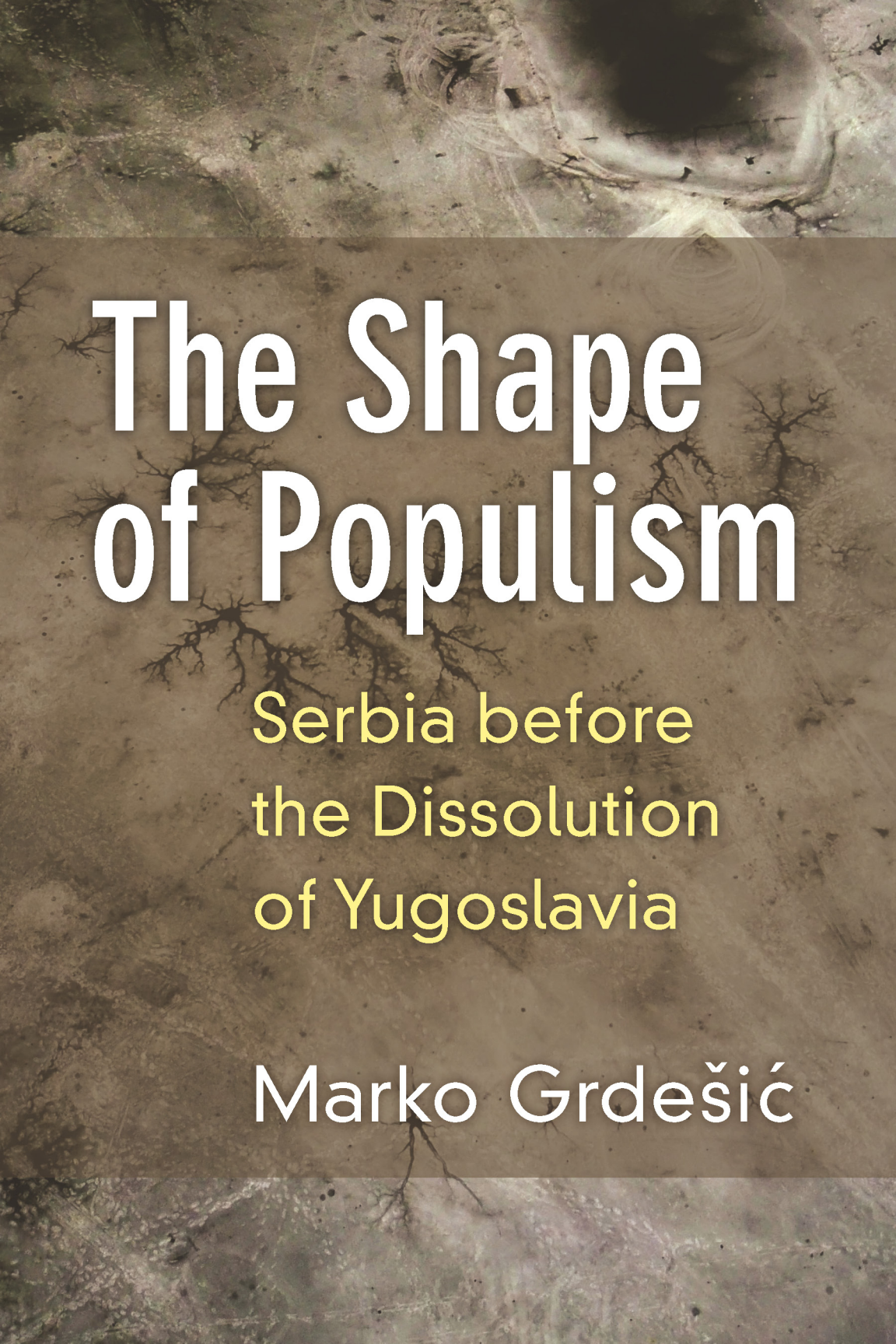
The Shape of Populism
Serbia before the Dissolution of Yugoslavia
Marko Grdešić

The Shape of Populism

Populism is a fractal phenomenon driven by a constant and persistent mode of elite-mass interaction, one in which elites are always inciting, amplifying, molding, and manipulating mass action. Populism is defined and driven by this recurring involvement of elites in the activities of popular actors and a corresponding lack of autonomy of mass actors, both in terms of their organizing as well as their ability to construct discourses. Despite the genuine enthusiasm from citizens, populist elites control the settings in which this activation takes place and manipulate them to serve elite interests.

The Shape of Populism examines the case of socialist Serbia, then part of Yugoslavia, which in the late 1980s witnessed a great deal of popular mobilization and an emergence of a populist discourse that constructed and celebrated "the people." It uses a mix of quantitative and qualitative analysis to address how "the people" emerge in the streets and in the public sphere. It introduces a catalog of more than 300 protest events and analyzes it in conjunction with elite events such as party sessions. It also uses a data set of more than 800 letters sent by ordinary citizens to newspapers as well as a collection of more than 800 political cartoons from several newspapers in order to sketch the contours of the populist construction of "the people." The book also relies on six focus groups conducted with thirty-four participants who took part in populist rallies in the late 1980s in order to bring the entire episode into the present and examine the long-run legacies of populism.

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Preface

This book began as a dissertation and is now a book. As the project took shape and evolved, so did the contemporary political landscape. When I started thinking about my research, populism was not on the radar. Now, debates about populism seem to be everywhere. Although this book is primarily about a particular populist episode that took place thirty years ago in Yugoslavia, a country that no longer exists, the contemporary rise of populism has made it strangely topical. In that respect, I have been quite lucky, even if the rise of populism globally may have more than a few worrying features. I have also been quite lucky that my editors at the University of Michigan Press, Elizabeth Demers and Meredith Norwich, shared my enthusiasm for the topic. I would like to thank them, as well as other staff members at the University of Michigan Press for working with me on this book, Danielle Coty and Scott Ham in particular.

There are quite a few people who helped me write this book. At the University of Wisconsin-Madison, a number of professors provided examples of excellent scholarship. I was lucky that they were very nice people, too. Pamela Oliver was a wonderful adviser, both supporting me as well as probing me to make my work as good as it could be. Yoshiko Herrera, Ivan Ermakoff, Myra Marx Ferree, and Ted Gerber all helped in innumerable ways. Veljko Vujačić from Oberlin College provided both knowledge and humor. I owe them all a great deal. My friends in Madison were also very important: Sanja, Kyle, Emily, Andrew, Melanie, Inken, Taylan, Chung-En, Mike, Emanuel, Bill, and Carole. They made my time in Madison not only intellectually stimulating but a lot of fun as well. Prior to Madison, I also spent a year in Budapest at the Central European University, where I accumulated a few additional debts, to the wonderful Dorothee Bohle and Bela Greskovits in particular.

I have also had the good fortune of working with terrific research assistants in Serbia and Croatia: Tamara Petrović, Selena Lazić, Ivana Stanojev, and Marija Radoman in Belgrade; Tijana Radić in Novi Sad; and Sara Skejo in Zagreb. At the Faculty of Political Sciences in Belgrade, I owe special thanks to Nebojša Vladisavljević. Rory Archer and Goran Musić, fellow researchers of Yugoslavia in the 1980s, were also very helpful. Many people freely gave me their time while I was conducting my research in Serbia. Most of all, I would like to thank the people who took part in the focus groups I organized, as well as the cartoon artists whose work is reproduced in this book. The anonymous reviewers also suggested a number of useful improvements.

In Zagreb, I have to acknowledge the support of my colleagues at the Faculty of Political Sciences: Daniela Širinić, Krešimir Petković, Andrija Henjak, Zdravko Petak, and Dagmar Radin. I also owe a great deal to the late Dag Strpić. I always try to emulate the joyful way he went about his work. It is also hard to imagine this book coming to life without the friendship of Viktor Koska. My nonacademic friends, Boris, Daniel, and Emil provided help in crucial non-academic ways. Finally, the most important support has come from Ružica and from my family. This book would never come into being without them.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Populism is on the rise. Wherever one turns, there are new instances of populist politicians, parties, and movements. Both on the left and on the right, populist leaders invoke "the people" and attack out-of-touch elites. On the right, cases such as the Tea Party and Donald Trump tap into a well of discontent amongst ordinary citizens, many of whom feel left out and marginalized. Often, this takes the form of antiestablishment as well as anti-minority rhetoric. On the left, politicians like Bernie Sanders and movements like Occupy Wall Street have also attacked elites, blaming the "1 percent" for the way they have hijacked democratic politics. Europe has witnessed its own recent populist uprising. On the right, parties such as Nigel Farage's UK Independence Party and Marine Le Pen's Front National in France ride the wave of antiestablishment and anti-immigration sentiment, partly fueling such feelings themselves. On the left, parties like Podemos in Spain and Syriza in Greece have also tried to develop a populist platform, one which does not include attacks on minorities and immigrants but aims to channel antiestablishment sentiments toward the inequities of economic neoliberalism. It is no longer news to say that a specter of populism is haunting both Europe and America.

Nor are rich, Western democracies the only place where populism is on the rise. The third world has historically been a setting in which populism has appeared quite frequently, and this still holds true today. Thaksin Shinawatra in Thailand, Hugo Chavez and Nicolas Maduro in Venezuela, Evo Morales in Bolivia, and Tayyip Erdogan in Turkey are just some recent examples. More historical cases include the Narodniki in late nineteenth-century Russia, Mao's Cultural Revolution, Juan Peron in Argentina, and many others. Even Hitler's and Mussolini's fascist movements overlap in many ways with populism. It appears that populism is both wide-spread

across time periods and across geographic regions. A fuller understanding of populism would thus help us understand both the modern project of mass democracy, which began with the French Revolution, as well as the contemporary populist upsurge.

Renewed interest in populism has been accompanied with a tangible sense of unease about the phenomenon. Populism makes people worried and nervous. It can have both a democratic and an authoritarian flavor, a progressive and a conservative one. For example, consider the suggestions that Google provides. When one types "Why is populism," Google's autocomplete algorithm offers "on the rise," "so popular," and "bad for democracy." When one types "Why are populists so," it offers "bad," "important," and "dangerous." There is a lot of nervous talk about populism in the world today. Careful study of the phenomenon is thus all the more important.

The central question that this book asks is about the way populism operates. Simply put: How does it work? What is its *modus operandi*? I use a single case—that of socialist Serbia in the late 1980s—to dig into the governing dynamics of populism. What is the motor that drives populism, the force that gives it momentum? This means analyzing populism as both a discourse and a mode of mobilization, in both the short and the long term. The case of Serbia, which was then part of multiethnic Yugoslavia, ticks practically all the boxes of even the most expansive definition of populism. However, while much has been written about the dissolution of Yugoslavia and the terrible wars of the 1990s, not much has been written about the Serbian populist episode that took place in the late 1980s. Therefore, this book aims to fill a hole in our knowledge. But it also aims to use the Serbian case in order to generate broader insights into the way the populist phenomenon works. Quantitative and qualitative evidence are combined to attack the problem from various sides. The broader lessons of the Serbian case are analyzed in the concluding chapter.

Populism remains a dirty word for most. Much discussion about populism in the broader public uses the phrase in a pejorative manner. The word "populist" is most often used as a label that one political actor tries to attach to their political opponents. It is meant to imply irresponsibility and immaturity about politics. This book, along with many other contributions to a growing field of populist studies, suggests that the concept can be useful. Of course, it would be unrealistic to expect that scholarly contributions such as this one can have a lot of influence on the way words are used more broadly. Nevertheless, I suggest that we retain the word populism. It is not very fruitful to see populism as a completely negative phenomenon, even though it certainly has its dark side. Rather, it may be more productive to approach

populism in terms of the trade-offs that it implies. What does one stand to gain or lose when relying on populist practices? That is the approach of this book. We should try to reclaim the word from its dominant pejorative usage and coolly analyze the choices that populism entails.

The Argument in Brief

The main contribution of the book is to see populism as a fractal phenomenon. What does this mean? It means that populism is driven by a constant and persistent mode of elite-mass interaction, one in which elites are always inciting, amplifying, molding, and manipulating mass action. In other words, populism is driven by an interactive process in which both elites and masses participate, but in which the rules of the game are written by elites. Populism is defined by and driven by the recurring involvement of elites in the activities of popular actors and a corresponding lack of autonomy of mass actors, both in terms of their organizing as well as their ability to construct discourses. Elites encourage the participation of ordinary citizens but control the settings in which this activation takes place. They solve the collective action problem for ordinary people but manipulate them to serve elite interests. This does not mean that the enthusiasm that comes from citizens is in any way less genuine, only that populist elites have treated them as something less than political adults.

The metaphor of fractals suggests that populism is "self-similar." No matter the scale at which one observes the phenomenon, elite-mass interactions continuously present themselves as the key mechanism propelling populism forward. In other words, as one zooms in and out, the same pattern of elite-mass linkage reappears: elites are always inciting, amplifying, molding, and manipulating the inputs of ordinary people. This can be observed both in the way populist movements organize as well as the ways in which populist discourses—those that celebrate "the people" while demonizing elites—are constructed. Ultimately, this type of interaction has traceable, long-term consequences for the attitudes of ordinary citizens toward political life.

This also suggests the main trade-off associated with populism: scale versus autonomy. While populist practices boost participation in ways that conventional movement techniques are rarely able to, they also restrict the space in which ordinary citizens can act without elite supervision. What is won in terms of numbers is lost in terms of independence. In the long-run, participants resent this lack of autonomy and become alienated from the political process. Hence, populism has clear limitations as a mode of politi-

cal education. It requires and aims to perpetuate a state of political naivety. Yet, we may also be forced to admit that without a dose of elite "meddling," large-scale activation of "the people" rarely ever comes about.

By approaching populism through the lens of elite-mass interaction, this book embraces the shadowy element of populism. A clean division between elites and challengers, between the "bad guys" and the "good guys" is not possible in the case of populism. Elite involvement continuously muddies the waters. To provide a way out, I suggest that this element of populism not be wished away but rather incorporated as the very foundation of the concept. Populism implies the presence of well-placed political elites who aim to politically capitalize on mass grievances. However, instead of simply saying that elite manipulation taints the involvement of mass forces—which may often be the case—this book provides an approach that makes it possible to side-step the problem. It provides a set of analytical and methodological procedures that can be used to dispassionately analyze the phenomenon. It should be reiterated that the emphasis is on matters of mobilization and organization on the one hand and discourse and ideas on the other. In both areas, the analysis continuously points to the presence of elite-mass interaction, hence fractals as a motivating metaphor.

The book aims to contribute to three bodies of scholarly work: (1) political sociology broadly conceived, (2) the literature on populism, and (3) the literature on the former Yugoslavia. First, political sociology: it has tended to avoid populism. Instead, it has favored an analytical approach to matters of popular contention in which the dividing lines between the challengers and their elite targets are clear. Populism makes such an approach inapplicable. Yet, not being able to notice populism when it appears means that researchers may miss important trends in modern political life, both in historical as well as contemporary cases. That would be unfortunate, since populism is an important feature of many polities. In other words, we need the right set of tools for the job. Social movement theory is important and valuable. Indeed, there are opportunities for cross-fertilization between the field of social movements and the field of populism that have not been sufficiently exploited. This book demonstrates several ways in which this cooperation between two bodies of research can be pushed forward.

Second, the literature on populism provides a variety of approaches, all of which have something of relevance to say about the topic. Yet, the current state of discussion about populism does not encourage an analysis of interaction nor does it encourage the joint study of mobilization and discourse. This book tries to take a step forward regarding these issues. Most of the contemporary scholarship has emphasized the importance of populist discourse.

And indeed, this is an important phenomenon. But matters of populist mobilization are just as important. Additionally, most studies of populism focus on the supply side of populism, i.e., they examine the discourses of populist leaders and parties. But what about the intended target group: ordinary citizens? It is also important to ask them what they think. Why do they participate in populist practices? Both aspects of the phenomenon—the supply side and the demand side—are important.

And third, the literature on the former Yugoslavia has treated the episode of Serbian populism in the late 1980s mainly as a case of elite manipulation. This is consistent with an elite-centric approach to the broader topic of Yugoslav disintegration. Slobodan Milošević—the Serbian politician later indicted by the international war crimes tribunal in The Hague—is seen as the mastermind behind a series of mass rallies and a ruthless propaganda campaign. It would certainly not be wrong to say that Milošević was manipulative and Machiavellian. But such an account misses the way mass actors participated in Serbia's populist episode and the way their actions were interwoven with elite actions in a populist patchwork. In other words, the goal is to "bring the people back in." However, "the people" remain for the most part a fictional character. In reality, "the people" are always divided across lines of class, occupation, race, ethnicity, age, education, and region. "The people" will therefore remain in quotation marks more often than not throughout this book. It is a way to signal the artificiality of the construct.

This book's emphasis on populist dynamics encompasses both a short-term and long-term perspective. In the short term, one needs to focus on the events and ideas that shaped Serbian and Yugoslav politics in the late 1980s. How did they occur and develop? Zooming in and zooming out, how did mass mobilization emerge, and how were "the people" constructed? But a long-run perspective, one which examines the legacies of populism, is important, too. Therefore, this book revisits the populist episode of the 1980s from a contemporary vantage point. What attitudes were left behind by the populist wave of the 1980s, by the populist mobilization in the streets, and by populist discourses in the media? How are the political orientations of citizens influenced by the populism of the past? By providing answers to these questions, it becomes possible to outline the dynamics of populism as both an intense outburst and a lingering legacy.

This book contains four empirical chapters. Each chapter deals with a certain aspect of populism in Serbia. In the summer and fall of 1988, Serbia experienced what has since been called an "anti-bureaucratic revolution." The rise of Slobodan Milošević is perhaps the most conspicuous consequence of the episode. Yet, 1988 also witnessed large-scale mobilization of

ordinary citizens in the streets and an emergence of a populist discourse that celebrated "the people" and attacked elites as "bureaucrats" and "arm-chair politicians." It has been common in the former Yugoslavia to say that in the late 1980s, "the people happened." This book is interested in the "hows" of this process. How did "the people" happen?

Methodologically, the book relies on a mixture of methods. There is both statistical examination as well as more qualitative and interpretive analysis. The quantitative analysis has been adapted throughout to serve the broader argument. Those readers who are interested in the details of the number-crunching will be able to find the information they need in the methodological appendix, but much of the presentation has been adapted with the general reader in mind.

Each chapter relies on a distinct data set, of either quantitative or qualitative data. After chapter 2 introduces the Serbian case, chapter 3 examines a data set of roughly 300 protest events, chapter 4 a data set of about 800 citizens' letters to the press, and chapter 5 a data set of about 800 political cartoons, while chapter 6 is based on six focus groups conducted with thirty-four participants of populist rallies. But before sketching the contents of these chapters, the next section returns to the conceptual problems that surround populism.

