regime's legitimacy crisis? The answer is ambivalent, and precisely this ambivalence is one of the reasons why we do not see unified anti-regime social mobilisation in the Yeltsin years.

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[56] Similar social divisions are also reflected in Serbia's ambivalent geopolitical identity positioning, hovering in between "East" and "West", a consequence of the political discursive practices related to the loss of Kosovo, territorial integrity, sovereignty, and security. See my paper "Discursive Practices of Territorial Loss: Comparing the Politics of Cultural Trauma and Ontological Insecurity in Serbia and Georgia" (2019). At the same, despite splits in Serbian political culture, it must be noted that the ongoing protest wave of the 2010 against the Vučić regime has, like *Otpor* in the late 1990s, moved beyond Belgrade and into the smaller towns (Balkan Insight 2019). Currently, the challenge for the protest wave is to provide a political alternative (in terms of leadership as well as programme) that also appeals to a wide base (Eror 2019).

[57] For an ethnography of young people's disappointment with the *Otpor* revolution as well as post-2000 youth activism, see Greenberg (2014). See also Kostovicova (2006); Greenberg (2010), and Mikuš (2015) for post-2000 civil society in Serbia.

[58] For a critique of Reddaway and Glinski's (1999, 2001) take on the Russian reforms, see Lukin (1999).

Sociological evidence on whether support for democracy was reduced by economic hardship in Russia is mixed.[59] This ambiguity in the quantitative literature is paralleled by Ellen Carnaghan's (2001) interview research. She finds that her respondents shared a democratic political culture, and valued the rule of law and newly-gained freedoms. At the same time, they were disillusioned with the presidency, the State Duma, and the police, and did not see any use in undertaking action to improve these institutions. She did not find evidence for a clear desire for an authoritarian leader, but Russians give such a figure the benefit of the doubt as long as nothing went wrong; this is how they seemed to approach Vladimir Putin in the first months of his rule. Overall, it seems that a decline in support for democracy entails a lack of trust in democratic political figures and institutions, rather than a reflection of a supposed Soviet political culture. This highlights the importance of the lack of democratic institution-building mentioned before, and the difficulties associated with the simultaneity of post-socialist economic reform and democratisation.

According to Vladimir Shlapentokh (1995), the absence of the rise of a new mass social movement, democratic or not, during the early 1990s can be attributed to Russians' yearning for order, their overall pessimistic stance towards social progress and ideologies as such, and a conservative aversion for risks and change. Consequently, Russians have resorted to individual-level survival strategies (autarkic self-production, the black market, immigration and so forth). This, in turn, has led to contempt for the elites and alienation from both state institutions and society at large. This is not only reflected in the lack of protest, but also in the lack of politicisation (upward scale shift) when protest against socioeconomic conditions *did* occur. Protest demands typically remained parochial (see Tilly 2006:51), concentrating on "very basic, bread-and-butter issues" (Robertson 2011:62)[60]. The liberal elites, on their part demonstrated a complete disregard throughout the 1990s for issues of social inequity (Shlapentokh 1999).

At first glance this situation seems similar to Serbia in the 1990s, and (for now disregarding the difficult political-contextual and organisational conditions) we might expect there to be an anti-regime backlash. To an extent, this did indeed take place with the 1996 elections. Yeltsin struggled to win against the neo-communist leader of the KPRF, Gennady Zyuganov, who ended up gathering 40.7 per cent of the votes. Although indeed in hybrid regimes like Russia, which lack a well-developed autonomous civil sphere, protest, as we have seen, is closely tied to the opportunity structure provided by elite politics (see Robertson 2011), Zyuganov's loss can not *only* be attributed to his lack of a nation-wide vehicle for mobilisation (see Chapter 3) and Yeltsin's skilful elite politics (see Chapter 4), but also to the ultimate weaknesses of the neo-communist frame.