Toward Populism as a Fractal Phenomenon

Providing a satisfactory definition of populism is not easy. As mentioned above, one of the ultimate goals of this book is to offer a new definition of populism. Yet, before the utility of this definition can be demonstrated, it is important to delineate the various possible definitions offered by the existing literature.

Definitional problems have plagued populism for a long time, beginning already with the founding contributions to the field (Ionescu and Gellner 1969). Scholars frequently bemoan the slippery nature of populism (Taggart 2000: 1–5; Canovan 2005: 10; Laclau 2005a: 3; Panizza 2005a: 1). A dizzying variety of politicians have been called populist, from Eva Peron to Adolf Hitler, from Thomas Jefferson to Lech Walesa (Berezin 2009: 26–27). Populism's ambiguities stem from its adaptability to local contexts and its receptiveness to heterogeneous political orientations. As already mentioned, it can take on either a left-wing or a right-wing orientation and, in fact, may combine elements of both at the same time.

A variety of factors have been mentioned as relevant to populism: late

development, peripheral geostrategic location, anti-elite sentiments, notions of the people's virtuousness, romantic assessments of a mythical past, sentiments of conspiracy and threat, the charisma of a leader, and loose forms of political organization. And yet, many cases that should be considered as populist do not feature all of these elements. This has led researchers toward minimal definitions that see populism as a thin-centered ideology, one which divides society into two homogenous and antagonistic groups, the elite and "the people," the first of which are demonized and the second celebrated (Mudde 2004: 543; 2017: 29; Canovan 1981: 264; 1999: 4; Taguieff 1995: 9; de la Torre 2000: 4; Meny and Surel 2002: 12; Laclau 2005a: ch. 4; 2005b: 33–34; Mudde 2007: 23; Hawkins 2009: 1042; Moffitt and Tormey 2014: 387; Hawkins et al. 2019). The key advantage of such a definition is that it makes it possible to encompass most or all of the cases typically considered populist.

The downside of this definition is that it stays exclusively in the realm of ideas. It is of little help to researchers who wish to study matters of mobilization and organization (Mouzelis 1985; 1986; Roberts 1996; 2006; Weyland 1996; 2001; 2017; Jansen 2011; 2017; Hetland 2014; Aslanidis 2017). Without paying attention to both matters of political organization and matters of political discourse, the study of populism risks the danger of becoming a field of largely philological, linguistic and even psychoanalytic investigation. There would be little room left for the typical concerns of political sociology. It is therefore important to approach populism as a mode of political practice, one which encompasses both discourse and mobilization (Jansen 2011: 82). This type of approach is especially useful since it suggests that we study the processes that drive populism. It can provide the basis for a more elaborate analysis of elite-mass interaction, which is a key goal of this book. It is also useful since it aims to keep one eye on discourse and one on mobilization.

However, the ways in which populist actors mobilize "the people" vary a great deal. Based on Latin American experiences, some scholars have isolated the following elements of populist modes of mobilization and organization: (1) a direct and personalistic relationship between a charismatic leader and his followers, (2) disdain for the existing institutional framework, (3) an emphasis on mass support, (4) weak organization of followers and, (5) low institutionalization (Hawkins 2010: 168). However, scholars have also found that modes of organization vary a great deal across populist cases, even within Latin America (Roberts 2006). Stepping out of Latin America, we are presented with even larger problems. Is there a common denominator for populist types of mobilization? As with populist discourse, an examina-

tion of populist modes of mobilization again pushes us to consider minimal definitions. That is where this book's emphasis on the fractal character of populism comes in.

Fractals have been employed as a motivating metaphor in a variety of contributions in the social sciences. Perhaps the best known example of the fractal metaphor in sociology is Abbott's discussion of turning points and trajectories (Abbott 1997; 2001: ch. 8). As Abbott says, one can always zoom in on a turning point and locate internal trajectories and smaller connected turning points. Or, one can zoom out and see that very same turning point as a node in a larger chain. That is what fractals look like: they are "self-similar." The same pattern exists at various levels of the phenomenon. The best known fractals are intriguing geometric shapes, but examples can also be found in nature, for instance sea shells or snowflakes.

Populist interactions between elite and mass actors can also be seen as fractals: no matter where one looks, one always sees the same pattern. Elites are always inciting, amplifying, molding, and manipulating mass input. In that sense, populism is "self-similar." The fractal metaphor lends itself to the development of a set of research tools that one can use in other cases of populism. Thinking about populism in this manner makes it possible to sidestep a common pitfall that tends to plague even many very insightful works: that of couching the issue in terms of "spontaneous" versus "organized." The question that naturally appears is whether a case like the Serbian one is, in the final analysis, really more of a top-down or a bottom-up phenomenon? One can thus say that it was really "spontaneous" and therefore "authentic" or that it was "orchestrated" and therefore "manipulated." This way of seeing comes naturally to people: even participants prefer to see their mobilization as spontaneous and therefore morally superior (Polletta 1998; 2006a: ch. 2). Such a binary framing of the phenomena may be understandable for participants, but it is problematic in terms of analysis. Yet, even some well-known studies of populism rely on the same style of thinking: juxtaposing "grassroots power" with manipulative "sorcerers" (Canovan 2005: 134–36). Why not think of the two in interaction, instead of opposition?

Thinking about populism as a fractal phenomenon provides a way forward. With fractals, we can appreciate the complexity of the phenomenon under observation. Moreover, we are invited to theorize the forces that produced the complexity that we observe. This is where notions of "self-similarity" become useful. What does it mean to say that populism is "self-similar?" This means that the linkage between elite and mass actors is something that one can notice at various levels of the phenomenon. I consider three levels. At the macro level, the analyst considers the entire episode as

a whole and assesses the evidence for elite-mass interaction. At the meso level, the analyst considers short-term rhythms and day-to-day relationships. And at the micro level, the analyst considers the smallest meaningful unit of analysis. If the same kind of elite-mass interaction is present on all levels, then it is warranted to call the phenomenon fractal.

In other words, the fractal metaphor embraces the endogenous character of populism: mass action can be traced to elite action, which can be traced to mass action, and so on. Cause and effect are obviously intertwined (see also Aslanidis 2017: 305). Instead of trying to explain the problem away or myopically insist on the importance of one over the other, this approach tries to turn what one may consider a weakness into a strength. The logic can be summarized as follows: if you have a cross to bear, you may as well use it as a crutch. This also means that conventional social movement phenomena that are not populist will not have a fractal character, which makes it possible to separate them from populism. In such cases, elite-mass linkages are expected to break down, leaving each side to act with more autonomy. This is what makes it possible to separate the "good guys" from the "bad guys."

With populism, elites simultaneously use the masses while empowering them. Elite actors are continuously present in the processes that harness and amplify the power of ordinary people. The flip side of this mobilization of popular power is the absence of autonomous spaces, i.e., spaces in which elites do not "meddle" and ordinary citizens have the opportunity to act and talk on their own. This final point is important: Are there opportunities to form autonomous spaces for the creation of discourse? These are not the norm in populism. Yet, "the people" are not asked to be silent. Rather, they are asked to speak up, provided that this is done in forums that elites can shape. This may be the main sin of populism. Citizens are not treated as political adults, even as they are—rather paradoxically—encouraged to become quite active in the political arena.

Political Sociology

As mentioned, this book aims to contribute to three bodies of scholarly work. The first of these is political sociology, broadly conceived. The second is the literature on populism. And the third is the literature on the former Yugoslavia and its breakup. What does the field of political sociology say with regard to populism? Curiously, most mainstream sociology has avoided the topic. Despite the prevalence and importance of populism, the topic has received "almost no attention from sociology" (Jansen 2011: 75). However,

even as much of political sociology has ignored the topic, there are signs that interest is growing. Several recent contributions to the literature have been written by sociologists (Berezin 2009; Jansen 2011; Gidron and Bonikowski 2013; Hetland 2014; Aslanidis 2016; 2017). But overall, political sociologists have not been at the forefront of investigations into populism. A partial exception is the literature on U.S. populism, both the populism of the late nineteenth century (e.g., Redding 1992; Soule 1992; Gerteis 2003), as well as the more recent literature on the Tea Party (e.g., Van Dyke and Meyer 2014; Rohlinger et al. 2015; McVeigh et al. 2014). However, these studies do not use populism as their grounding concept.

Overviews of the field of political sociology typically exclude populism. For example, *The Blackwell Companion to Political Sociology* does not contain a chapter on populism and the index to the book contains no mention of it (Nash and Scott 2001). Another introductory text, *Contemporary Political Sociology*, also contains no mention of populism (Nash 2010). The journal *Annual Reviews of Sociology* has not published an article summarizing the state of the literature on populism and only one of its articles—devoted primarily to the rise of the radical right in Europe—provides a discussion of populism (Rydgren 2007). All in all, political sociology has mostly avoided the topic.

A similar picture emerges when one looks at the field of social movements and collective behavior, arguably an area in which debates about populism should be lively. For example, the widely read *Blackwell Companion to Social Movements* (Snow et al. 2007) contains no chapter on populism and no mention of the topic in its index. The handbook by Della Porta and Diani mentions populism twice, but only tangentially, while quoting other sources (Della Porta and Diani 2006: 239, 246). The agenda-setting book *Dynamics of Contention* (McAdam et al. 2001) paints a similar picture. It mentions populism twice but only in passing (McAdam et al.: 266, 296). None of its fifteen cases are cases of populism. Two more recent introductions to social movements mention populism a couple of times but do not engage the topic explicitly (Goodwin and Jasper 2015; Jasper 2014). The first clear sign that populism may be appearing on the radar of social movement scholars is Caiani's review of the field of populism and populist movements in *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Social and Political Movements* (Caiani 2012). The recent rise of populist politicians and parties across the globe will probably bring political sociologists into the debate. But for now, their contributions have been few.

Why has political sociology in general and social movement scholarship in particular had so little to say about populism? I would suggest that the

main reason is the lack of fit between populist phenomena and the way social movement scholarship approaches contentious politics. The field has been built on cases marked by clean divisions between "the good guys" and "the bad guys." For instance, Tilly's "polity model," which has informed much of the literature on social movements, is based on a distinction between challengers on the outside and their elite targets on the inside (Tilly 1979). Gamson's discussion of members and incumbents on one side and challengers on the other is similar in this respect (Gamson 1975). But populism muddies the waters, since elites are clearly involved with the mobilization of challengers. One does not know if there is a side to cheer for. The "good guys" and the "bad guys" are not clearly delineated. Indeed, populism presents a good case of an "awkward" research topic (Polletta 2006b), a phenomenon that is morally and politically ambiguous.

This ambiguity may constitute one reason why sociologists have steered clear of populism. In addition, sociologists may have been under the impression that populism is a vaguely defined concept. And this impression is not without merit, as was mentioned earlier. The lack of an agreed-upon definition of populism may have lead political sociologists toward other concepts, such as revolution, social movements, democratization, or nationalism. Or, they may have been influenced by the everyday usage of the term, which is predominantly pejorative. Populism often comes bundled with a variety of unpleasant connotations such as clientelism and authoritarianism. However, populism's entanglement with modern democracy means that the study of populism has much to offer to our understanding of such topics as state development, democratization, the welfare state, party politics, movement tactics, leadership, and the public sphere. In other words, most aspects of modernity's project of mass democracy have at some points crossed paths with populism.

Therefore, political sociology stands to gain much if it takes populism seriously. But the flip side also holds: the literature on populism can benefit if it employs some of the analytical tools developed within political sociology. Indeed, there are opportunities for cross-fertilization between the two fields that have not been sufficiently made use of (see also Aslanidis 2017: 306). This especially holds for process-oriented approaches. Many contributions to basic social theory, i.e., contributions that aim to set the agenda for other researchers, have emphasized the importance of an interactional or relational approach. For example, scholars have pleaded for the analysis of processes and mechanisms, as in the influential "dynamics of contention" approach (McAdam et al. 2001), for the study of social fields, as in Bourdieu's sociology (Bourdieu 1977; Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992), relational fields

(Goldstone 2004), and strategic action fields (Fligstein and McAdam 2012). The field metaphor suggests interaction and much of sociology has been motivated by these broad insights. Of course, much work still remains. In particular, while fields and mechanisms can serve as a motivating image, one is not really certain how to operationalize this insight for empirical research. The chapters in this book try to take a step forward in this respect by offering research strategies that can be employed more broadly.

And finally, the recent reemergence of populism even in the politics of many developed countries suggests that an engagement with populism may increase the visibility, influence, and importance of sociology. Political sociologists can either embrace the phenomenon or stand by their older categories, risking exclusion from wider political and social debates. The case of Ernesto Laclau, a scholar of populism who has been quite influential, shows that academic pursuits need not be disconnected from political practice (Laclau and Mouffe 1985; Laclau 2005a; 2005b). Indeed, the popularity of Laclau amongst some leftist populist movements, most notably Podemos in Spain and Syriza in Greece (Iglesias 2015; Kioupkiolis 2016), suggests that scholarly ideas on populism may cross over into the political realm. More recently, the same agenda has been promoted by Chantal Mouffe (2018) and will probably win many additional readers among leftist activists and strategists. The debate on populism has grown in importance and is no longer merely an academic one. This also means that we should be more explicit about the trade-offs associated with populism: what we stand to gain and what we stand to lose if we adopt populist practices.

Studies of Populism

The second field of study to which this book aims to contribute is the literature on populism. The field is diverse in terms of disciplinary background and frequently segmented according to geographical region. In particular, the literature on Latin American populism figures prominently, as does a distinct literature on right-wing populism in Western Europe. Older work on populism was motivated by the experience of interwar Europe and overlapped with the study of fascism. Despite this heterogeneity, several main bodies of work can be located. The history of the field can broadly be classified into four waves of research: modernization approaches, Marxist approaches, discursive approaches, and institutional approaches (for overviews, see Weyland 2001; Jansen 2011; Kaltwasser et al. 2017).

Modernization theories placed their emphasis on rapid urbanization,

industrialization, and the advancement of education (Deutsch 1954; Kornhauser 1959; Lipset 1960). Such socioeconomic changes destabilize traditional forms of rule and lead to unstable forms such as populism (Germani 1978; Ionescu and Gellner 1969; Di Tella 1965). For this group of scholars, socioeconomic modernization breaks down traditional political arrangements as well as behavioral patterns. As broad segments of the population become politically activated and mobilized, political instability ensues and populism fills the gap. Modernization theories see populism as a particular developmental phase that can be outgrown as countries advance politically. Empirically, much of this literature focused on Latin America, with Peronism in Argentina as the defining case.

Populism was also frequently approached from the perspective of Marxism in general and dependency and world-system theory in particular (Frank 1966; Wallerstein 1974; Amin 1977). Though different in their political orientations, Marxist approaches share some concerns with modernization theories, notably a focus on the economy. For Marxists, the incorporation of Third World countries into peripheral and semi-peripheral positions in the world economy leads—once again—to political instability and populism (Waisman 1982; Spalding 1977; Klaren 1973). In that respect, both modernization and Marxist approaches see economic relations as crucial. Additionally, both approaches are empirically grounded in Latin American experiences. Moreover, populism was seen as coupled with protectionist economic policies, notably import substitution industrialization (O'Donnell 1979; Cardoso and Faletto 1979). In some cases, scholars inspired by structural arguments looked for classes and class-coalitions, which formed the basis for particular styles of rule (Paige 1978; Stokes 1989; Luebbert 1991).

These structural approaches have lost influence over the last two decades. They were criticized for leaving little room for politics and culture, for their teleological views of history, and for their definitions of populism as a package of particular policies (Weyland 2001: 5–6; Jansen 2011: 79). Discursive perspectives provide a third approach. This body of work has been on the upswing in recent years, in large part due to the influential work of Laclau (Laclau 1977; Laclau and Mouffe 1985; Laclau 1996; 2005a; 2005b). Discursive approaches see populism as an antagonistic mode of politics that forms in the public sphere when "the people" are successfully constructed in opposition to the elite. Such contributions focus on the speeches of populist politicians and the populist discourse of particular parties and movements (Kazin 1995; de la Torre 2000; Mudde 2004; Mudde 2007; Hawkins 2009; Mudde and Kaltwasser 2012; Stavrakakis and Katsambekis 2014; Moffitt and Tormey 2014; Moffitt 2016). The discursive approach is important

because it highlights the discursive construction of "the people," the ways in which populist politicians try to create a seemingly homogenous force out of a previously segmented society. Yet, measuring populist discourse has proven to be difficult, as researchers themselves frankly admit (Hawkins 2009: 1046; Moffit and Tormey 2014: 384). Furthermore, the study of discourse focuses primarily on the supply side of populism. Less attention is given to what "the people" think and want. In addition, analysis of discourse is undertaken with little to no concern for matters of mobilization and organization. In this respect, a focus on words and ideas becomes detached from the world of political practice. This is something that the fourth approach to populism places center stage.

The fourth approach emphasizes matters of organization, agency, and institutions. Populism is explained by the weakened capacity of existing institutions to channel citizen demands (Huntington 1991; Roberts 1996; 2006; Weyland 1996; 1998; 2000; de la Torre 2000; Ellner 2003). Disaffected voters who are not incorporated via strong political parties turn to populist leaders instead. Most of the research has once again been on Latin America. For example, the work on "neopopulism" was motivated by the rise of politicians such as Hugo Chavez and Evo Morales. Some of the same factors—notably the weakness of existing institutions—have also been emphasized by scholars of West European populism. These authors have focused most of their energies on the rise of the radical right in Europe. The explanation is similar since it stresses the weakness of political parties and the inability of liberal democracy to accommodate new grievances (Kitschelt 1995; Betz and Immerfall 1998; Mair 2002; Ignazi 2003; Norris 2005; Mudde 2007). The expansion of the liberal and technocratic project of European integration further destabilizes centrist political parties and provides additional momentum to radical right populists (Berezin 2009).

All of these approaches are valuable and all contribute something to the study of populism. However, they all share the same fault; namely, they are exclusively oriented toward the problem of populism's emergence. Yet, this is not the only question of relevance when it comes to populism. Moreover, it may be a question that cannot be answered. Faced with the existing plethora of populist cases across the globe, one would have to conclude that populism can emerge in almost any setting. Social modernization and peripheral incorporation into the world economy are not necessary, since populism exists even in the rich democracies of North America and Western Europe. Populist discourses are important but should be studied with empirical rigor and in connection with popular mobilization. And a focus on weak institutions and parties is helpful but essentially restates the problem—namely,

that populists tend to emerge when the existing establishment is in crisis. Therefore, the question of when and where populism emerges may not be one that can be answered with a single answer.

If that is the case, we may be better off reformulating our questions. This book suggests that it may be more productive to think about the political practices that drive populism. While keeping one eye on discourse and another on mobilization, such an approach may make it possible to study the *hows* of populism, its interactive and processual aspects. In addition, the majority of studies on populism tend to focus almost exclusively on the supply side, i.e., on the populist rhetoric of populist politicians and parties. What about the demand side? Why do ordinary people take part in populist practices? Why do they respond to populist discourse? Scholars of populism tend not to ask the ordinary "foot soldiers" of populism why they take part. It is important to examine both aspects of the populist phenomenon, the supply side that comes from elites with the demand side that comes from "the people." This book tries to do both.

Studies of the Breakup of Yugoslavia

The third literature to which this book aims to contribute is the literature on the former Yugoslavia and its terminal crisis in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The main goal here is to "bring the people back in," i.e., to challenge the overly elite-centered approach that most of the contributions to this literature have relied on. The Serbian populist episode of 1988, or the "anti-bureaucratic revolution" as it is often called, is usually dismissed as a simple case of top-down manipulation. Elites are indeed important, most notably the Serbian politician Slobodan Milošević. But such a singular focus on elites misses the chance to examine the linkages between elite and mass actors. Though the goal here is to "bring the people back in," it should be reiterated that "the people" are a populist construct, not an actor that can actually act autonomously. This book does not aim to reverse the story from elites to popular actors but to show the form of interaction between the two.

In part, the elite-centric perspective predominant in the field is an understandable reaction to the "ancient hatreds" thesis that was initially employed to understand the wars of the 1990s (Kaplan 1994). According to this argument, the various ethnic groups in the Balkans were "unusually wild and predisposed to violence" (Ramet 2005: 3). In response, most scholars of the Yugoslav breakup emphasized elite strategies instead. In particular, nationalist grievances were often seen as the main tool that elites could use in order

to deflect attention from their own responsibility for Yugoslavia's economic woes (e.g., Woodward 1995; Snyder 2000). This perspective was further strengthened by a strong desire to assign blame. For many scholars, the most important question about the breakup was "Whose fault is it?" (Ramet 2005: 4–5). This type of inquiry leads quickly to particular personalities, most often to Slobodan Milošević. The focus on Milošević is further accentuated by the many biographies of him (Đukić 1992; Doder and Branson 1999; Cohen 2001; Sell 2002; LeBor 2004). Thus, scholars see Milošević as "the first communist politician to make use of the re-emerging nationalist ideologies" (Pavković 2000: 103), as "the most successful communist functionary to exploit ethnic nationalism as a political resource" (Cohen 1993: 51), or as someone who "stoked Serbs' ethnic hostility with deft demagoguery" (Kaufman 1996: 117).

Of course, the main point is well taken. Elites were indeed important. But such an exclusive focus on elites has replaced one simplified narrative, that of "ancient hatreds," with another, that of "loathsome leaders" and "paradise lost" (Cohen 2001: 465; Dragović-Soso 2008: 15). In adopting an elite-centric perspective, scholars have tried to reestablish the line between the "good guys" and the "bad guys." For example, Gagnon suggests that the people had the right democratic attitudes, resisted the nationalist onslaught as long as they could, but were ultimately forced down the nationalist path by politicians (Gagnon 2004; 2010a; see also Lowinger 2009; 2013 for a similar argument). Yet, as already mentioned, populism makes it impossible to establish such clean dividing lines between the good guys and the bad guys. A purely elite-centric approach cannot make sense of the episode.

When turning specifically to the Serbian protests of the late 1980s, most scholars have adopted the similarly elite-centric dichotomy of "spontaneous" (i.e., genuine) versus "organized" (i.e., manipulated). For example, referring to the Serbian protests of 1988, Glaurdić says that "there was nothing spontaneous in their organization and timing" (Glaurdić 2011: 29). Ramet echoes this statement when she writes that the protests were "ostensibly spontaneous" but really "carefully organized" (Ramet 2005: 56). Bennet suggests that "there was nothing spontaneous about the meetings, which were all carefully stage-managed" (Bennett 1995: 98). Other contributions similarly speak of the protests as "stage-managed" (Little and Silber 1995: 58; Pavlowitch 2002: 194). Such a stylization of Serbia's populist protests is analytically unproductive. It frames the debate in a way that leads to a dismissal of the protests as a top-down phenomenon not worthy of closer examination.

Luckily, the literature contains several contributions that show the way. The first important steps came from Veljko Vujačić whose work downplayed the role of elites in order to focus on long-run historical legacies (Vujačić 1996; Vujačić 2003; Vujačić 2015). Other scholars also aim to "bring the people back in" (Vladisavljević 2008; Archer 2016; Musić 2016; Archer and Musić 2017). These studies can be seen as part of a broader attempt to provide a bottom-up perspective to key issues of post-Yugoslav politics (see also Pickering 2007; Koska 2015). Vladisavljević shows that the Serbian protests of the late 1980s were simultaneously a top-down and a bottom-up phenomenon and provides a detailed qualitative account of the entire episode. Archer and Musić, two historians, also protest against the top-down approach favored by the literature and emphasize the agency of blue-collar workers in particular. This is valuable work since it can provide more historical detail about the anti-bureaucratic revolution, addressing the various lacunae of the elite-centric perspective.

The account developed in this book shares certain aspects with this work. In particular, I share with these scholars the desire to "bring the people back in." However, my book also contains certain specificities. The goal of the book is to show that the Serbian episode was complex but also to show *how* it was complex, i.e., to cut through the complexity in order to conceptualize the processes that generate the complexity that we observe. In my opinion, this can be achieved if one approaches the problem with a mixed-method approach, employing both quantitative and qualitative evidence. And furthermore, it is important to name the phenomenon. Setting the empirical story straight and giving voice and agency to ordinary people is important. But it is also important to approach the phenomenon conceptually.

This entails asking the question: What is this case a case of? It is the contention of this book that Serbia in the late 1980s is best understood as a case of populism. The rest of the analysis developed in this book derives from this basic premise. Of course, the point that populism is often a vaguely defined concept is well-taken. Even insightful analysts of Yugoslavia suggest that populism is an imprecise concept (Vujačić 2003: 391). As mentioned, this view is shared by many, even many researchers of populism. Nevertheless, this book contends that it is both possible to add precision to the study of populism as well as fruitful to do so. In my opinion, our analysis of the dynamics of the Serbian episode will be left hanging unless one engages the concept of populism in a mixed-method way, tracking the elite-mass interactions in a variety of ways.

Why Populism? Why Serbia?

As the last section hinted, this book will not focus on nationalism quite as much as has been common in the literature on the former Yugoslavia. Serbia's anti-bureaucratic revolution certainly featured a lot of nationalism: Serbian protesters on the streets often voiced typically nationalist claims about the victimhood of their ethnic group while the media recycled the Kosovo issue as the key myth of Serbian politics. Yet arguably, the nationalism of the late 1980s was folded into a larger package of populist practices that has not been sufficiently examined. This package contains issues that matter for both the area of discourse and the area of mobilization.

In terms of discourse, a focus on nationalism neglects the more distinctly populist discourse that took shape in the Serbian public sphere in the late 1980s. It is important to highlight this specific language and not approach the 1980s with expectations formed by the 1990s. Once this is done, certain aspects of populism emerge—such as the language of producerism analyzed later in this book—which would otherwise go unnoticed and which is relevant to contemporary debates about populism. In other words, adopting the concept of populism is like putting on a new pair of glasses. It enables us to see certain things that we would not see otherwise. Nationalist glasses have already been used by many scholars, especially of former Yugoslavia, and little can be gained by putting them on once again.

In terms of mobilization, populism provides a new way to approach forms of elite-mass interaction that were prevalent during the episode. The conceptual switch from nationalism to populism brings into sharp relief the fact that there is no specifically nationalist mode of mobilization. Actors with nationalist goals and grievances may use a variety of mobilizing tactics, but to speak of nationalist styles of mobilization makes little sense. However, the picture is different when it comes to populist modes of mobilization. Indeed, it can be reasonably expected that nationalist actors may choose populist modes of mobilization quite often (e.g., Stroschein 2011). To speak of nationalist mobilization makes sense in terms of the grievances voiced by actors but not in terms of the modes of mobilization that generate collective action. This is a key advantage of populism over nationalism as a grounding concept: it can lead us to an examination of mobilization, not only discourse.

All this is not to say that studies of populism and the former Yugoslavia have not crossed paths. However, such contributions tend to say they are interested in the issue of populism but actually turn to nationalism in their empirical analysis (Bowman 2005; Laclau 2005a: 197–98). Of course, na-

tionalism and populism are not always easy to separate, especially since they frequently appear together. Yet the two can nevertheless be meaningfully distinguished by emphasizing the central cleavage: a vertical cleavage in the case of populism, i.e., a cleavage that separates "the people" and the elite, and a horizontal cleavage in the case of nationalism, i.e., a cleavage between "the nation" and a racial or ethnic minority (Jansen 2011: 84; see also De Cleen 2017). Of course, most of the time, there will be a lot of overlap between "the people" and "the nation."

While employing the lens of populism promises insights into the case of Serbia, it is also legitimate to ask what the case of Serbia offers more broadly. What makes the case of Serbia an interesting one for the study of populism? The next chapter introduces the case in more detail and provides additional background information that readers may find useful, but it is important to sketch the reasons why the Serbian episode from the late 1980s is an important one, a case that can push forward our understanding of populism.

It is rather curious that the Serbian episode has not been approached from the perspective of populism as it ticks practically all the boxes of even the most expansive definition of populism. As mentioned earlier, most efforts to define populism have moved toward minimal definitions of the phenomenon. This makes it possible to encompass many cases that we typically consider populist but that may not be defined as such if we adopt a strict list of necessary criteria. For example, the Russian *Narodniki* of the late nineteenth century are usually considered populist, but would have to be ignored if one were to adopt a definition that includes widespread popular mobilization. It was mostly a movement of intellectuals with little resonance among the intended target, the large peasant population of Russia. Yet, this would be unfortunate since the *Narodniki* are often considered one of the central examples of populism.

Similarly, if only instances with a charismatic leader were to be considered populist, then such important cases as the U.S. Populist Party, another key example, would be left out. The American populists of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century built a strong political movement, but it did not feature one leading figure, as was the case with Peron in Argentina or Mao in China. Yet, excluding the case would certainly lead to a loss of comparative knowledge about populism. Therefore, minimal definitions are a better choice, and this book does not disagree. The advantage of such definitions is that they approach populism as a political logic, rather than a set of traits. Populism is not something that you are but something that you can employ (Kazin 1995: 2–3). This book's definition of populism as a fractal phenomenon is in line with such a perspective.

Yet, the interesting thing about the Serbian case is that it seems to fit even the most detailed definitions of populism. For example, the book edited by Ghita Ionescu and Ernest Gellner, arguably the founding contribution to the study of populism, contains several contributions that try to make a list of elements that should be present for a case to be called populist (Ionescu and Gellner 1969; Minogue 1969; Stewart 1969; Wiles 1969; Worsley 1969). To this day, there has not been a similar effort of sifting through many country cases in order to construct a definition of populism.

The Serbian case seems to include many, if not all, of the elements proposed by several contributors to the Ionescu and Gellner volume: a peripheral country, institutional decay, economic crisis, a charismatic leader, a division of society into the elite and the people, the emergence of a discourse that celebrates "the people," anti-elitism, anti-intellectualism, conspiracy theories, a supposedly direct relationship between the leader and "the people," disrespect for procedures and rules, popular mobilization of the people in the streets, various forms of "pseudo-participation," loose forms of organization and patchy discipline, and a short duration and relatively quick absorption of the populist impulse by the regime. Indeed, there are arguably too many elements in the Serbian case to fit into a single volume. This book will therefore focus only on several of these that matter most, especially from the perspective of this book's goal—namely, developing a fractal approach to populism. Some of the themes listed above, such as conspiracy theories, have already been highlighted by other contributions (Blanuša 2011; Dragović-Soso 2002; Mimica and Vučetić 2008; Živković 2012; Grdešić 2016), while others still await a more detailed analysis. It is certainly a case that can be returned to again and again.

For scholars of political sociology and comparative politics, it is perhaps the extent of popular mobilization that transforms the case into one that warrants attention. The large crowds at the many protests that took place in the summer and fall of 1988 in Serbia make the case difficult to dismiss. While some of the other elements in the broader populist package are harder to define and measure, harder to put one's finger on, the crowds that came to the large populist rallies in Serbia cannot be ignored. This level of mobilization transforms the case into something that demands understanding and analysis. In comparison, other cases of popular upheaval in the late 1980s, most notably the many revolutions that took place during 1989 in Eastern Europe or China and slightly later in the former Soviet Union, have received a lot more attention. And yet, the crowds seen in Serbia are just as impressive in terms of size, if not more so (see also Vladisavljević 2008: 2). Confronted with this level of popular unrest, one naturally wonders: What political prac-

tices led to this phenomenon to burst onto the political scene? Unpacking this package of populist practices is the goal of this book.

Road Map for the Book

This final section of the introduction presents a road map. Following this introductory chapter, the book consists of a chapter that introduces the Serbian case, four empirical chapters, and a conclusion. There is also a methodological appendix that contains certain elements of the statistical analysis that may be of interest to some readers. The statistical analysis in the main body of the book was kept light in order to keep the general reader interested. This methodological appendix provides additional detail that quantitative scholars may want to consult. Each of the four empirical chapters engages a certain aspect of populism. The final chapter concludes and considers the broader implications of the argument.

Chapter 2 provides an introduction to the Serbian case. Most readers will probably have no trouble with the subsequent empirical chapters, but chapter 2 provides the historical background that will make it easier to understand some of the idiosyncrasies of the Serbian case. More broadly, Yugoslav socialism had certain unique features that require a bit of explanation. Chapter 2 has the goal of providing such background information.

Chapter 3 investigates populism on the terrain of events. The interaction between elite and mass players is traced in the dynamics of protest relative to elite events. As a site of interaction, waves of popular mobilization pose specific challenges. This chapter presents a type of analysis rooted in "eventful history" (Tarrow 1989; Beissinger 2002; Sewell 2005). Events are not just "one damn thing after another," but actually provide a kind of structure, a kind of method to the madness of a revolutionary episode. This is one way in which studies of populism can learn from political sociology. The fractal manipulation of populism can be traced by looking at various levels: the macro level of the protest wave as a whole, the meso level of short-term bursts of mobilization, and the micro level, i.e., the level of the single rally as the smallest meaningful unit of analysis. The chapter introduces an event catalog of over 300 contentious events and analyzes them in connection with important sessions of the communist party. Quantitative analysis is supplemented with qualitative evidence.

Chapter 4 shifts the analysis from what is happening in the streets to what is happening in the public sphere. More specifically, this chapter introduces a data set of roughly 800 letters published in a newspaper rubric

devoted to readers' contributions. This newspaper section, which was called "Echoes and Reactions," was one of the main sites in which the populist agenda was formed. Interestingly, it was also a site of elite-mass interaction in which elites solicited the input of the masses but manipulated it at the same time. The fractal character of the manipulation can again be seen by zooming in and out: at the micro level, i.e., the daily editorial practices that determined the publication of each letter; the meso level, i.e., the day-to-day linkages between populist media content and mobilization; and the macro level, i.e., the effect of exposure to the media on the propensity to protest for the period as a whole. This chapter thus demonstrates the second way in which the fractal character of populism can be spotted. It also shows another way in which scholarship of populism and social movement scholarship can cross-fertilize. The letters published in "Echoes and Reactions" provided a key mechanism of "identity work," as a sense of "we" was formed on the pages of the newspaper (Melucci 1989; Hunt et al. 1994; Bernstein 1997; Snow and McAdam 2000; Polletta and Jasper 2001). This public space, which was both genuine and doctored, provided the forum in which "the people" could emerge as a unitary force, a homogenous and powerful actor.

Chapter 5 stays on the terrain of the public sphere but approaches it from a different angle. It introduces a data set of more than 800 political cartoons from several Serbian newspapers. This chapter unveils a discourse of producerism, i.e., a discourse that relies on notions of productive and unproductive work (Hattam 1993; Kazin 1995; Huston 1998; Currarino 2011). The central theme in the cartoons is the division between the blue-collar worker and the political bureaucrat or functionary. The worker is usually active while the bureaucrat is lazy. A key theme associated with the bureaucrat is the armchair: he is often sitting, resting, and sleeping in it. It becomes a symbol of his parasitic character. In other words, the populist discourse of the time is linked to a producerist view that celebrates the manual labor of ordinary people, especially blue-collar workers, and demonizes the paper-pushing activity of "armchair politicians" (*foteljaši*). The importance of producerism extends beyond the socialist setting of Serbia, since producerism continues to offer a "folk theory" about what makes the people "good." Chapter 4 shows that the populist discourse in the media aimed to construct "the people" as a unitary political actor. Yet, it does not specify what it was that made the people "good." The visual vocabularies of cartoons may have been able to do what conventional text-based materials (readers' letters) were not. Moreover, unlike the letters analyzed in chapter 4, the cartoons analyzed in chapter 5 show fewer traces of manipulation, indicating a type of discourse that was more organically established in the public sphere.

Chapter 6 brings the entire populist episode into the present. It investigates the long-run legacies of populism. The chapter is based on six focus groups with a total of thirty-four participants of the anti-bureaucratic revolution. Almost thirty years after the event, "the people" were asked to come together in small groups and discuss their experiences: Why did they take part in a populist rally? What do they now think of their participation? How do they now feel about populist ideas and discourses? These discussions were used to probe popular opinion on the populist episode and examine if former participants were willing to engage in "coming to terms with the past." On the whole, people communicate a deep sense of unease about their participation and regret the fact that they were manipulated by political elites. The politicization that occurred with the anti-bureaucratic revolution was for many of them their first and last foray into protest politics. The people have retreated into passivity and cynicism. This puts into stark perspective the entire package of populist practices analyzed in previous chapters. The sole exception is the discourse of producerism, which still resonates and amuses most people, despite fundamental changes in socioeconomic conditions.

The concluding chapter discusses the implications of the study for a comparative analysis of populism. How can the analysis be extended to other parts of the world and other cases of populism? What are the main trade-offs associated with populism and what are the main lessons for contemporary politics? The final chapter engages this broader set of questions. Instead of assessing populism as either bad or good, I suggest that we think about the main trade-offs that come with populism. The central one is the trade-off between autonomy and scale. What we gain in terms of scale, we lose in terms of autonomy. The long-run legacies of populism are tied up with resentment, cynicism, and political passivity. Populism depends on political naivety, treats citizens as something less than adults, and, in the long-run, pushes them out of politics and into the private sphere. Populism leaves much to be desired as a vehicle for political education. At the same time, one cannot deny the effectiveness of populism in terms of constructing "the people," at least in the short term. Large protest rallies and a powerful discourse about "the people" may not be able to emerge without at least a dose of populism. This dilemma needs to be kept in mind, given the growing appeal of populism for many. The final chapter engages this new enthusiasm for populism. The growing popularity of authors like Laclau (2005a; 2005b) and Mouffe (2018), who advocate a return to populist politics, suggests that a discussion of the do's and don'ts of populism is in order.