Although their popularity increased over the course of the 1990s, the neo-communists, in alliance with various nationalist groupings, failed to mobilise the Russian populace for their cause, whether at rallies and demonstrations or at the election polls in 1996. In a manner rather similar to Milošević, Zyuganov's KPRF merged orthodox socialism with Russian nationalism. Its political framing was composed of anti-reformism, collectivism, anti-Westernism, Russian

[59] According to Raymond Duch (1995), economic chaos did not produce an abandonment of the ideals of democratic capitalism per se; incumbents perceived as responsible tended to be punished in elections, however. Kullberg and Zimmerman (1999), on the other hand, argue that the divergence between elite's support for liberal ideology and the masses return to socialist values can be attributed to the unequal structure of economic opportunities arising from the way economic reform unfolded. Similarly, Whitefield and Evans' (1996) survey results suggest that normative attachment to democratic (as opposed to authoritarian) values has been on the decline as such, especially among voters for the main opposition parties at the time, Zyuganov's KPRF and Zhirinovsky's LDPR. For an extensive review of the literature see Fleron (1996).

[60] See also Javeline (2003) who shows the importance of blame attribution to successful mobilisation in Russia. This blame attribution is typically pre-empted when lines of authority in the political system are obfuscated due to "either institutional design or the machinations of self-preserving elites" (2003:119).

Orthodoxy, and imperialism (Vujačić 1996b; Devlin 1999; Slater 1999).[61] We have already seen how historical legacies discredited communism more in Russia than in Serbia, and had weakened Russian nationalism, too (Vujačić 1996a, 2004; Beissinger 2002). Besides, in Serbia the working classes had retained more allegiance to socialist ideals, as we have encountered before (Stanojević 2003; Vladisavljević 2008; Meszmann 2009; see also Archer 2018).

In addition to this, collective memory framing allowed Yeltsin to win over Zyuganov. According to McFaul (1996), we should indeed see the 1996 presidential elections not as ordinary elections between different personalities with different programmes and platforms, but as Russians' last opportunity to choose between two systems, between the old and the new. Indeed, Yeltsin consciously framed the elections as a referendum between the status quo and communism (Brudny 1997). This opened up a polarised window for frame contestation, especially given the lack of a clear-cut coming-to-terms with the Soviet past in Russia (see Khazanov 2000; Adler 2005; Etkind 2009). In this contest between the incumbent Yeltsin and the neo-communist Zyuganov, Yeltsin ultimately emerged victorious.[62] Zyuganov quite successfully retained the allegiance of older people with positive memories of socialist times by sticking to socialist symbols, while at the same time countering anti-communist frames with an emphasis on contemporary social injustices such as homelessness and insider privatisation. He also abandoned orthodox socialism in favour of a mixed economy and other moderate stances in political and economic regards, and worked hard to blend Russian nationalism with socialism to win over conservative, religious voters afraid of cultural Westernisation. Yet, Yeltsin managed to win as his campaign shifted from frames concentrating on a future of better economic reforms, which failed to resonate, to frames demonising his opponent. Yeltsin's campaign framed Zyuganov as a representative of the CPSU, and a vote for him as a return to revolutionary chaos, civil war, the gulag system, and famine. A vote for Yeltsin, on the on the other hand, was a nonideological one in favour of a "normal life." Note the similarity in framing with the *Otpor* campaign. In the final evaluation, Zyuganov could not escape the legacies and memories of Stalinism with which Russian communism was burdened (Smith 2002; see also Vujačić 2001).

Thus, while post-socialist disillusionment with ideology in Serbia led to polysemic framing against the regime, in Russia it resulted in part in the decline of regime's legitimacy, but also in a discursive context hostile to ideological anti-regime framing. This further reinforced the trends away from nation-wide anti-regime framing and in favour of localised claims, involution into voluntary associations, and detachment from politics as identified in previous chapters.

At the same time, Yeltsin's 1996 victory should not be overstated. The fact that Gennady Zyuganov still won 40.7 per cent of the vote signals the weakening of democracy. Russia once again seemed split between a long-standing division between "Slavophiles", espousing statism and nationalism, and "Westernisers", in favour of Western-style modernisation – although it must be added that a large part of the electorate was probably unenthusiastic about either choice.

[61] The neo-communists tapped into pre-revolutionary Slavophile nationalist and imperialist thought, and largely abandoned the Marxist underpinnings of socialism in favour of "tradition-based" arguments in favour of collective property, collectivist attitudes etc. (Devlin 1999; Smith 2002). It must furthermore be noted that, in spite of its ambiguous but often radical merging of Left and Right ideology, the KPRF has largely abstained from extra-parliamentary tactics such as street agitation. As Flikke (1999:276) has written that the KPRF is "an ambiguous political force in post-Soviet Russian politics, and an organisation which has been 'zigzagging' between a left-centrist parliamentary strategy, involving regime cooperation, and a patriotic strategy of anti-regime mobilisation."

[62] The various liberal parties, meanwhile, failed to mobilise support because they failed to engage with historical memory and symbolism in their framing, and focused instead on the near past of economic reform – despite the fact that this reform period was widely evaluated negatively (Smith 2002).

After 1996, though, neo-communism did not disappear from the political scene. Throughout the late 1990s, when economic recession hit the Yeltsin regime once again, the KPRF organised mass opposition rallies together with the trade unions (CNN 1998).

When Yeltsin handed over his presidential power to Putin at the end of the 1990s, Putin skilfully crafted a pro-regime frame based on, on the one hand, pervasive political apathy, and on the other hand, on the ideological disunity in the political sphere. The first factor gave him the benefit of the doubt (Carnaghan 2001). The second factor allowed him to craft a middle-way frame, combining elements from, one the one hand, statist and nationalist frames, and on the other hand, reformist and liberal-democratic frames. The strengths of this frame may have played a considerable role in pre-empting a post-Yeltsin anti-regime movement, at least until the Dissenters' Marches of 2006–7 (see Robertson 2011; Gabowitsch 2016). Putin's frame of "sovereign democracy" reached full use during his second term (2004–8), and was meant to reinforce ideological cohesion among Russia's political and economic elites (Horvath 2011). This frame, introduced by deputy chief of the presidency Vladislav Surkov, suggests that Russia develops its own interpretation of "democracy", based on its own traditions, and actively resists the cross-national diffusion of Western political ideas into its political discourse. It also marked a shift towards anti-Westernism in Russian official discourse (Prozorov 2005; Makarychev 2008; Morozov 2008; Horvath 2011). However, this shift has been very gradual. Initially, there was optimism about Russia–West relations in the early Putin era (see e.g. Bremmer and Zaslavsky 2001/2002; see also Tsygankov 2012), which allowed the Putin regime to frame the Second Chechen War in the international discourse of the Global War on Terror, thus silencing calls for protest from abroad as well as domestically (Baev 2004; Russell 2005a, 2005b; see also Wilhelmsen 2017; Tsygankov 2012:Ch.8.). Overall, the discursive context of the Putin presidency, which we may term hegemonic (see Casula 2013), has made anti-regime framing difficult, out-crowding liberal-democratic and statist-nationalist frames at the same time.[63]

Conclusion

In brief, we have seen different framing processes in a similar post-socialist cultural context. In the Serbian case, *Otpor* managed to unite diverse audiences behind a polysemic anti-regime frame. Its social breadth was matched by its strategic framing, and it successfully framed a clear alternative to the Milošević regime. In the Russian case, a context of ideological confusion and ambivalence could not be overcome. The democracy espoused by the nominally democratic regime was declining in popularity, but the main challenge from within the system, posed by the neo-communist, failed at collective action framing due to the burdening legacies of the past, which the ruling regime exploited to its advantage. Eventually, skilful framing situated in between the statist and the democratic traditions did not come from a social movement, either democracy- or labour-oriented, but from Vladimir Putin who was handed power at the end of 1999.