CHAPTER 2

The Serbian Case

This chapter introduces the Serbian case. It provides the background information that will make it easier for readers to understand the four empirical chapters that follow. It may be especially useful for those who are not specialists on Yugoslav politics and history. Yugoslavia was, in many ways, a peculiar country, and some of these peculiarities need to be fleshed out. The wars of the 1990s have removed Yugoslavia from the map, replacing it with several independent countries, of which Serbia is one. But Yugoslavia remains a terrain for interesting scholarship. The country's final decade, the 1980s, was perhaps Yugoslavia's most turbulent and dynamic period.

Yugoslavia can be described as an authoritarian socialist country with a decentralized political structure, which mostly mirrored the ethnic composition of its population. In comparison with other East European regimes, Yugoslavia was always more liberal and open. This was a political consequence of the domestic legitimacy that Yugoslav communists achieved through World War II, as well as subsequent political developments. During World War II, it was the communists who led the resistance against fascism. This won them the support of ordinary people and provided additional legitimacy. Their leader, Josip Broz Tito, became an important partner of the American and British allies. Subsequent postwar developments additionally strengthened the position of the communists. The most notable of these was the break that Tito made with Stalin in the late 1940s. This turn of events launched Yugoslavia onto a somewhat exceptional trajectory, though it remained in many ways a recognizable socialist country led by a Leninist party.

The Serbian episode of the late 1980s has not been approached as a case of populism, despite the fact that it ticks practically all the boxes of even the most expansive definitions. As mentioned, most scholars have focused instead on the more explicit nationalism of the 1990s, both in Serbia as well

as in other former republics of Yugoslavia. Yet practically all the elements of populism are here: a peripheral country, institutional decay, economic crisis, a charismatic leader, a division of society into the elite and the people, the emergence of a discourse that celebrates "the people," and popular mobilization of the people in the streets. Arguably, this is a case that researchers of populism should be interested in, not least because its ramifications include such dramatic and far-reaching outcomes as state dissolution and war.

Serbia's anti-bureaucratic revolution unfolded predominantly in the summer and fall of 1988. Throughout this book, most of the analysis focuses on this period: from the start of June to the end of November of 1988. But the episode has both a back story as well as a conclusion that fall outside these boundaries. This chapter will provide a basic chronology of these events. Initial protests began to take place in the mid-1980s. Though protests had occurred periodically in Yugoslavia, the 1980s saw an explosion of contentious events. The political elite were also experiencing more than just the usual level of intraparty maneuvering and intrigue. The famous eighth session of the Serbian party, which took place in September of 1987, can be used as the starting point of a period of heightened elite conflict. In the span of only several years, the party would become completely divided. By January of 1990, when the equally famous fourteenth congress of the federal party took place, it had irreversibly self-destructed. As the party imploded, so did Yugoslavia.

Yugoslav Socialism

Yugoslav socialism had a peculiar trajectory. During World War II, Yugoslav communists were the main force behind a formidable resistance campaign against both the fascist occupiers—Italy and Germany—as well as their domestic collaborators. By 1945, Yugoslavia had around 800,000 resistance fighters, compared to France's 500,000 or Italy's 250,000, though Yugoslavia's population of about 15 million was less than half of France's or Italy's populations. It suffered civilian losses of about 10 percent of its population, surpassed only by the Soviet Union (11 percent) and Poland (17 percent). Furthermore, Yugoslavia suffered military losses of about 305,000 soldiers, a figure surpassed only by the Soviet Union (Jelić 1979: 160, 164). This gave the communist regime an important reservoir of legitimacy as they began to establish their regime in the aftermath of World War II. The country's leader, Josip Broz Tito, became an important player in world politics.

The initial building blocks of Tito's regime were unabashedly Leninist,

even Stalinist. Political pluralism was squashed and property was nationalized. Yet, the country reversed course in the late 1940s, in the aftermath of Tito's break with Stalin. Yugoslavia's communist leadership did not depend on the Soviet Union or the Red Army to the extent that other East European regimes did. Their domestic legitimacy and increased confidence in foreign policy made them a thorn in Stalin's side. Tensions escalated in 1948 when Stalin expelled Yugoslavia from the Communist International. The situation was dramatic: there were a total of 896 border incidents that year (Seroka and Smiljković 1996: 7). However, Stalin decided not to invade Yugoslavia, effectively launching the country on an independent political trajectory.

Following an initial clampdown, in which Yugoslavia became even more Stalinist than Stalin (Rusinow 1977: 34), Yugoslavia's communist leadership began to innovate, both in the areas of foreign and domestic policy. In terms of foreign policy, Yugoslavia *de facto* became an ally of the United States. It also became a recipient of more than a little aid, despite refusing the Marshall Plan. In the roughly three decades following World War II, Yugoslavia received about 3.5 billion U.S. dollars in military and economic aid, an amount that surpasses those given to some West European countries (Doder 1978: xii; Lees 1997). After Cold War rivalries eased, Yugoslavia launched the "nonaligned movement," an attempt to lead, along with Egypt and India, a set of third-world countries that refused to be associated with either of the two Cold War superpowers.

Domestically, the key innovation was called "self-management." Following the break with the Soviet Union, reforms of some sort, preferably reforms with a Marxist pedigree, had to be introduced. Workers' councils, the key component of a broader ideology of "worker self-management," were seen as an ideologically acceptable way to differentiate the country from the Soviet Union (Comisso 1979; Grdešić 2015). After an initial period of doubt, Tito accepted the new course proposed to him by his inner circle. After all, it was a way to make good on the wartime promise: "Factories to the workers" (Rusinow 1977: 51). The introduction of self-management made it possible for the regime to claim that it was actually the Soviet Union, not Yugoslavia, who betrayed the cause of communism.

Workers were given the power—at least on paper—to run the companies they worked in. They were celebrated as self-managers and producers. The latter is especially important, as chapter 5 will show in more detail. Constantly tinkering with the system, the regime's main ideologues transformed worker self-management into a more comprehensive system of "socialist self-management," in which all of society was to function along the same participatory principles. Self-management offered the regime a way to dif-

ferentiate itself from both Western capitalism and Soviet etatism. The goal of the Yugoslav model was always to navigate between the extremes of East and West, between "the Scylla of bureaucratization and the Charybdis of capital" (Kardelj 1983: 92). The party's fear of bureaucracy and of bureaucratization is important for the populism that emerged in the late 1980s: party elites distant from the people could always be called bureaucrats, a political insult par excellence. The party remained revolutionary only to the extent that it resisted bureaucratization, the chief evil (Jović 2004).

The self-management experiment was never fully implemented, since the party was not ready to actually let go of the main levers of political control. Nevertheless, the system led to comparatively high levels of worker participation (IDE 1993: 94). Self-management even piqued the interest of some renowned Western scholars, such as Robert Dahl (1970: 130), who called Yugoslavia "probably the most radical alternative to the American and Soviet status quo," and Carole Pateman (1970: 88), who was interested in Yugoslavia as a "blueprint for a participatory society." Of course, not all of the lofty goals of egalitarian participation were achieved. All in all, the regime retained a Leninist core: it remained an authoritarian one-party system built around a vanguard communist party (Jowitt 1992). The regime can be summarily described as a contradictory combination of an authoritarian core with some important democratizing impulses and a fair dose of domestic legitimacy. Perhaps most important for the daily lives of ordinary citizens were the effects of the modernization effort launched by the communists: industrialization, urbanization, education, health care, and decent housing for most citizens.

As a consequence of Yugoslavia's experimentation, the party loosened its grip over individuals' private lives. Yugoslav citizens could not establish independent political parties or print their own newspapers, but they were otherwise relatively free. The country was open to the West, both culturally and physically. American films and European tourists entered the country in large numbers. Travel and emigration was made possible for Yugoslav citizens, too. Local consumption habits were westernizing rapidly, leading some historians to refer to the system as "Coca-Cola socialism" (Vučetić 2012). All of these changes made Yugoslavia into the loosest socialist country in Eastern Europe, probably beyond.

This looseness was also manifested in the country's territorial organization. It was decentralized to such a degree that the daily workings of the regime were visibly complicated. This was especially the case in the 1980s when Tito was no longer alive and could not resolve conflicts through the power of his personal leadership. The party had, through constant decen-

tralization, dissolved much of what makes a state a state (Bunce 1999: 112; Jović 2009). The last of several constitutions, formally agreed to in 1974, gave a great deal of power to republics and autonomous provinces, while leaving the federal center relatively weak. In other words, state power was moved down to the level of republics. Here, the state retained much of the infrastructural strength required in order to implement policy (Mann 1986). Devolution of power was a response to demands for further democratization but only strengthened republican leaderships (Malešević 2006: ch. 7). An additional complication was the constant tug-of-war between the party and the state. The party officially promised to distance itself from the state apparatus but never quite did so. The party also fragmented the economy based on a blueprint of bottom-up bargaining and social planning (Kardelj 1983). This was a consequence of a particular reading of Marxist theory, one which emphasized Marx's community of independent producers rather than the top-down vision of state socialism.

Yugoslavia consisted of six republics: Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, and Macedonia. There were also two autonomous provinces, both on the territory of Serbia: Vojvodina in the north and Kosovo in the south. That provinces already were de facto republics is something that former provincial leaders readily admit (Lekić et al. 2009: 118). In addition, Serbia was the only republic that was divided in this manner. Although the country was formally a federation, it was de facto a confederation. Most importantly perhaps, decisions at the federal level required unanimity, giving each republic veto power. The federal structure was really organized as a power-sharing mechanism of republican party leaderships (Vladisavljević 2008: 36). In many ways, decentralization along republican lines was a substitute for the lack of genuine political pluralism, the demands for which appeared in various nascent forms from the late 1940s onward. Yet, despite their relative openness, Yugoslav communists never allowed for political pluralism outside the institutional structure built by the party.

The Public Sphere

The loosening of the regime could also be seen in the way the Yugoslav public sphere opened up. By the late 1980s, the days of rigid *Agitprop* were long gone. Given that chapters 4 and 5 deal with various aspects of the Serbian media, it is important to sketch the basic contours of the media system here. Since those chapters deal mostly with print media, the focus here is predominantly on newspapers.

Officially, the media in Yugoslavia remained under state control. Yet, this control was weak compared to other countries in Eastern Europe. By the late 1980s, the regime had softened considerably and remaining constraints on media freedoms were rapidly falling away (Ramet 1992a; Thompson 1999: 7). The absence of official censorship authorities and the decentralization of the media according to republican lines gave journalists room to maneuver and introduced a degree of competition between news sources (Ramet 1992a). Indeed, segmentation of the media space according to republican lines was perhaps the most notable characteristic of the system. Each republic had its own media: readers from one republic would rarely read newspapers from others. Since republics were defined predominately based on the largest ethnic group, the media reproduced ethnic divisions. The situation for television and radio was much the same.

Newspapers were not responsible to the party (the League of Communists) but to the Socialist Alliance of Working People, technically a separate organization. The SAWP was the successor to the wartime "popular front," an umbrella organization that united a coalition of political forces led by the communists. After the war, it was transformed into a wing organization of the party with a separate bureaucracy and organizational resources. The SAWP was to function as a forum in which public scrutiny of party policies could take place. It was envisioned as a kind of countervailing power to the party. Formally, noncommunist actors could make their voice heard through the SAWP. This did not work as imagined, since the SAWP usually only duplicated procedures and discussions already taking place in the party or in state institutions. But with regard to the media, the fact that it was the organizational home of all media outlets gave journalists a degree of separation from everyday political meddling. Furthermore, the SAWP was not just a federal or national organization but had local organizations and resources as well. These could be especially useful for the organization of protest, as chapter 3 will show.

The mid- and late 1980s were a period of media liberalization in all republics of the federal state, including Serbia. At the same time, this liberalization was incomplete and frequently paradoxical. Milošević, who quickly realized that the media can be a powerful ally, managed to replace several prominent journalists not to his liking in a variety of newspapers and magazines (Ramet 1992a: 422; Marović 2002: 230–33; Lekić and Pavić 2007: 40–41). His new populist course led to some important shifts in the Serbian media landscape. The most important change occurred in *Politika*, Serbia's central daily newspaper. It became an ally of Milošević and supported his increasingly populist style. *Politika*, one of the symbols of the political es-

tablishment, a well-respected if slightly dull newspaper, now became a key component of the newly rising populist regime (Nenadović 1996; Thompson 1999; Marović 2002; Mimica and Vučetić 2008). In retrospect, the turn towards populism has been interpreted as a mistake, even by the paper's erstwhile editor (Minović 2008). Chapter 4 will look more closely at the content published in *Politika*.

Politika was arguably the most important Serbian daily. It was founded in 1904 and enjoyed the reputation of the oldest newspaper in the Balkans. It ranked highest in a readership poll in which people were asked to name the newspaper they trusted most (Ramet 1992a: 438). *Politika* was not just a newspaper: when people went to buy it at newsstands, they could simply say they wanted to buy "the paper" (Nenadović 1996: 607). Such a special position makes its conversion to populism all the more important. A new orientation was admitted by their editor at the time, who said that *Politika* "has no right to think differently from the people" (quoted in Nenadović 1996: 597). By being with "the people," *Politika* also became an ally of Milošević.

Despite the dominant position of *Politika*, critical alternatives did exist. The main newspaper that resisted the rise of populism in Serbia was *Borba*. It was a federal newspaper and as such, it was outside the reach of Serbian political elites. It was well respected for its avoidance of sensationalism and high professional standards. Its editor at the time was a professional who insisted on journalistic integrity (Marović 2002: 234; Ramet 1992b: 40–41; Đurić and Zorić 2008: 128). Indeed, among the daily newspapers available to Serbian readers, it was the sole "dissenting voice" (Bennett 1995: 97). Other critical options existed, too, most notably the Croatian and Slovenian weeklies *Danas* and *Mladina*. But, as was mentioned above, it was not very common to read the press from other republics, a factor that no doubt contributed to escalating conflicts between republics.

The newspapers' political orientations are difficult to express in terms that would be comparable to west European or North American settings. It is difficult even when compared to other socialist regimes, given Yugoslavia's complex and decentralized political system. On the whole, *Politika* was more open toward populism and nationalism, which would place it to the right of the political center, while *Borba* was more cautious of nationalism and was slightly more open toward liberalism, which would place it on the left of the political center. But any kind of left-right division is complicated by the staunchly socialist pedigrees of each. Indeed, their socialist attitudes seem genuine.

Naturally, there were also newspapers where politics was less important. One such newspaper in Serbia was *Večernje novosti*. It belonged to the same

publishing house as *Borba*, which meant that it too was outside the reach of Milošević and the Serbian party. Unlike *Borba*, it was a catch-all newspaper. It regularly featured more photography, sports, and entertainment, all in an effort to attract a larger audience. Some observers describe it as a "tabloid" (Ramet 1992a: 440), which may be a bit too harsh, while others simply note its high circulation figures (Đurić and Zorić 2008: 127). *Večenje novosti* did not explicitly embrace populism the way *Politika* did, though its catch-all character pushed it in the same direction. *Večernje novosti* can be seen as a newspaper that catered to the mainstream of Serbian society. It was largely disinterested in politics, but as the entire society was suddenly politicized in the late 1980s, it was caught up in the same dynamic.

Of course, the printed press is not the only kind of media that matters. Arguably, television was just as important. In particular, TV Belgrade was a key actor in the populist episode of the late 1980s. It was a partner of *Politika* and similarly embraced the new populist course of Milošević: what *Politika* did in print, TV Belgrade did on the screen (Thompson 1999: 7). The segmentation of the media space was even more extreme in the case of television than in the case of newspapers. In order to be exposed to different perspectives, one would have to watch Slovenian (TV Ljubljana) or Croatian broadcasts (TV Zagreb). This was rarely done due to issues with access and language barriers (in the case of Slovenian and Albanian). The fragmentation of the media scene is only a case in point that demonstrates how far the decentralization process had gone by the 1980s.

Problems of the 1980s

What was on the political agenda in the 1980s? The decade began with the death of Tito, the country's uncontested ruler since World War II. The transition to post-Tito rule was handled smoothly by Yugoslav communists. It was only by the mid- to late 1980s that problems began to accumulate. Many of the problems were economic: unemployment, stagnating living standards, high inflation, and debt (Woodward 1995a; Lowinger 2009). The 1980s became something of a "lost decade" compared to the more impressive growth of living standards in the 1960s and 1970s. The economic malaise was a big problem for the communist party, especially because it increased the frequency of worker strikes (Fočo 1989; Stanojević 2003). More and more workers would put down their tools and demand an increase in pay or emergency loans for their companies.

Politically, Yugoslavia was struggling with several issues, most of which

could be traced to the country's convoluted political system. Serbian politicians became particularly unhappy with the constitutional division of powers between the various layers of the federal state. In particular, they wanted to limit the autonomy enjoyed by the provinces of Vojvodina and Kosovo. The Kosovo issue was particularly volatile, given the permanently tense relations between the Albanian majority and Serbian minority in the province. Problems escalated with Albanian protests in 1981, when a protest over the quality of food at the university cafeteria in Priština led to a massive revolt of Albanians in the province (Lekić et al. 2009: 20–21). Their demands escalated to include the slogan "Kosovo—Republic," a demand that the Serbian and Yugoslav leadership was unwilling to grant.

Instead, they suppressed the protests with force. Although the country's authoritarianism had progressively softened from the 1960s onward—so that repression became less and less appealing to political elites—the regime nevertheless had few qualms about repressing Albanian unrest (see also Vladisavljević 2008: 95). Such a response was much harder to imagine when it came to Serbian protests. Indeed, most of the Serbian protests of 1988 featured little to no police repression. On the other hand, the Albanian protests of 1981 were officially proclaimed a "counter-revolution." The phrase was soon extended to all potentially destabilizing Albanian activity.

Kosovo has special importance to Serbian history. It is a key location of the medieval state, the Orthodox Church, and the site of important battles against the Ottoman Empire (Anzulović 1999; Bieber 2002). The political position of Albanians in Yugoslavia was complicated by the fact that they were the only non-Slavic group in a multi-ethnic federation dominated by Slavs (notably Serbs, Croats, and Slovenians). Indeed, it would not be a stretch to say that Albanians were in a position of second-order citizenship in Yugoslavia. Ethnic distance between groups was generally not a problem, especially among Slav groups, but Albanians were the universal exception: other ethnic groups generally did not want closer ties—through work, friendship, or marriage—with Albanians (Popović et al. 1990: 134–41).