[63] This dynamic can also be recognised in the anti-war movement in Russia, which, for reasons of scope, has largely been excluded from this research thesis. Although demonstrations against the Second Chechen War (1999-2000, insurgency phase until 2009) were more frequent and larger than those opposing the First Chechen War (1994-6), they failed to have an impact on policy, because the protest movement failed to adapt its master frame to changing external circumstances, in particular the regime's increased repression and the slow shift towards anti-Western discourse. The movement became dominated by a narrow, pro-Western organisational culture, whose slogans and tactics no longer resonated with the public at large (Lyall 2006; see also Gerber and Mendelson 2002).

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Discussion

In this conclusion I will first recall the main findings from each chapter, thereby suggesting once more that the triad of political opportunities, mobilising structures, and framing processes is a useful analytical lens to analyse post-socialist regimes. Following this, I will reflect on the particular importance of legacies, context, and hybridity in post-socialist regime transformation. Lastly, I will highlight the merits and limitations of a social movement approach to regime transformation, and briefly suggest future directions for research.

Summary

Chapter 3 analysed the political opportunity structures of the post-socialist rump states. Different interactions between elites and masses meant that the era of *perestroika* and *glasnost* in Russia produced a radically different regime than the anti-bureaucratic revolution in Serbia. In Russia, collusion between independent organisations and an intra-party counter-elite produced the democratic, liberal-capitalist Yeltsin regime. In Serbia, amongst a multitude of claims, nationalism ultimately prevailed and allowed for the survival of some sort of socialist regime under the socialist-turned-nationalist Slobodan Milošević. These differences in turn could be traced to different histories, forms, and perceptions of nationalism and socialism. During the 1990s, the political opportunity structure of the Yeltsin regime became increasingly narrow, and the ties between the regime elite and the democratic movement led to the latter's ultimate downfall. The Milošević regime, though also a hybrid regime, was more dependent on electoral victories and popular support, especially among workers. When Milošević's party apparatus began to erode, the Kosovo War removed remaining hopes for a return to prosperity, and the NATO bombings eroded the regime's repressive capacities and international image, the democratic movement, which had been growing and re-organising over the course of multiple protest waves, converged with labour mobilisation and brought about Milošević's downfall.

Chapter 4 demonstrated that the set of differences in political opportunities interacted with differences in the organisational trajectories of the social movements. In Serbia, repeated political opportunities allowed an initially marginal civil society to grow into a mass movement. *Otpor* overcame earlier difficulties by broadening its social base, establishing a highly effective internal structure, and reaching out to other organisations and, crucially, the growing force of independent labour. Importantly, the balance of power was ultimately in favour of *Otpor*. Its independent organising could force the political opposition into unity. This meant that regime change could no longer be pre-empted by Milošević's skilful politics of divide-and-rule, and that the movement could not be swayed by the interests of the anti-Milošević elites.

In Russia, by contrast, the initial organisational infrastructure was more unfavourable. Labour unions were firmly under the grip of regional political machines. In a situation of harsh economic crisis, the strategy of "social partnership" with local management and political elites could not be avoided. The democratic movement was also under the sway of political elites. *DemRossiia* was founded upon diverse elite-mass linkages during *perestroika*. After it had successfully brought their "democratic" leader, Boris Yeltsin, to power, the perils of this basis became evident. *DemRossiia* had been co-opted by the intra-system counter-elite. It was now at the mercy of Yeltsin's politics, who prevented its establishment as a strong political force. The absence of possible political and organisational experience among its members meant that the movement failed to develop a vision of democracy beyond liberal market utopianism. Those who did have experience, were firmly embedded in Soviet-era networks. Consequently, the democratic movement became centred around patrimonial networks, getting certain individuals into power, rather than around democratic institution-building. Moreover, due to the loose

structure and strained relations with the regime's elites, *DemRossiia*'s organisational trajectory was marred by internal disputes from the start. It thus failed to transform into either a political party or a renewed democratic social movement. This outcome was sealed, when Yeltsin's "soft landing" in 1999 gave way to Putin's effort at further curbing the space for independent social movement organisation.