The Kosovo issue came to the forefront of Yugoslav politics. The main trend that worried Serbian politicians was the changing demographic composition of Kosovo. Throughout the period after World War II, the share of the Serbian minority had been decreasing and the share of the Albanian majority increasing. The percentage of Serbs in the province dropped from 24 percent in the 1948 census to 13 percent in the 1981 census, while the percentage of Albanians rose from 69 percent to 77 percent in the same period (Petrović and Blagojević 1989: 84). This lead to fears of an "ethnically clean" Kosovo, one completely dominated by Albanians. The falling share

of the Serbian population was driven by emigration of Serbs and a higher birth rate of Albanians, more than double the birth rate of Serbs (Popović et al. 1990: 12). The position of Serbs was also shared by a small Montenegrin group living in Kosovo, members of which were seen as ethnically and politically close to Serbs.

As the crisis heated up, the focus of political debate turned to the political reasons for Serbian emigration. Many Serbs complained of Albanian pressure as a factor driving them toward emigration to central Serbia. This included low-level violence of various sorts: harassment of Serbian women, stoning of houses, and burning of crops. It is impossible to say how widespread these practices really were. The most defensible position seems to be that a kernel of truth existed but that much was exaggerated. Official data show that crime in Kosovo was generally not on the increase (Popović et al. 1990: 45–75). Additionally, ethnically motivated rape (of Serbian women by Albanian men) was relatively rare (Hudelist 1989: 62), while many instances of "rape" were probably lighter forms of harassment, such as cat calling and so on (Tijanić 1988: 128). A survey of Kosovo Serbs who left the province showed that a small minority of Serbs had firsthand experience of Albanian violence but that a much larger percentage of those that left did so because of a general climate of fear (Petrović and Blagojević 1989: 219). Throughout most of the 1980s, the Kosovo issue was one that politicians, including Serbian politicians, tried to address through interparty diplomacy and calming rhetoric. This is something that began to change with the political ascendancy of Slobodan Milošević.

An effective response to the Kosovo issue was hampered by a variety of factors. As usual, divisions in the communist leadership made it unlikely that any policy would actually be implemented. Some republican leaderships—such as Slovenian or Croatian—were disinterested in what was happening in the distant southern province. Even the leadership of Vojvodina was just as likely to ignore the situation in Kosovo. On the other hand, the leadership of Kosovo was predominantly Albanian, since it reflected the ethnic composition of the province. Albanian politicians were hostile towards Serbian protests, especially if they took place outside the organizations of the regime. With a change in generations, new politicians like Azem Vllasi and Kaqusha Jashari, younger and less conservative than earlier Albanian leaders, came to power in Kosovo (Vladisavljević 2008: 95). Though they were less likely to use regime repression against Serbian protests, they nevertheless worked to minimize such occurrences. Serbian leadership, both with Milošević and before, tried to promote Kosovo into a Yugoslav issue, not merely a Serbian one, but progress in addressing the issue was slow.

The preferred approach of the Serbian leadership was to push for constitutional revisions that would make it easier for Serbian authorities to act in Kosovo. Naturally, this was a sensitive issue since it could reopen conflicts settled by the constitution of 1974. Of course, the Kosovo leadership was against this, as was the Vojvodina leadership. The concessions they offered were relatively minor. In addition, the absence of an ultimate arbiter, such as Tito, made it unlikely that any permanent constitutional settlement would be found. Therefore, most politicians preferred to defend the status quo. Periodically, party sessions would be organized that dealt with the Kosovo issue, but nothing more than a declaration of intentions would emerge. In such a climate, both inter-elite conflicts and popular protests continued to grow.

Setting the Stage for the Anti-bureaucratic Revolution

The wave of popular protest that washed over Serbia in the summer and fall of 1988 did not come from nowhere. Momentum was building throughout the decade. By the mid-1980s, protests were no longer rare. It was not only Kosovo Serbs who were protesting. As mentioned, industrial workers engaged in a growing number of strikes. All across Yugoslavia, workers would conduct short work stoppages. Some of these strikes grew into large street protests, especially during the turbulent summer of 1988. Sometimes, workers would even protest in front—or inside of—the federal assembly building in Belgrade. In parallel, the Kosovo issue was being put onto the public agenda by sporadic protests of Kosovo Serbs. A group of Serbian nationalist activists began organizing protests and signing petitions. The core of the group was located in Kosovo Polje, a small town near Prišitina, the provincial capital.

This group organized the majority of the early protests, although the movement's decentralized character meant that no single organizational center of Serbs in Kosovo existed (Vladisavljević 2008: 104, 142). They also bore the brunt of the initial half-hearted repressive measures, such as the temporary imprisonment of one of their founding members or police surveillance (Doderović 1990: 21, 30; Lekić et al 2009: 21). Fighting for their cause was made more difficult by the distrust and opposition of the Albanian-led political elite in Kosovo, the cautious attitude of the Serbian elite, and the disinterest of the federal center and elites from other republics. Outside support came primarily from Belgrade's nationalist intellectuals (Dragović-Soso 2002).

By 1987, this began to change. Ivan Stambolić, who had dominated Serbian politics during the mid-1980s, ensured that his long-time protégé Slobodan Milošević was elected as head of the Serbian central committee, the top position in the Serbian party. In April of 1987, the Serbian nationalist activists from Kosovo Polje asked Milošević to visit them and hold a meeting with officials and ordinary people. This day has since become mythologized: when he was told the police was beating the crowd that gathered outside the building, Milošević responded by telling the crowd, "Nobody should dare beat you!" (Jović 2009: 258–61; Vladisavljević 2008: 100–1). Overnight, Milošević's popularity with Serbs soared, especially in Kosovo.

Stambolić had the chance to do the same a year earlier when he visited Kosovo Polje. Yet, he chose the opposite path of trying to calm the crowd down (Tijanić 1988: 174). The Kosovo Polje activists decided to give the new man in charge a chance, having failed to get anywhere with Stambolić. In fact, they were ready to give anybody a chance so long as their problems could be publicized and their cause promoted (Doderović 1990: 36–38). Following the Kosovo Polje speech, Milošević increasingly turned to a more populist style of politics and began to use the Kosovo issue to attack his enemies. Various minor conflicts with Stambolić finally lead to a head-on collision at the eighth session of the Central Committee of the Serbian party in September of 1987 (Vladisavljević 2004; Pavlović et al. 2008). Here, Milošević managed to defeat Stambolić and consolidated power within Serbia.

The eighth session was a watershed. Although sometimes portrayed as a "coup" (Jović 2008: 34; see also Lekić and Pavić 2007), Milošević's victory came by a vote. First, the Presidium of the Central Committee voted in his favor and then the Central Committee confirmed this vote. Milošević managed to sway neutral members of the party elite by enlisting the support of well-respected and prominent senior politicians, notably army generals (Stambolić 1995: 147; Vladisavljević 2008: 73). They spoke out in his favor and against the opposing faction. Milošević also managed to surprise members of the Presidium on the second day of the meeting—when a lull seemed to have settled—by revealing that Stambolić had sent a secret letter in which he tried to influence some members (Đukić 1992: 170; Stambolić 1995: 252; Minović 2007: 312). Milošević presented this as a scandal, as a violation of party norms. Other members took the bait and voted against Stambolić. Milošević did not rely on fear, nor did he dispense patronage. These aspects of his rule took shape only later, most visibly in the 1990s.

The conflict between Milošević and Stambolić, previously his mentor and friend, was waged through a proxy-war: the immediate target was Dragiša Pavlović, Stambolić's ally in the Belgrade Committee. Pavlović had

criticized Milošević for stoking the flames of the Kosovo problem. Milošević retaliated by moving to expel Pavlović from the party. After Pavlović was ousted, Stambolić became increasingly isolated until he too was forced to withdraw from political life. Milošević's victory within Serbia's top echelon was complete.

The eighth session was also important for the way it made elite divisions publicly visible. The Central Committee meeting was televised and millions of interested viewers could witness the conflict between Milošević's and Stambolić's faction. Afterward, it became increasingly difficult for politicians to go back to closed-party meetings. The media was now present, domestic and foreign, television and press, at many party sessions. For the younger generation of Yugoslav communists, Milošević included, the increased transparency of political life was a good thing: it was a natural development of Yugoslavia's socialism, its more open and democratic character. Chapter 3 investigates the role of party sessions in the dynamic of Serbia's anti-bureaucratic revolution in more detail.

The eighth session of the Serbian party also revealed the main political cleavages in the elite. Given the complexity of Yugoslav state and party structures, the fault lines were many and cross-cutting: young versus old, unitarists versus those who defended the power of republics and provinces, and orthodox communists versus liberal communists (Vladisavljević 2008: 126). Yet, the various cleavages began to coalesce around a single division between bureaucrats and populists: between those that continued to work in the old style of politics and those that embraced notions of rapid change via mass support. The old style involved lots of patient, diplomatic work trough the institutions of a decentralized party and state structure. The populist style of politics embraced speed, rejected compromise, and sought the support of popular forces. The division has alternatively been referred to as "institutionalists" versus "revolutionists" (Jović 2009: 258) or "cool heads" versus "hot heads" (Stambolić 1995: 194). Essentially, on the one side were old-fashioned bureaucrats and technocrats, on the other a new breed of fiery populists.

The populists were primarily located in the Serbian party, especially after Milošević purged Stambolić's adherents. The bureaucrats and technocrats were located in other organizations and institutions: the provincial party organizations of Vojvodina and Kosovo and federal institutions. This is something of a simplification, but the relevant point is that in 1988, it is indeed very hard to find populists outside the Serbian party. Most of the others are old-fashioned politicians who were caught off guard by the aggressiveness and ruthlessness of Milošević and the circle around him.

For Milošević, the political priority was curtailing the powers of the provinces, both Vojvodina and Kosovo, and reintegrating them under the control of central Serbia. This meant that constitutional revisions had to be agreed to in which the consent of both the provincial elites of Vojvodina and Kosovo was required. Stambolić had made some progress with this process through his slow and methodical intraparty diplomacy. Milošević hoped to reach the same goal via different means. A close colleague of Milošević in 1988 summarized this attitude by saying that "everything is allowed if it leads to the fulfillment of goals" (Lekić et al. 2009: 128). Milošević himself summarized this populist style with strong authoritarian undertones with the following motto: "constitutional or unconstitutional, institutional or extra-institutional, statutory or non-statutory, we will do what the people ask of us" (Lekić et al. 2009: 183). Nudged by the Serbian activists from Kosovo, Milošević began his transformation from an unexceptional apparatchik to a man of "the people."

In pursuing his new course, Milošević could rely on two main levers of power: the media and party wing organizations such as the Socialist Alliance of Working People (SAWP). With regard to the media, Milošević's influence was strongest in *Politika*. Chapter 4 investigates the role of *Politika* more closely. The second resource that Milošević could employ was the SAWP. It was important because it could use its resources to support protest efforts locally, as chapter 3 will show in more detail. When the decision was finally made to support the protests, the Serbian party gave instructions to local branches of the SAWP to provide protesters with assistance. Most of the time, this meant a stage and public announcement equipment, which in previous protests the activists usually improvised themselves (Vladisavljević 2008: 169). Access to SAWP resources greatly increased turnout at protest events.

The Anti-bureaucratic Revolution

A brief chronology of the anti-bureaucratic revolution will make it easier to follow the empirical analysis in subsequent chapters, especially in the next chapter, which deals with the dynamics of the protest wave. Figure 2.1 shows a graph of the protest wave over time, i.e., from the beginning of June to the end of November of 1988. For the same period, Figure 2.2 shows a map of the protest wave. It displays where most protests took place, across central Serbia, Vojvodina, and Kosovo.

There are numerous possible starting points to the anti-bureaucratic rev-

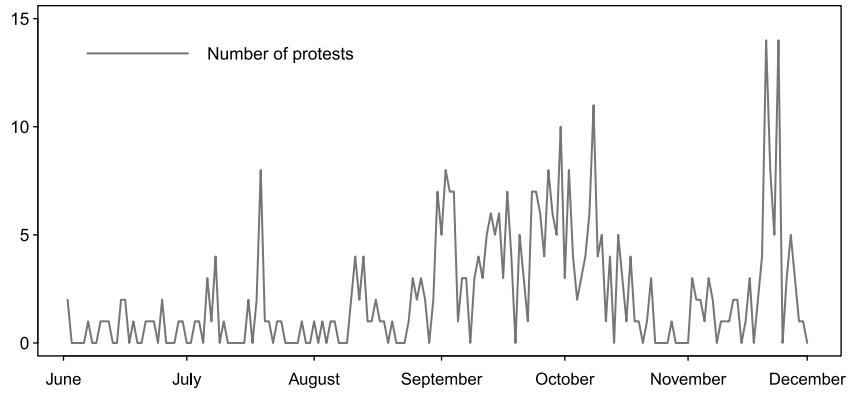

Figure 2.1. The Serbian protest wave (from June to November 1988)

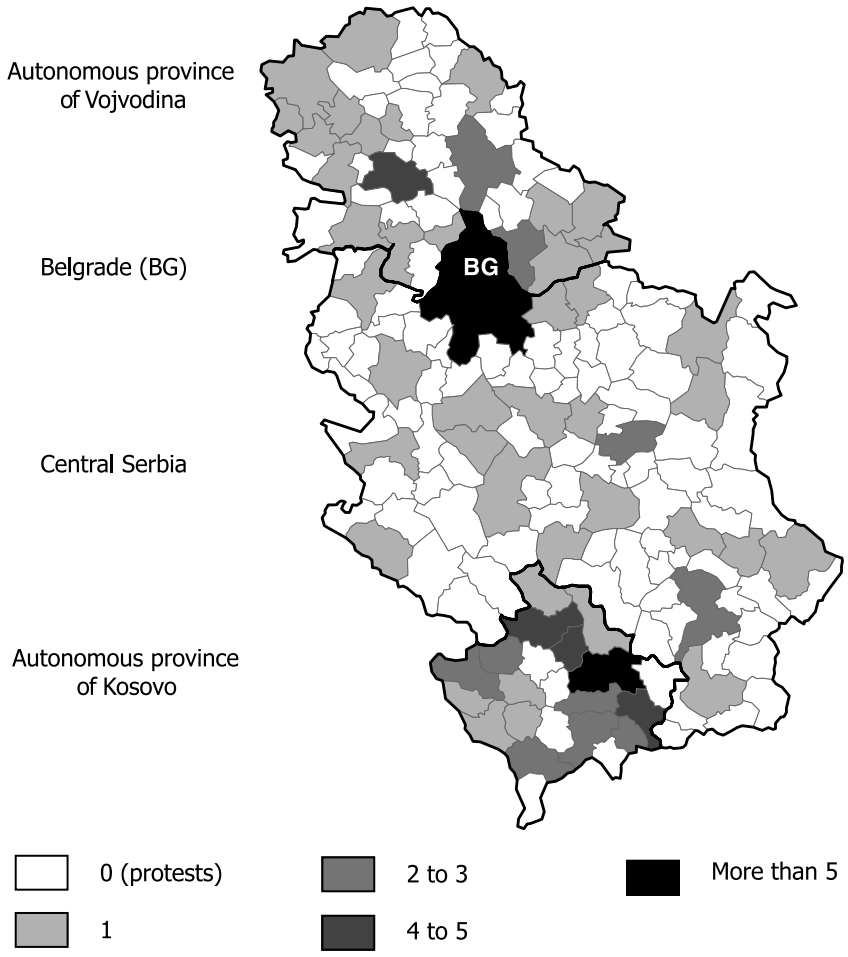

Figure 2.2. The Serbian protest wave

olution. However, one protest that stands out in particular is the first protest of Kosovo Serbs in Novi Sad. It took place in early July of 1988. This was the first time that the group of Serbian activists from Kosovo Polje ventured outside their province. Formally, they went to Novi Sad in order to "inform" the leadership and "the people" of Vojvodina of their problems. The Vojvodina leadership refused to meet with them. However, they also did not arrest them or send them back to Kosovo. This was precisely the outcome that the Kosovo Serbs had hoped for, since it made the Vojvodina leadership look disinterested in the plight of Kosovo Serbs (Kerčov et al. 1990: 272). Famously, somebody cut the power to the public announcement equipment in the middle of the protest, raising concerns of sabotage by the Vojvodina elite. This aspect was brought up repeatedly in the discussions that followed the event, as was the fact that protesters were not given water, despite the scorching heat. Attacks on the Vojvodina leadership targeted Boško Krunić in particular since he was the best-known member of the Vojvodina elite. The protest itself had little to do with Milošević, since he was at the time still wavering in his support for popular protest (Vladisavljević 2008: 124).

This protest was not large, numbering less than a thousand people, counting both the Kosovo Serbs and the locals who joined them. Nevertheless, it made quite a splash. In the aftermath of the event, several rallies took place in which protesters across Serbia expressed their support for the Kosovo Serbs and their unhappiness with the Vojvodina leadership. It was the beginning of a hot political summer. In July and August, a series of protests took place, organized by various groups, independently of the party. For example, workers from *Borovo*, a large manufacturing firm from Vukovar (Croatia), came to the Federal Assembly in Belgrade to protest the dire economic situation in their company. This was one of the first protests where protesters demanded that politicians hear them out (Vladisavljević 2008: 115).

The Kosovo Serbs were also quite active. They organized protests both in Kosovo and outside, with especially notable protests taking place in the Vojvodina towns Nova Pazova and Titov Vrbas. Crowds had increased to about ten thousand people. Protesters became increasingly confident. They had by this point accumulated valuable experience and knew when to applaud, when to shout, when to turn their backs on a speaker, all in a coordinated manner (Kerčov et al. 1990: 247). At times, these protests featured explicitly nationalist songs and protest signs (Lekić et al. 2009: 25–26). In Nova Pazova, Tito was openly criticized, a worrying precedent for the communist leadership. This was also the point at which the party decided to take on a much more active role.

In early September, after much wavering, Milošević decided to publicly

support the protests. In a party session that will be examined more closely in the next chapter, he officially decided to support protest meetings. This way, the Serbian party tried to limit the more worrying anti-communist and nationalist sentiments that had become visible, while simultaneously using the protests in their struggles with other segments of the party elite, specifically the Vojvodina and Kosovo leadership. In September, protests spread throughout Serbia. It became clear that Milošević was hoping the protests would force the Vojvodina and Kosovo leaderships to resign, so that he could carry out the constitutional revisions that would centralize political power in Serbia. The involvement of the regime grew, with local branches of the SAWP taking on an organizational role. Workers from large industrial firms were used to increase participation at rallies and create a sense of plebiscitary support for the proposed constitutional changes. Protesters were frequently bused in from nearby towns, as a show of solidarity. Particularly large rallies took place in Kraljevo (100,000), Kruševac (100,000), and Niš (300,000).

The Vojvodina leadership finally did fall, with a large protest in Novi Sad in early October. This event came to be known as the "yogurt revolution" since protesters from a crowd of about 100,000 threw carton packages of yogurt—given to them in hopes of appeasing them—at the building of the provincial committee. The crowd included Kosovo Serbs, Novi Sad locals led by workers from large manufacturing firms like *Jugoalat*, as well as people from surrounding towns. Most notable of these was a large delegation from Bačka Palanka, headed by workers from the manufacturing firm *Majevica* and a local populist politician Mihalj Kertes (Kerčov et al. 1990: 48–49). As the crowd grew restless, the Vojvodina leadership was trapped in the building, making for a dramatic setting. In a last ditch effort, the Vojvodina leadership contacted Milošević, but he refused to intervene on their behalf (Lekić et al. 2009: 28). Fearing violence, the Vojvodina politicians voted to resign. This was one of the best known rallies of the anti-bureaucratic revolution and will be returned to in chapter 6 of this book. With the resignations of the Vojvodina leadership, Milošević had achieved an important victory. However, in order to push through the constitutional changes, he would still need to oust the Kosovo leadership. This was harder to achieve.

By October, events were speeding up and catching even the main actors off guard. For example, although Milošević certainly had reason to be pleased with the outcome of the yogurt revolution in Novi Sad, there is evidence to suggest that he was surprised by the protest. A few days before the large protests in Vojvodina began to unfold, a narrow circle of officials from Vojvodina and central Serbia had secretly reached an agreement on constitutional changes. This agreement would have been made public in several days

but became obsolete after the protests intervened and forced the Vojvodina politicians out (Vladisavljević 2008: 159). In other words, Milošević had already gotten most of what he wanted when the protests took place and blindsided both him and the Vojvodina leadership. Similarly, a large group of workers from Rakovica, an industrial suburb of Belgrade, made their way by foot to the Federal Assembly and demanded to see Milošević (Musić 2018). Visibly shaken by the large mass of blue-collar workers in front of him, he addressed them with an improvised speech in which he did not say much of anything (Pavić 2007: 26). The incident demonstrated that the protest wave was becoming increasingly volatile and that no single actor could control its course. Luckily for Milošević, workers still saw in him a leader whom they trusted.

In the aftermath of the yogurt revolution and the protest of Rakovica workers, another Yugoslav republic was shaken, too: Montenegro. Although this book deals with protests in Serbia, the events in Montenegro also played a part in the larger Yugoslav dynamic. Protesters in Montenegro demanded the resignations of their leadership in much the same way as in Vojvodina. Like Vojvodina and elsewhere, workers from large firms played a key role. This time it was workers from the manufacturing firm *Radoje Dakić* in Titograd, the republican capital, who spearheaded the charge. Unlike the Vojvodina leadership, the Montenegro leadership decided to turn to repression to stop the protests. They imposed a two-week state of emergency (Vladisavljević 2008: 160–62). This, however, turned out to be only a temporary reprieve, as the leadership was eventually forced out by protests in January of 1989, in what was essentially a rerun of events from October (Lekić et al. 2009: 68–70). The new leadership was on much better terms with Milošević, giving him an additional vote at the federal level. However, the anti-bureaucratic revolution did not spread beyond Montenegro or Serbia. Attempts of Kosovo Serbs to organize events in Bosnia and Herzegovina or Slovenia came to nothing.

For Milošević, Kosovo was the hardest nut to crack. Matters spun out of control in November of 1988 with an Albanian counter-mobilization. The protests took place after Milošević tried to remove Albanian politicians Azem Vllasi and Kaqusha Jashari from their posts. Once again, industrial workers played an important role. This time it was the Albanian miners from the *Trepča* mines in Stari Trg. Miners marched to the provincial capital in Priština and expressed support for "their" leadership in the face of Milošević's offensive (Vladisavljević 2008: 182–83). The miners' protest was joined by many thousands of Albanians across the entire province. The upheaval lasted five days. Authorities responded with a ban on all public gath-

erings in Kosovo. This effectively stopped the protest wave, both in Kosovo and beyond.

Yet, the political conflict was far from resolved. In November, fearing violence, Vllasi and Jashari had accepted their fates. They worked to halt the protests and calm angry protesters. Yet, Vllasi remained an obstacle for Milošević. In February of 1989, he demanded that Vllasi be expelled from the party. This triggered another round of Albanian protests. This time, the miners of *Trepča* protested in their pits, several hundred meters below ground. They were to remain there until several politicians, including Milošević, came to address them. Milošević never came. Solidarity with Albanian miners was expressed in several places outside of Kosovo. This included a high-profile event with several high-ranking Slovenian politicians in Ljubljana, Slovenia. With this turn of events, the anti-bureaucratic revolution had launched an essentially intractable conflict between Slovenia and Serbia (Belić and Bilbija 1989). A response rally was held in Belgrade, in front of the Federal Assembly, with Milošević as the main speaker. When the crowd demanded that Vllasi be arrested, Milošević famously pretended that he could not hear them (teasing them by saying "I can't hear you very well") but arrested him immediately afterward. With the arrest of Vllasi, Milošević had defeated his opponents in Vojvodina and Kosovo, but his brinksmanship had pushed Yugoslavia one step away from destruction. A state of emergency was declared in Kosovo, and the army moved in to squash any remaining protests.

Conclusions

The anti-bureaucratic revolution was a very dramatic period in the political history of Yugoslavia. Although the country had seen moments of popular unrest before—in 1968, 1971, 1981—it had never witnessed protest escalate to such levels. The increase in the scale of protest is no doubt related to the package of populist practices applied by Milošević and his allies. The rest of this book focuses precisely on what these are and how they work. The episode may not be completely responsible for the breakup of the country or the wars that began in 1991, but it was nevertheless a key link in the chain of events that led to the destruction of Yugoslavia.

The immediate consequence of the anti-bureaucratic revolution was a new political constellation in Serbia. With new provincial leaderships installed in both Vojvodina and Kosovo, Milošević could alter the constitution of Serbia. In March of 1989, the constitutional revisions that weakened the

powers of the provinces and re-centralized Serbia were passed in both Novi Sad and Priština. On the very same day that the new Serbian constitution was ceremoniously promulgated in Belgrade, the Yugoslav army, still busy repressing protest in Kosovo, shot and killed several people.

The long-run ramifications of the anti-bureaucratic revolution are harder to pin-point, but it is relatively clear that the entire episode deeply destabilized the country. The rise of Milošević was not welcomed by other republics. On the contrary, his ascendancy to the status of charismatic leader in Serbia only fed the centrifugal tendencies already present in Yugoslavia. In particular, Slovenia and Croatia were now on collision course with Serbia. However, Milošević was buoyed by the popularity that he amassed in Serbia. The final years of Yugoslavia—1989 and 1990—were thus a constant tug-of-war between the various republics. The fall of the Berlin Wall in late 1989 put into doubt the viability of socialism, while inter-republican conflicts put into doubt the viability of a federal state framework. The resolution of the impasse came when armed conflict broke out, beginning with the short skirmish in Slovenia and brutal wars in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Therefore, the anti-bureaucratic revolution can be seen as a crucial episode. If this is the case, then the analyst is tasked with better understanding the main mechanisms that gave the episode momentum. What propelled the anti-bureaucratic revolution forward? As laid out in the previous chapter, in order to answer this question, one must turn to the problem of populism and its governing dynamics. How do populist mobilization and discourse work, both in the short and the long run? Answering these questions is the task of this book as a whole.

CHAPTER 3

Populist Mobilization

This chapter investigates the *hows* of populist mobilization. It does so on the terrain of events. In other words, events are used as an entry point into the interactive character of populism. This implies studying the relationship between contentious events and elite events, in this case, party sessions. How are the dynamics of the protest wave impacted by important elite events? The fractal metaphor introduced in chapter 1 can now be put to work. What can be observed when considering the protest wave as a whole? Are there particular elite events that significantly impact the level of mobilization? What can be observed when zooming in slightly to consider short-term rhythms of protest? And when one zooms in fully to consider the single contentious event, can it again be seen as a site of elite-mass interaction? Are elites inciting, amplifying, molding, and manipulating mass action at all levels? If this is the case, then it is warranted to speak of the fractal character of populist mobilization.

What does an approach based on "eventful history" contribute? My suggestion in this chapter is that an "eventful" analysis provides one way in which social movement research and the field of populism can cross-fertilize. It provides an approach that scholars of populism can employ for the study of populism. There are several well-known "eventful history" accounts that can provide the necessary tools (Franzosi 1995; Beissinger 2002; 2007; Sewell 1996a; 1996b; 2005; Tarrow 1991; 1996; 2012). Using an eventful approach is not something that scholars of populism have done often, though some have noticed that such an approach may be of promise (Berezin 2009). This chapter aims to show what an eventful analysis of populist mobilization can look like. At the same time, social movement scholarship can learn from populism, since it naturally points to the relevance of both elite events and protest events. Existing "eventful history" accounts have de-

veloped a very useful approach, but they have not studied contention and elite politics in interaction. The field of populism—because it has to be attuned to the role of elites—can help social movement research incorporate this aspect into its tool kit.

What is an event? Although it may seem odd to try to offer a definition of a word that is so commonly used, it is nevertheless important to notice that not all short occurrences or happenings constitute events. An event is something that punctures accepted routines, something out of the ordinary. For Hannah Arendt, an event is something that "interrupts routine processes and routine procedures" (Arendt 1970: 7). For Badiou (2007), an event is defined precisely by its capacity to create genuine novelty. Sewell's analysis of the fall of the Bastille is a good example of this: it is a transformative event par excellence (Sewell 1996a). On a scale smaller than the French Revolution, critical and focal events have been singled out by a variety of researchers in the social movement literature (Snow et al. 1998; Staggenborg 2000; Ramos 2008). An event is important for the way it intervenes in the mundane. It stands out.

Which events can be classified as elite events? Cabinet meetings, party conventions, and parliament sessions are all relevant. While contentious events happen in the street or in a similar atmosphere of public confrontation, elite events take place within the contours of institutional politics, i.e., in settings where the entry of non-elite actors is usually prohibited. Though access is restricted, visibility or publicness of elite events is required. Otherwise, we are on the terrain of totalitarian political systems.

Why are events so useful as an analytical category? The reason lies with the fact that the event is a practical entry point into the interactive character of contentious action. Analysis of contention and mass mobilization frequently requires fine-grained and observable interactions. Events can provide this (Jasper 2012: 17). Furthermore, during an episode of revolutionary upheaval, events themselves provide a kind of structure to what is otherwise a very fluid and chaotic period. Without events, we may not be able to find much order in such "unsettled times," "moments of madness," or "thickened history," as moments of upheaval and rapid change have been referred to (Swidler 1986; Zolberg 1972; Beissinger 2002). When politics spills out onto the streets, events can provide a kind of grid that structures daily life. To return to the example of the French Revolution, a discussion of the particular events of the revolution is not just an atheoretical discussion of random circumstances but a discussion of the operating logic of the revolution itself (Furet 1981). Events bring a dose of order to the chaos of a protest wave or an episode of revolutionary mobilization.

While the study of eventful history is now relatively well-established in the field of social movement and contentious politics research, it should nevertheless be reiterated that accepting events as important means going against the advice of French historian Fernand Braudel who famously suggested that events are merely "surface disturbances, crests of foam that the tides of history carry on their strong backs" (Braudel 1972: 21). While Braudel preferred to emphasize forces of long duration, scholars such as Sewell, Tarrow, and Beissinger turned the tables and focused precisely on the short term, precisely on the "historical foam." The key point of this scholarship is that processes such as revolutions or large protest waves have a logic of their own, one that is partially autonomous from the long-run forces that exert their effects over longer stretches of time.

For those interested in populism, an eventful approach is particular appealing. If the analysis keeps one eye on protest events and another on elite events, it can be possible to trace the interactions of elite and mass actors as the protest wave is unfolding. Such an approach also makes it possible to make good on the promises of an interactive and process-oriented analysis of contention and mobilization. For many scholars in political sociology and social movement research, the mantra has been all about process and interaction. Scholars have variously emphasized mechanisms (McAdam et al. 2001), evolution (Koopmans 2005), coevolution (Oliver and Myers 2003), dialectic relationships in the public sphere (Ellingson 1995; Steinberg 1999), social fields (Bourdieu 1977; Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992), relational fields (Goldstone 2004), and strategic action fields (Fligstein and McAdam 2012). Though the goal of an interactive approach to mass contention is universally agreed upon, progress in the operationalization of this agenda has been slow. The main suggestion of this chapter is that an emphasis on the interaction between elite events and contentious events may provide a way forward, especially for studies of populist mobilization.

This chapter relies on a combination of statistics and qualitative analysis, shifting from one to the other. The statistical analysis uses an event catalog of street protests that was collected from primary sources. This list of protests is plotted visually and inspected statistically. What patterns can be revealed? As outlined in the introductory chapter, the goal is to investigate whether populism is a fractal phenomenon. In order to do this, I first consider the protest wave as a whole, then I zoom in slightly on shorter bursts of mobilization, and finally, I zoom in on the single contentious event as the smallest possible unit of analysis. If traces of elite-mass interaction are to be found on all three levels—such that elites are always inciting, amplifying, molding, and manipulating mass input—then it is warranted to speak of the fractal

character of populism. As mentioned in the introduction, the main expectation with fractals is that the same picture will reappear even after zooming in several times (Oliver and Myers 2003: 7; Biggs 2005: 1685).

The statistical examination in this chapter rests on a particular view of causality. It depends on close temporal linkages, what can be called "tight coupling." This refers to systems in which a change in one segment leads quickly to a visible change in another segment of the system (Perrow 1984). Timing is key. One thing needs to quickly follow another in order to say that they are related. Of course, causality need not always be defined in this way, but statistical testing is necessarily restricted to it. The advantage of revolutionary "thickened history" is that the quick succession of events makes "tight coupling" a reality and therefore statistical testing a possibility. In order to fill the gaps that such a statistical analysis may leave open, this chapter also employs a lot of qualitative evidence. Using these approaches together, it will be possible to delineate the main contours of the wave of populist mobilization that occurred in Serbia in 1988.

Party Sessions and the Protest Wave

The goal of this section is to analyze whether key party sessions had an effect on the protest wave as a whole. Can this link be traced statistically in the level of protest activity? Can it be traced in the number of protests and the number of protesters? Are particularly important party sessions turning points that usher in periods of heightened mobilization? The goal of this section, therefore, is to consider the entirety of the protest wave. The next sections will begin to zoom in.

In order to conduct a statistical test, "intervention analysis" is used. What does this statistical technique do? It investigates if there are certain points in the time series after whose occurrence the mean of the time series changes (Box and Tiao 1975). The goal of intervention analysis is to incorporate an experimental component into studies of observational data. "Intervention" or "interruption" refers to a type of treatment after which the behavior of some social process is assumed to have changed, making it possible to locate a clear "before" and "after."

Before one can conduct the analysis, one has to isolate possible "interventions." Which party sessions are the most important for the period under observation? Intervention analysis tests if certain particularly important elite events functioned as watershed moments leading to a notable and sustained increase (or decrease) in protest. In order to pick the events to be included as

"important," a list was made of all sessions of the communist party (League of Communists) mentioned by the two most comprehensive histories of the protest wave: the most detailed documentary book (Lekić et al. 2009) and the most detailed social science analysis (Vladisavljević 2008). The authors of these two books worked independently from one another: Vladisavljević's book was published before the book of Lekić et al., while the latter contains no reference to the former.

This procedure yielded a list of four party events: (1) the session of the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, held on July 28th, which was devoted to the problem of Kosovo (Vladisavljević 2008: 134; Lekić et al. 2009: 12), (2) the session of the Presidency of the Central Committee of Serbia and the Presidency of Serbia, held on September 5th, 1988, at which Milošević endorsed protests as legitimate even if they had nationalist aspects (Vladisavljević 2008: 147–48; Lekić et al. 2009: 48), (3) the extraordinary session of the Provincial Committee of the League of Communists of Vojvodina, held on October 6th, when the political elite of Vojvodina resigned, an event that became known as the "yogurt revolution" since protesters threw carton packages of yogurt at the building where the meeting was being held (Vladisavljević 2009: 157–60; Lekić et al. 2009: 50–52; Vladisavljević 2008), and (4) the session of the Provincial Committee of the League of Communists of Kosovo held on November 16th, at which Albanian leaders agreed to be removed from the top of the Kosovo party (Vladisavljević 2008: 182–83; Lekić et al. 2009: 29). Figure 3.1 shows a graph of the protest wave with these four events marked for easier inspection.

What can intervention analysis tell us? Table 3.1 presents two models, first using the number of daily protests and then the number of daily protesters, i.e., people on the street on a given day. When multiple event size estimates were provided by different newspapers, the smaller number was used. Each party session variable is a categorical variable which is equal to zero until the event in question takes place and switches to one for the remainder of the period. Which party session leads to statistically significant results? As can be seen, the July 28th session of the federal party seems to have had no effect on either measure of protest activity, i.e., neither the number of protests nor the number of protesters.

The September 5th session of the Serbian party, on the other hand, has an effect on both measures of protest activity. The importance of this event lies with the fact that it presented the first official statement by the Serbian party, according to which protests should be seen as legitimate, even if they raised nationalist grievances. Here, Milošević finally threw his weight

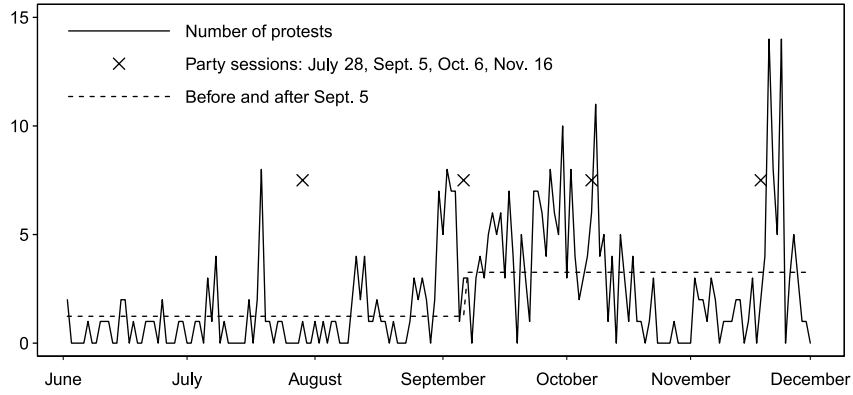

Figure 3.1. Party sessions and the Serbian protest wave (from June to November 1988)

behind the protesters. In short, while earlier positions of various party organs always involved a "but," e.g., protests can be accepted but nationalism cannot, Milošević's new position was unequivocal. Before this session, the average daily number of protests was 1.2. After the session, it was 3.3. This expansion of average protest activity before and after the session can also be observed on figure 3.1. Even more dramatic is the increase in the number of protesters. Before the September session, the average daily number of protesters was about 3,000 people. After the session, it increased to about 60,000 (median is 6,000). The next section will consider this party session more closely.