Chapter 5 detailed the framing processes in both post-socialist rump states. In both Serbia and Russia, the 1990s were an era of ideological confusion and ambiguity, and in both cases it made sense for a challenge to the regime to adopt the opposite ideology to that of the ruling regime. In Serbia, this meant democratic opposition to the nationalism and quasi-socialism of the regime. It took multiple waves of contention, however, until such democratic framing succeeded. Initially, the democratic movement could be discredited by the regime using the still widely accepted nationalist frame. This began to fail by the mid-1990s. Until 1996-7, however, the democratic frame was still ineffective. It failed to shed its elitist and urban outlook and include a wide social base. *Otpor* overcame this barrier, eventually, by adopting frames which could mean different things to different segments of the population. Anti-communists, nationalists, students, workers, intellectuals, and others all rallied behind an polysemic but powerful anti-Milošević frame.

In Russia, the ideological confusion was not overcome by polysemic framing. The most significant challenge to the Yeltsin regime came from the alliance of "patriotic" and neo-communist opposition politicians. However, while the popularity of the regime had declined considerably due to grave political and economic instability, communism had been discredited even more. The Yeltsin regime successfully played the game of memory politics by framing the opposition as Stalinists. Yeltsin's framing strategy would not last, however. It was only when Putin took over in 2000, that we begin to see the formation of a stable regime frame in Russia, combining elements from statist, nationalist, and democratic frames.

Hybrids, context, and legacies

This restatement of the key mechanisms and processes found in my comparative-historical research brings us back to the central claim of this thesis, namely that in Serbia the political opportunity structure, mobilising structures, and available cultural framings ultimately evolved more favourably to social movements than in Russia. This allowed for a convergence of the democratic movement and labour mobilisation in Serbia, leading to democratic regime transformation, while in Russia both movements declined.

In the explanation of these differences, *historical context* and *post-socialist legacies* were crucial, as well as the *hybrid* nature of the two regimes. Hybrid regimes are particularly vulnerable to elite instability. Hence, we may suggest that political opportunity structure takes predominance in such a context. Indeed, much of the survival of both regimes throughout the 1990s was thanks to a maintenance and innovations of elite coalitions and divide-and-rule tactics. However, while both were hybrids, Milošević's regime was ultimately weakened by the legacy of the anti-bureaucratic revolution: it had begun as a populist regime in the context of multiparty elections. It was more restricted in its survival, having to achieve repeated electoral victories. In Russia, by contrast, Yeltsin rose to power as an individual after the coup attempt of August 1991, without a political party machine behind him. Yeltsin crucially postponed elections to 1993, so that old deputies from the 1989 elections could consolidate their power. Due to crucial decisions made at such critical junctures, including also Yeltsin's violent disbandment of the Duma in 1993, the Russian system developed into a much more closed one.

Furthermore, openness, divisions, instability, and multiplicity in the sphere of elite politics do not immediately translate into sustained protest activity. To examine this we need to

look closely at the elite structures. In Serbia, Milošević's turn to personalist rule failed to re-stabilise the elite bases of his rule. In Russia, however, elite instability in the late 1990s was coupled with a stage of decline in social mobilisation. This can only be explained if we pay attention to the federal structure, which allowed for a selective channelling of unrest into the relations between centre and regions. This was in turn only possible due to the regional governors grip over labour's mobilising structure. Thus, in Russia, the inheritance of the Party-State's labour unions which functioned as paternalistic channels for welfare and control, meant that, in a context of crisis and uncertainty, labour unions were easily absorbed into the political machines of regional elites, which pre-empted nation-wide diffusion, brokerage, and upward scale-shift. In Serbia, there was, firstly, more independent labour organisation, and secondly, labour unions were co-opted not by regions but by Milošević's central government. This was a legacy of self-management, which had greatly strengthened the role of labour in politics. Milošević's regime survival, then, depended much more on workers' sustained pacification. When labour unrest grew, it could not be channelled into a local bargaining process, and greatly weakened the regime.