The October 6th session of the provincial committee of Vojvodina functions as an intervention but with a negative sign. In other words, the event's long-run impact was to lower protest activity. As Vojvodina's politicians met, the crowd outside demanded their resignations. They threw packages of yogurt at the building, breaking several windows in the process and giving the episode the name "yogurt revolution." The crowd dispersed when the Vojvodina politicians agreed to resign. Its negative long-run impact on protest activity can probably be explained by the fact that the resignations of the Vojvodina leadership were a major victory for the protesters (and for Milošević), leading to lower protest activity overall. However, this is not the full story. Later in this chapter, I will return to this session since a modified intervention analysis reveals that the event had a statistically significant and positive *temporary* effect on mobilization. In other words, when one zooms in to consider segments of the protest wave, not the protest wave as a whole, this event turns out to be important.

The November 16th session of the provincial party committee of Kosovo is statistically significant and positive in model 1 but not in model 2 in table 3.1. At this meeting, Milošević managed to remove several top-ranking Albanian politicians. The previous chapter provided a brief description of this episode. Kosovo's Albanian leadership, headed by Kaqusha Jashari and Azem Vllasi, agreed to step down in hopes of placating Milošević. As news broke, Albanian protests followed, until the regime implemented a ban on public gatherings in Kosovo. While the party session led to an increased number of protests (as can also be seen in figure 3.1), there were many smaller protests across Kosovo, depressing average protest size. This party session really represents the finale of the protest wave. Afterward, protests were no longer a daily phenomenon.

Table 3.1. Intervention analysis of daily levels of protest activity (ARIMA models)

	(1) Daily number of protests	(2) Daily number of protesters (natural log)
Session of the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, July 28, 1988 (regarding Kosovo)	0.689 (0.984)	1.129 (1.175)
Session of the Presidency of the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Serbia, September 5, 1988 (Milošević endorses protests)	2.878** (0.832)	5.266** (1.758)
Session of the Provincial Committee of the League of Communists of Vojvodina, October 6, 1988 (resignations of Vojvodina politicians, i.e., the "Yogurt revolution")	–2.409** (0.697)	–4.527** (1.676)
Session of the Provincial Committee of the League of Communists of Kosovo, November 16, 1988 (removal of Albanian politicians)	2.908*** (0.577)	1.393 (1.570)
Constant	0.555 (0.777)	2.943*** 0.758
Auto-regressive term	0.245*** (0.061)	0.320*** 0.073
Chi-squared (degrees of freedom)	63.25*** (5)	27.64*** (5)
Log likelihood	–397.076	–494.536
Number of observations	181	181

Note: Coefficients and standard errors in parentheses.
* $p < 0.05$
** $p < 0.01$
*** $p < 0.001$

It should also be mentioned that the analysis checked for the influence of all other party sessions, just to be sure. Making a list of "important" elite events by looking for an overlap of party sessions mentioned in the most comprehensive sources on the Serbian protest wave is practical. Yet, the choices of these authors may have been influenced by their knowledge of what came afterward. In other words, the authors know how the protest wave unfolded and may therefore have focused more on some elite events, while ignoring others. To offset this problem, I conducted the same tests for all fifty-five party sessions that took place during the period of interest. None approached conventional thresholds of statistical significance. Only those events temporally close to the September and November session did, but this effect disappeared when variables for the September and November sessions were included in the model. Therefore, the results presented in table 3.1 are robust.

To inspect the results in even more detail, *all* the dates within the six-month period were statistically investigated as potential turning points, alongside the four party sessions listed above. No other date stood out. This also means that no protest event functioned as quite the same type of statistical watershed. Additionally, it is implausible that other events, which happened on the same day as party sessions, are actually the watershed moments, instead of the party sessions. If this were the case, an error of simultaneity would have occurred. However, on days when important party sessions took place, all other events took a backseat in terms of media coverage. For example, the early September party session received a full eleven pages of coverage out of the first fourteen in *Politika*, with the other pages devoted to foreign policy. In *Borba*, it was three out of the first four, followed by foreign policy, culture, and sport. In *Večernje novosti*, six out of the first seven pages were devoted to the party session. On this particular day, the other events mentioned in the newspapers were a meeting of the nonaligned movement in Cyprus and a large traffic-jam in Belgrade. In other words, when an important party session took place, no other event could possibly compete for public attention.

In conclusion, the statistical analysis suggests that it is most warranted to speak of the September 5th session as the most relevant turning point, both in terms of the number of protests and, even more dramatically, the number of protesters. The next section looks more closely at this party session. What took place at it? And what were its immediate consequences?

The September Session as a Turning Point

This section analyzes the September session more closely by providing more historical and qualitative evidence. What actually took place at the session? Can it be seen as an instance in which elites incited, amplified, molded, and manipulated mass protest? What were the main repercussions of the event, and how was it perceived by other actors? This section is devoted to putting more meat on the bones of the statistical argument presented thus far.

The September session of the Serbian communists presented the first official endorsement of protest activity. The meeting was a joint session of the Presidency of the Central Committee of the Serbian Party and the Presidency of the Serbian State. After the discussion, which featured forty speakers and lasted sixteen hours, Milošević delivered the closing speech. He rejected attempts to define the protests as undemocratic: "it is unacceptable that meetings of solidarity in the Socialist Republic of Serbia are labeled as dangerous demonstrations and undemocratic forms of pressure that threaten the security of Yugoslavia" (*Politika*, September 7, 1988, 6). Milošević also approved of the protesters' messages: "The content and messages of the protest meetings express demands for socialism, unity, Yugoslavia, brotherhood and unity, equality, which strengthen Yugoslavia and destabilize the forces of bureaucratic resistance to change in the country and the forces of resistance to the liquidation of the [Albanian] counter-revolution in Kosovo" (*Politika*, September 7, 1988, 6). This was a clear show of support to Serbian protesters. Milošević also positions himself as the main opponent of "bureaucratic resistance" and applauds the protests for their attacks on the bureaucracy.

Milošević was even ready to endorse nationalism: "People gather on the basis on which they are attacked and threatened. They are being persecuted as Serbs and Montenegrins and so they emigrate or defend themselves as Serbs and Montenegrins. They cannot defend themselves, emigrate or gather as Dutchmen, protestants or cotton pickers, because nobody is threatening them on this basis" (*Politika*, September 7, 1988, 7). He also downplayed the presence of anti-Albanian rhetoric by arguing that the presence of exclusionary messages "cannot compromise the gatherings in general" (*Politika*, September 7, 1988, 3). All in all, the signal was unequivocal. Previous party announcements supported the right of the people to protest but rejected nationalism. Milošević's statement contained no such caveat. The protests were a "democratic, honest and expected reaction" to the problems in Kosovo (*Politika*, September 7, 1988, 1). In other words, Milošević was now on board. He publicly gave his approval.

As scholars have argued, this announcement "altered the political stage and

had a major influence on subsequent political developments" (Vladisavljević 2008: 150). The rejection of the federal line regarding protest activity was an unprecedented move and an outright challenge to other segments of the communist elite. The Serbian party had *de facto* become something of an opposition within the ruling communist apparatus (Jović 2009: 310). It now threw its weight behind activists and protesters. After Milošević's announcement, the involvement of official institutions increased, especially at the local level (Lekić et al. 2009: 89). Local institutions—especially the wing organization SAWP (Socialist Alliance of Working People)—began to provide resources such as a stage and professional public announcement equipment to protesters (Vladisavljević 2008: 169). This suggests that the form of protest began to change, as will be analyzed more closely later in this chapter. Street protests increasingly took the form of the populist mass rally, called the "meeting of solidarity." Thus, the September session not only provided a signal to potential protestors but also marked the starting point of a new phase of mobilization in which regime institutions became more involved.

How was the September session received by ordinary citizens? In this respect, the September session stands in stark contrast to other party sessions. To most of these party events, ordinary people reacted with disappointment. As one person said in a letter to the editor with regard to an earlier session: "Following the last session of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, one cannot escape the impression that a lot of people spoke without saying anything" (*Politika*, August 19, 1988, 15). Despite the constant disappointment, the attention of much of the Yugoslav public was turned to these events. As the same person said, "our hope is extended from session to session" (*Politika*, August 19, 1988, 15). Other sessions were criticized because ordinary people "expected that a turning point would occur" (*Politika*, August 11, 1988, 12). In other words, much of the Serbian public paid attention to elite events and scanned them for signals. Most of the time, they were disappointed.

The September session is an exception. Many in Serbia reacted with enthusiasm. Some of this enthusiasm can be spotted in the letters that ordinary people sent to newspapers. These letters are the topic of the next chapter, but several exemplary quotes can be given here. One letter to the editor rather pathetically called Milošević's speech "the most honest thing that I have heard in my life" (*Politika*, September 7, 1988, 17). The session led to demands for new protests. For example, one group from the town of Niš sent a telegram expressing their "strong support for the positions and conclusions of the Presidency of the Socialist Republic of Serbia and the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Serbia." They further wrote

that they "support the initiative to hold a meeting of solidarity with Serbs and Montenegrins from Kosovo" (*Borba*, September 9, 1988, 4). In other words, taking their cue from Milošević's endorsement, actors on the ground now wanted to expand protest activity. A similar group letter was sent from the town of Čačak and published in the newspapers. The group provided signatures in two columns of names and said that they too "support the policies of the League of Communists of Serbia" and called for a protest to be organized in cooperation with the Kosovo Serb activists (*Politika*, September 11, 1988, 8). The encouragement from the top was being translated into enthusiasm on the ground.

Opponents of Milošević also recognized that something of fundamental importance had occurred. At the session, Kosovo politicians tried to oppose him but were outvoted by delegates from central Serbia. For example, the Albanian politician Kaqusha Jashari said: "I am not a supporter of encouraging these gatherings [. . .] since such encouragement instrumentalizes the discontent" (*Borba*, September 7, 1988, 2). She saw that Milošević was trying to capitalize on the protests, to use them in conflict with other elite factions, including hers. One journalist wrote in an editorial that the Serbian party now "acknowledged the full constitutional legitimacy of such gatherings" (*Borba*, September 10, 1988, 5). Another editorial in a Slovenian newspaper wrote that "the Serbian leadership has obviously decided to support the protest meetings more or less without qualifications" and that this "opposes the decisions of the federal party leadership in a way that is without precedent in our recent history" (*Delo*, September 7, 1988, 3). In other words, the September session was recognized at the time as a key event, one which altered the political landscape in very important ways.

Rhythms of Protest

This section zooms in slightly, from the protest wave as a whole onto certain selected segments. If the analysis of protest is like a seismograph (Franzosi 1995), what dynamics can be revealed by looking at short-term bursts of activity? The same approach used in the above section can be used here, i.e., party sessions can be analyzed as interventions into the protest wave. The difference is that now the analysis turns to temporary expansions of mobilization.

Earlier, in table 3.1, each party session was modeled as if it transfers its intervention onto the protest series in an abrupt and permanent manner. The variable for each party event was 0 until the event in question transpired

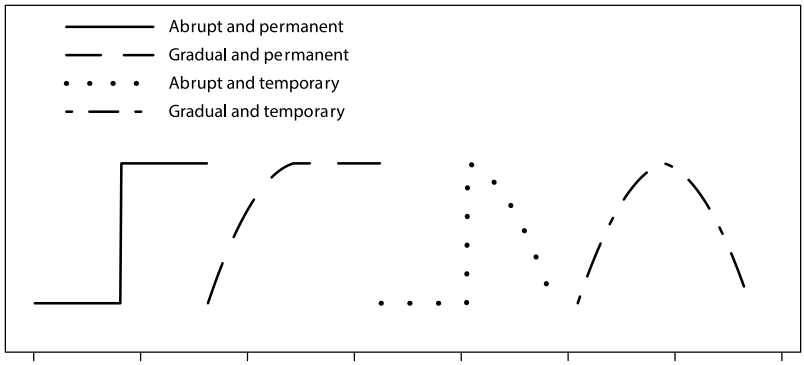

Figure 3.2. Transfer functions for intervention analysis

and 1 for the remainder of the period. However, it is possible to conceive of different "transfer functions": they can be either abrupt or gradual, permanent or temporary (McDowall et al. 1990). Figure 3.2 presents a visual representation of each of these four possibilities. It was clear from the earlier analysis that the September session functioned as an abrupt and permanent intervention, but are there also more subtle short-term patterns?

Table 3.2 presents several models which led to interesting results. As mentioned earlier, the October event, i.e., the yogurt revolution, is interesting because it seems to have led to a long-term decline in protest. But, as figure 3.1 shows, there seems to be a visible spike in protest in the immediate aftermath of the event. Indeed, the analysis in table 3.2 reveals that this is indeed the case. If the intervention is modeled with an abrupt and temporary transfer function, the result is statistically significant. The first model in table 3.2 shows this result. The gradual decline of the intervention is set to a total of ten days. What happens if this is lengthened to, for example, twenty days? The second model investigates this and reveals a result that is not statistically significant. Therefore, the short-term burst of mobilization that occurred after the yogurt revolution lasted about ten days, not longer. What happened in these days immediately following the yogurt revolution?

As was explained in chapter 2, the yogurt revolution led to the downfall of the provincial leadership in Vojvodina. However, Milošević and his allies could now use this momentum to force similar resignations of local officials across many smaller towns in Vojvodina. Following a protest, Milošević's allies would move in to replace the local leadership. The best-known case is that of Mihalj Kertes, a local politician from Bačka Palanka, who would be propelled to fame and power following the October protests. He used his

Table 3.2. Intervention analysis (ARIMA models) for protest activity

Transfer function	(1) Daily number of protests Abrupt and temporary (10 days)	(2) Daily number of protests Abrupt and temporary (20 days)	(3) Daily number of protests Abrupt and temporary (10 days)	(4) Daily number of protests Abrupt and permanent
Session of the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, July 28, 1988 (regarding Kosovo)				
August 29, 1988, one week ahead of the Session of the Presidency of the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Serbia, September 5, 1988 (Milošević endorses protests)				2.531** (0.776)
Session of the Provincial Committee of the League of Communists of Vojvodina, October 6, 1988 (resignations of Vojvodina politicians, i.e., the "Yogurt revolution")	4.404* (2.192)	2.211 (1.698)		
Session of the Provincial Committee of the League of Communists of Kosovo, November 16, 1988 (removal of Albanian politicians)			5.178*** (1.113)	
Constant	1.757** (0.51)	1.698** (0.563)	1.743*** (0.498)	0.584 (0.736)
Auto-regressive term	0.441*** (0.058)	0.464*** (0.057)	0.413*** (0.062)	0.334*** (0.059)
Chi-squared (degrees of freedom)	58.60*** (2)	64.96*** (2)	54.13*** (2)	44.96** (2)
Log likelihood	–409.235	–410.092	–408.589	–401.273
Number of observations	181	181	181	181

* $p < 0.05$
** $p < 0.01$
*** $p < 0.001$

status as an ethnic Hungarian to good effect. Kertes cynically argued that if he, as a Hungarian, was not afraid of Serbia, then Serbs in the Vojvodina leadership should also not be afraid (*Politika*, October 9, 1988, 10). This was an effective way to deflect accusations of Serbian nationalism. Kertes would remain loyal to Milošević and would rule the town of Bačka Palanka for many years to come. There were many such stories across Vojvodina.

Such local party cadres tried to use the yogurt revolution to edge out their rivals all across Vojvodina. In the ten days following the event, local officials resigned in the following towns: Sremska Mitrovica, Inđija, Pančevo, Šid, Kula, Ruma, Zrenjanin, Alibunar, Temerin, Titov Vrbas, Vršac, Sombor, Stara Pazova, and Nova Crnja (Vladisavljević 2008: 160). Similar resignations were demanded of the Kosovo leadership (*Politika*, October 8, 1988, 6), but this would have to wait until November. After the ouster of the old "bureaucratized" Vojvodina leadership, Milošević began a purge at all levels of the provincial political establishment: not just the state and party apparatus but also many general managers of large companies lost their jobs (Vladisavljević 2008: 28). Milošević was cementing his political victory with sweeping cadre changes.

By late October, the short-term upsurge in mobilization died down, as can be seen in figure 3.1. This is logical, since the resignations of Vojvodina politicians—a key demand of both the protesters and of Milošević—were now achieved. After scoring this victory, protesters could take a breather. Furthermore, the Kosovo Polje "committee," the group of Serbian nationalist activists that had taken part in many of the earlier protests "officially" disbanded, stating that they had largely achieved their goals (Doderović 1990: 140). This did not mean a complete halt of protest activity of Kosovo Serbs, but it did take them out of the spotlight.

The third model in table 3.2 concerns the November session. As can be seen, this event can be modeled as having a temporary effect on the protest wave. Of course, since this party session took place at the very end of the protest wave, in its last two weeks, the difference between temporary and permanent is purely semantic. Yet, as can be seen in figure 3.1, the spike in protest immediately after the party session is impressive, leading to the highest number of daily protest events in the entire protest wave. As mentioned already, this was predominantly due to a series of dramatic Albanian protests, events in which Kosovo's Albanians came out to the streets to support "their" leadership, which was in conflict with Milošević.

The fourth model in table 3.2 engages in a bit of statistical forensics. As shown in figure 3.1., there is a marked increase in protest in the days leading up to the September session. It seems that the momentum for protest

activity began to accelerate a few days prior to the September session. There is good reason to suspect that Milošević had made party resources, especially local branches of the SAWP, available to protesters several days ahead of his official announcement of support on September 5th. Naturally, this is not something that Milošević and his allies would have admitted to publicly. They preferred to present popular protest as the spontaneous and unmediated will of "the people." Admitting otherwise would have taken away from the legitimacy of the protests.

But elite involvement can nevertheless be gleaned from the protest data. As table 3.2 shows, when the intervention is moved one week ahead of the September 5th session, the test reveals a statistically significant result. A particularly visible protest was the one that took place in Smederevo on September 3rd. With approximately 60,000 people, it was the largest protest up to that point (Vladisavljević 2008: 151). This type of turnout was not possible without the involvement of regime institutions. Tellingly, the protest was opened by a speech from the local head of the SAWP (*Politika*, September 4, 1988, 1). The SAWP was now beginning to involve itself in the organization of protests. Before the local SAWP official spoke, everybody sang the Yugoslav national anthem, "Hey, Slavs." Such formality gave the entire event an air of officialdom. This protest began a trend that would continue in the next period: it was one of the first cases of the populist rally, a hybrid contentious event. This type of event will dominate the second half of the protest wave, as the next section will show.

After this event and several smaller ones, Milošević could publicly come out in support of the protests. He could present his response as the only reasonable one when faced with such widespread popular action. The manipulation inherent in populist mobilization can be teased out by the type of analysis performed in table 3.2. The fingerprints of elite involvement cannot be entirely erased. The next section continues this type of forensic statistical analysis. It does so by looking more closely at the form of organization—in particular the role of the SAWP—that became widespread after Milošević made his announcement. At this stage, the analysis zooms in fully to consider the single event as its unit of analysis.

The Populist Rally

So far, the chapter has investigated interactions between events, i.e., between elite events and contentious events. Yet, a curious aspect of populist mobilization is that a typical populist rally is in itself a site of elite-mass interaction.