In addition, we saw that timing mattered significantly. The fact that the Russian democratic movement evolved earlier paradoxically also led to its ultimate decline, as it became co-opted and divided due to elite disputes. It also inherited more Soviet legacies due to its embeddedness in Soviet-era networks. The Serbian democratic social movement benefitted from the fact that it was rooted in relatively independent niches in civil society and universities, after which it ultimately expanded into a mass movement.

Finally, we saw that framing was tied to past legacies as well. Successful social mobilisation was in part dependent on the forging of culturally resonant, polysemic master frames. In Serbia, the ambiguous mix of nationalism and quasi-socialism could unite diverse forces behind the anti-regime cause. The protests could include both workers who felt Milošević betrayed socialism, students who felt Milošević ruined their youth, nationalist intellectuals who felt Milošević had abandoned Kosovo, and so forth. In Russia, however, the burden of the Soviet past meant that the neo-communists, the most powerful opposition faction, could not forge a credible frame against the Yeltsin regime which would find mass appeal. It was only when Putin came to power, when a unifying frame was forged *by the regime*, rather than by a movement.

Overall, I have shown that, in the context of post-socialist hybrid regimes, we should look at neither movements nor political regimes in isolation alone. It is precisely the relations between social mobilisation and political elites which can explain the divergent regime transformations of the post-socialist rump states – that is, the end of Russia's much-lauded "democratic experiment" in the 1990s, and the advent of democracy, though fragile, in Serbia after the collapse of Milošević's nationalist, quasi-nationalist regime.

Merits, limitations, and suggestions

Social movements, and more generally the tradition of studying contentious politics in sociology and political science, provide an avenue for the relational study of socio-political change. As we saw in the introduction, the interaction of movements and regimes is one way in which we can interpret and explain the transformation of regimes over time. Let us briefly return to Charles Tilly (2002, 2004, 2007) and his processes and mechanisms of democratisation (that is, regime transformation towards protected consultation). In Russia, the combination of co-optation, failed institutionalisation, and eventual decline of the democratic social movement meant that it could ultimately contribute little to the segregation of public politics from categorical inequality. Although initially it helped broaden political participation, it later did

not pre-empt the power-grab of the new oligarchs and the old *nomenklatura*, nor it have the will and, more importantly, the means to create inclusive democratic institutions which would exercise broad public control on official politics. Since *DemRossiia* was so intertwined with Soviet-era informal networks, insulated trust networks persisted and politics remained an isolated, unreachable affair for many social groups. Finally, *DemRossiia* failed to prevent the institution of the super-presidential system, which allowed Yeltsin to exercise considerable arbitrary power. Yet, at the same time, the fall of state socialism meant the great equalisation and broadening of political participation, so here we are: the Yeltsin regime was, and remained, throughout the 1990s, a volatile hybrid regime.

In Serbia, the ruling structure was broken in more considerable ways. Insulated trust networks around the Milošević clique fell apart, arbitrary rule and coercion disappeared, regime control over state property evaporated as Serbia finally continued its privatisation schemes, and cross-class liaisons had been forged to oppose the regime. This is not to say, however, that Serbia entered into a paradise-like democracy. To this day, important sections of both the mafia and the security forces in Serbia remain beyond effective democratic control. Taken together, the above analyses result in the pathways drawn in Figure 9 below.

In my thesis, I have striven to emphasise relations, dynamics, and processes over either structure or agency. I have taken a path-dependent strategy to integrate structure and agency in my analysis. This means that I have attempted to trace back crucial choices, junctures, and events using an evolutionary approach to causation (Mahoney and Snyder 1999). Social movements are perfectly suited for such an approach, because they are situated at the meso-level. At this level, we see (1) how structural factors influence the historical development of a more or less organised group (the movement); (2) how this group makes more or less successful attempts to influence structures; and (3) how individuals within the movement continuously shape and reshape the group they are part of, an inherently relational and contested process. This social movement approach avoids structuralist explanations of post-socialist regime transformation which arrive at the importance of general factors such as “anti-Soviet nationalism”, “possible EU membership”, “strength of links to the West”, and “state capacity”

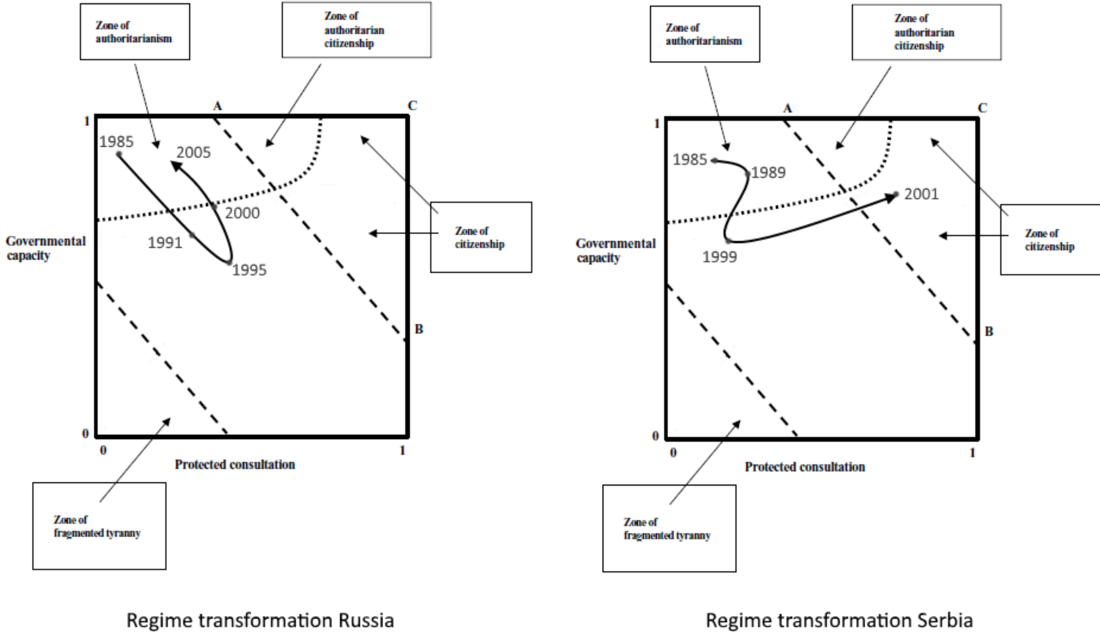

Figure 9 - Regime transformation in Russia and Serbia (diagram template taken from Tilly [2004, 2007], pathways mine)

(Way and Casey 2018; Way 2008) without explaining much of the *how* of regime transformation. Concentrating on movements also avoids voluntarist or actor-centric explanations which underscore the importance of the "balance of power" between regime incumbents and democratic challengers at a moment of uncertainty, and the "ideological commitment" of "democrats with power" (McFaul 2002b). Such explanations typically do not go very far in explaining where such balances and commitments come from (or fields, positions, and habituses, were we to take a relational sociological view [Bourdieu 1977; Fligstein and McAdam 2011]). Social movements allow us to take a more historical, process-oriented approach. In the final analysis, however, this approach has the tendency to trace processes back to structures (Mahoney and Snyder 1999) or – to phrase it in terms of my research project – legacies and contexts. I would suggest that future studies of post-socialist change take up the ambitious task of taking a more rigorously relational approach, such as that developed by Fligstein and McAdam (2011, 2012).

My research has further limitations. A comparative-historical strategy inevitably leaves little space for elaborate explanations of single factors such as political party development, economic policies, and elections. I have also not been able to delve very deeply in descriptions of everyday experience (e.g. Burawoy and Verdery 1999) or crucial factors such as memory politics (e.g. Etkind 2013). Finally, I hope the contentious politics approach soon turns its attention to current events – not only in Russia, where welfare and pension reforms recurrently encounter public resistance, and Serbia, where the Vučić regime is under ongoing pressure, but also to political movements in the wider post-socialist world, from anti-corruption protests in Romania and Georgian resistance against Russia's grip over South Ossetia and Abkhazia, to recent occurrences of regime change in North Macedonia and Armenia.

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