A populist rally, while remaining contentious and unruly, is simultaneously a product of elite involvement. One has to investigate not only the interactions between elite events and mass events but also the interactions of elite actors and mass actors within contentious events. Here, we zoom in fully, from the protest wave as a whole onto the contentious event itself.

In early September, protests began to take on a specific form: that of the "meeting of solidarity" or the "meeting of brotherhood and unity" (Vladisavljević 2008: 166–69; Lekić et al. 2009: 48). Milošević and his circle did not only talk while encouraging others to do the protesting. They decided to become more involved in contentious activity themselves. The populist rally was the result of this choice. One of Milošević's aides frankly admitted to the rationale behind the new approach:

> The leadership of Serbia began to understand that they [Kosovo Serbs] will begin to go all over Serbia. In order that they do not organize gatherings all over Serbia, the leadership decided to support [the protests in] Kragujevac, Kruševac and so on, where these protests were held, and gave this task to the leadership, the party leadership, and the local leadership and the state leadership, for them to organize meetings of support for the changes to the constitution. And yes, these were large gatherings, yes, they created an atmosphere that the constitution really should be changed, but Kosovo Serbs came to them as guests, they did not lead. In this way, the municipal leadership governs the gatherings that cannot turn into something that you cannot control, but at the same time you did not hurt the Serbs from Kosovo and you obtained the support of the masses. (Lekić et al. 2009: 89)

By October, it was not uncommon for local officials to call the Serbian party headquarters in Belgrade and ask them if they were "supposed" to organize a rally (Vladisavljević 2008: 169). This shows how the inner circle around Milošević chose to facilitate protest while attempting to mold it, modifying its message, and using protest activity for political gain. Therefore, the meeting of solidarity was a compromise between the Kosovo Serbs and the party leadership. The former would prefer to take part in more contentious protests, events that featured more open nationalist rhetoric and the singing of Serbian nationalist songs (Lekić et al. 2009: 173). Yet, such an approach risked repression and the loss of precious elite allies.

From early to mid-September, the protests came to resemble older Titoist mass rallies, i.e., they became more scripted, while never completely losing

their contentious character. The positive side of the trade-off for the Kosovo Serbs was higher turnout, guaranteed absence of repression, and better public announcement equipment. Such rallies brought out more than just Kosovo Serbs and their local sympathizers. By relying on local institutions, large firms, and the local media, large populist rallies led to the participation of many thousands of regular citizens. These are the ordinary foot soldiers of the anti-bureaucratic revolution, the people whose memories are presented in chapter 6.

The meeting of solidarity usually followed the same script: it began with the Yugoslav anthem, featured a mix of speakers, both Kosovo Serbs and local officials from various wing organizations of the party (such as the local World War II veterans association, the local youth organization, and the local branch of the SAWP), with the end of the rally coming in the shape of a letter addressed to high-ranking targets, publicly read in order to name and shame the opponents of "the people" (Vladisavljević 2008: 166). In other words, the populist rally was a compromise, a paradoxical result of elite and mass interaction, which tried to control the never fully controllable and channel popular energy while multiplying it manifold.

For many scholars of the former Yugoslavia, the most interesting indicator of elite involvement is the presence of the secret police (Bennett 1995: 98; Silber and Little: 61; LeBor 2004: 98). Allegedly, secret agents used their influence to increase turnout when their political superiors demanded this. The main lever was to pressure general managers of large industrial companies to bring out large numbers of workers. As the testimonies presented in chapter 6 show, there is a degree of truth to this. However, given the behind-the-scenes nature of such activity, one cannot observe and track this factor in a systematic way for a larger set of protests. However, some aspects of elite involvement can be traced for the entire catalog of contentious events analyzed in this chapter. As mentioned earlier, newspapers usually noted whether a protest featured the presence of Kosovo Serbs and whether local regime institutions helped with organizations (predominantly, the local SAWP, but other wing organizations of the party as well). This information makes it possible to compare patterns of organization before and after the September session of the Serbian party, that is, before and after Milošević's endorsement of the protests.

Table 3.3 presents the results of two cross-tabulations. Only protests outside of Kosovo are examined, since the loose networks of Serbian activists in Kosovo made it relatively easy for them to organize a protest in the southern province, while, on the other hand, their lack of resources made it more difficult to travel outside Kosovo. The first cross-tabulation looks at protests

before the September session and examines how many featured the organizational input of local institutions (the SAWP) and how many featured the presence of Kosovo Serbs. As can be seen, Kosovo Serbs did not come to many protests prior to the September session, only a total of ten protests. And equally interesting, local organizations helped in only six out of forty-seven protests (12.8 percent). Though the numbers are small, it appears that local institutions were more likely to get involved if Kosovo Serbs did come. If they did arrive, local institutions helped in five out of ten protests. Therefore, even in this period, there was some synergy between the regime and the Kosovo activists. If they did not arrive, local institutions helped in only one out of thirty-seven cases (2.7 percent).

The number of protests increased in the period after the September session. Kosovo Serbs arrived for a total of fifty-five protests. Local institutions helped in 63 out of 120 cases (52.5 percent, as opposed to 12.8 percent in the first period). Clearly, elite involvement increased: regime institutions were involved in more than half of the protests. But it is not as if Kosovo Serbs were squeezed out. On the contrary, their involvement increased. However, they now worked more frequently with regime institutions. In the first period, out of the ten protests where Kosovo Serbs arrived, five were assisted by local institutions and five were not. But in the second period, the

Table 3.3. Cross-tabulation of protest and organization before and after September 5th session of the Serbian party (for protests outside of Kosovo)

Before September 5th session		Kosovo Serbs came to the protest		
		No	Yes	Total
Local political organizations (SAWP) helped organize the protest	No	36	5	41
	Yes	1	5	6
	Total	37	10	47
		Chi-squared: 15.813***	*p*-value: less than 0.001	

After September 5th session		Kosovo Serbs came to the protest		
		No	Yes	Total
Local political organizations (SAWP) helped organize the protest	No	50	7	57
	Yes	15	48	63
	Total	65	55	120
		Chi-squared: 49.232***	*p*-value: less than 0.001	

* $p < 0.05$
** $p < 0.01$
*** $p < 0.001$

share of such joint organizing increases. Out of the fifty-five protests where Kosovo Serbs arrived, forty-eight protests (87.2 percent) featured the organizational input of local institutions. This is a clear indication of the prevalence of the populist rally, characterized by the interaction of the Kosovo group and regime institutions.

However, even though the populist rally—organizationally shared by local institutions and the Kosovo Serbs—now became the dominant form of street event, it never completely replaced other forms. As can be seen, the number of protests organized by the Kosovo Serbs and without the involvement of local institutions increased from five to seven. This is not a large increase. But it should also be noted that groups unaffiliated with the Kosovo Serbs and unsupported by local institutions also protested more in the second period: the number of such protests rose from thirty-six to fifty. The most relevant in this respect are industrial workers whose protests were running in parallel to the protests of the Kosovo Serbs. This is another indicator that the signal given at the September session was received even by the unaffiliated. Regime institutions such as the SAWP aimed to channel and mold this new enthusiasm for protest, but, as can be seen, they were not always able to do this. Unsupervised protest expanded as well.

To continue the statistical forensics begun in the previous section, what can these data tell us about Milošević's involvement in the days prior to the September session? As was visible in figure 3.1 and as the fourth model in table 3.2 showed, it seems that there was an increase in protest levels ahead of the September session. Was Milošević behind this? Did he use the September 5th session to endorse an upsurge of mobilization that was partly of his own making? The SAWP can again be used as a sign of the stronger involvement of elites. As table 3.3 shows, the test for independence between the two variables leads to statistically significant results for both the first and the second period (using September 5th as the cutoff). The difference is in the strength of the association: it is tighter in the second period, as witnessed by a higher chi-squared test statistic. But, what happens as the cutoff is moved a little? For example, if September 4th is used as the cutoff, the p-value for the first period increases to 0.121. If September 3rd is used, it increases to 0.189; if September 2nd is used, it becomes 0.238. In other words, the relationship breaks down. This indicates that the SAWP was already employed in the first few days of September, i.e., leading up to Milošević's formal endorsement. Therefore, it would appear that the party had already made its resources available to protesters a few days before the party session. Elites were not only encouraging protest publicly, they were also actively involved in organizing.

In conclusion, the September turning point is relevant for a number of reasons. It inaugurated the populist rally as the main form of protest activity, it encouraged the arrival of Kosovo Serbs to protests outside of Kosovo, and it encouraged the mobilization of other groups. The scale of protest expanded, but the autonomy of movement activists shrunk. Populist actors encouraged mobilization publicly as well as covertly, influencing the timing and the form of the contentious activity of ordinary people.

Conclusion

This chapter has taken the first step toward understanding populism as a fractal phenomenon. It has focused on populist mobilization. Events were used as the terrain on which to conduct this type of analysis. Events are useful as an entry point into the interactive character of contention. Following the notion of fractal populism outlined in the introduction, this chapter looked at the Serbian protest wave from several vantage points. At each level, one finds a similar pattern of elite-mass interaction. In that respect, populism is like a fractal, i.e., it is self-similar. Zooming in always reveals a similar picture. Elites are always inciting, amplifying, molding, and manipulating mass action.

Considering the protest wave as a whole, one can begin by inspecting the protest wave for turning points. The September party session appears to be the most obvious turning point, the point in time in which elite intervention most impacted the overall level of mobilization. It led others to undertake collective action, but elites were also busy facilitating protest themselves. The next step in the analysis is to move in a little closer and examine short-term fluctuations and bursts of contentious activity. The analysis of the aftermath of the October yogurt revolution reveals a similar pattern of elite-mass interaction. The short-term burst of protest is connected to elite conflicts, with Milošević and his allies forcing a wave of resignations throughout the province of Vojvodina. And finally, when one zooms in fully on a single day, a single event, the same interactive logic reappears. The populist rally, called the "meeting of solidarity" in Serbia, was itself a compromise that resulted from the interaction of partially conflicting forces: elite and mass forces combined to create a particular type of event that was both contentious and scripted, both unruly and controlled. Those are the main findings of this chapter.

The type of analysis performed here, combining statistical examination of the protest wave with qualitative evidence, makes it possible to outline

the governing dynamics of the episode. Instead of saying that the protest wave was complex, both top-down and bottom-up, this analysis can be more specific about the ways in which it was complex, the type of interactions that made it complex, and the driving mechanisms that created the particular complexity that we observe. As mentioned in the introduction, that is the main advantage of the fractal metaphor. Our analysis does not stop when we admit that the phenomenon is complex. Rather, we are urged to think about the processes that created this complexity. As suggested, the type of populist mobilization on display in Serbia in 1988 is best seen as fractal in its character. Elites are always "meddling" with the actions of mass actors, urging them on while tailoring their efforts to suit their own interests.

This chapter also showed how studies of contentious action and studies of populism can cross-fertilize. Eventful analysis offers a research approach and a set of tools that can be used in studying populism. Scholarship on social movements tends to focus on quite different types of mobilization than what one observes with populism. But this does not mean that the tools developed for the study of social movements are not of use in the study of populism. On the contrary, this chapter has aimed to show that recognizing the differences in the "species" of mobilization can go together with applying already developed tools, such as eventful analysis. On the other hand, scholars of social movements may profit from the study of populism, too, especially by becoming more attuned to the way elite events and contentious events interact. Most "eventful" accounts of mass mobilization focus only on mass contention. Populism quickly brings into focus that elites and elite events matter a great deal. Social movement scholarship can incorporate this into its toolbox. This would help to address the blind spots that social movement scholarship has for populism as well as develop insights that can be applied to non-populist cases. Therefore, the two areas of study may profit from closer communication.

This chapter stayed firmly on the terrain of populist mobilization. It had nothing to say about populist discourse, the other half of the populist phenomenon. The next chapter engages this aspect of populism by considering the construction of "the people" on the pages of *Politika*, Serbia's most important daily newspaper. As was mentioned in the introduction, if populism is understood as a set of political practices, then it is best to study aspects of mobilization together with aspects of discourse. They are two sides of the same coin. The next chapter looks more closely at the practices behind the creation of populist discourse. The question is again about the *hows* of populism: How does it work?

CHAPTER 4

Constructing "the People"

The previous chapter showed that there is room for cross-fertilization between political sociology and the literature on populism. The tools that were considered were based on "eventful" analysis. This chapter aims to showcase another area of possible cross-fertilization: the work on collective identity. Scholars of populism always emphasize that "the people" are a key category of populism, while scholars of social movements emphasize the importance of collective identity for movement success. These two concerns can be brought together to mutual advantage by asking how "the people" emerge as a collective identity.

This chapter is about the construction of "the people." It cannot be taken for granted that a collective identity will emerge on its own. It needs to be constructed. For some scholars, the construction of a shared identity is the primary goal of all movement activists and a precondition for success (Melucci 1989; Bernstein 2008). In order to forge a collective identity, movements must engage in a lot of "identity work." The boundaries of the community need to be defined and an adversary needs to be located (Taylor and Whittier 1992; Polletta and Jasper 2001). Without a shared identity, there is little chance that individuals can come together at all (Hunt, Benford, and Snow 1994; Snow and McAdam 2000). It is important to define who "we" are.

Identity work needs to be undertaken in the case of populist movements, just as in the case of any other movement. The goal in a populist setting is to construct "the people." As mentioned in the introduction, the trope of "the people" is a crucial one for most studies of populism (Canovan 1981: 264; 1999: 4; Meny and Surel 2002: 12; Laclau 2005b: 33–34; Mudde 2007: 23; Hawkins 2009: 1042; Moffitt and Tormey 2014: 387). Yet, there is surprisingly little explication of the ways in which this discourse emerges.

For example, Laclau (2005a; 2005b) has been perhaps the most influential in terms of conceptualizing populism as a discourse that forges "the people." But he is curiously silent about the nuts and bolts of this process. What does this identity work look like in the case of populism? More concretely, two questions can be asked: (1) *who* engages in the construction of "the people" and (2) *how* does this process work?

Regarding the first question, the answer offered in this chapter again centers around the fractal character of populism. Both elites and ordinary citizens take part, but their interaction is patterned in a particular way: elites are inciting, amplifying, molding, and manipulating the inputs of ordinary people. As the previous chapter showed, this process can play out on the terrain of events, leading to populist mobilization. But it can also be traced in the public sphere. What the previous chapter did for populist mobilization, this chapter does for populist discourse. There are surprising similarities in the way that the final outcome results from an intricate web of elite-mass interaction. The fractal metaphor once again invites us to think about the forces that produce the complexity that we observe.

Furthermore, a tighter focus on agency is something that the scholarship on collective identity can take away from the study of populism. The issue of elite involvement and elite manipulation cannot be ignored in the populist construction of "the people." This fact reminds us that the process of collective identity is not something that merely floats in social space. Real agents with real interests are behind it. The literature that social movement scholars have developed around the concept of collective identity is not as aware of this fact as would be desirable. Therefore, just as in the previous chapter, both fields can profit from each other. Populism scholars can start to think more about the "identity work" that is implied in the construction of "the people," while social movement scholars and political sociologists can start to think more about the agency behind the formation of collective identities.

Regarding the second question—how are "the people" constructed—this chapter fleshes out two key aspects. The ideal of populist discourse is to forge (1) "the people" as a homogenous collective force and (2) "the people" as an actor capable of autonomous action. The first task is therefore to construct the people as a single, unitary power. In contrast to the fractured citizenry that exists otherwise, the populist version of "the people" is not only united but monolithic as well. This version of "the people" can be referred to as "the-people-as-one" (see also de la Torre 2016). The fact that people are actually divided across a variety of social cleavages is ignored. Indeed, such divisions need to recede into the background for "the people" to emerge. The intricacies of the social mosaic are swept under the rug. The second element

concerns "the people" as an actor, an agent that can come to life and begin to act on its own. Populism pushes the transition from "the people in itself" toward "the people for itself," to paraphrase Marx (Aslanidis 2016: 18). "The people" are not only united, but they gain the capacity to act for themselves. The first condition complements the second and vice versa.

Of course, the emergence of a unitary and active "people" is not really possible in any strict sense. Such a collective actor is bound to remain a fictional one. "The people" are never really homogenous and can never really act as one. To some extent, this artificiality of identity is present in all movements, large or small. Identities are always constructed and negotiated. In that way, they are always at least a little artificial. They are imagined. This is particularly apparent in the case of populism. The reason lies in the ambitious nature of populism: its goal is nothing less than the unification of practically all citizens under a single collective identity. This gives populist discourse a slightly jarring quality. The way "the people" are transformed into a giant person always seems at least a little implausible. The success of this discursive operation therefore depends in part on the naivety of the audience, as chapter 6 shows. Though all identities are constructed, and therefore always at least a little manipulative, populism takes this logic to the extreme.

This chapter investigates the construction of "the people" in Serbia by examining one of the main venues in which populist discourse took shape: a section of the Serbian newspaper *Politika* called "Echoes and Reactions" (*Odjeci i reagovanja*). The goal of this section was to publish letters from ordinary citizens. The story of Serbian populism would be incomplete without an analysis of this newspaper rubric and its impact. The curious thing about "Echoes and Reactions" was its hybrid character: it was both bottom-up and top-down, both the expression of many ordinary citizens and a tool of manipulation for Milošević and his allies. It was a site of elite-mass interaction in which the elites were inciting, amplifying, molding, and manipulating the contributions of ordinary actors. On its two daily pages, "Echoes and Reactions" constructed "the people."

The empirical core of this section is a data set derived from a selection of letters from "Echoes and Reactions." In order to be able to assess the strength and content of populist discourse in *Politika*, this data set was complemented with letters published in *Borba*. With its stronger professional standards and relatively liberal orientation, *Borba* provides the counter-example to the fiery approach of *Politika*. This makes comparison possible: it becomes possible to say if one media source was more populist than another. A coding scheme was developed to systematize the letters and to provide a quantitative over-

view of the type of populist discourse that emerged in the Serbian public sphere in 1988. But the chapter also provides many qualitative examples that give the reader a more full sense of what was written by "the people" for "the people" and about "the people."

Discourse, however, is also linked to action. It can impact political reality in very tangible ways. What was the impact of populist discourse? In particular, was populist discourse relevant to what was happening in the streets of Serbia? The connection between discourse and protest is something that can itself be operationalized in several ways. In line with this book's fractal theme, this chapter uses two different approaches. First, zooming out slightly from the letter as a unit of analysis, this chapter looks at the day-to-day linkages between populist media content and protest activity. Does an increase of one lead relatively quickly to an increase of the other? In which way does the arrow point? The second approach zooms out even more to consider the protest wave as a whole. It is interested in the long-run effects of media exposure on the propensity to protest. Together, this type of investigation can provide insight into the connection between populist discourse and populist mobilization, two phenomena that tend to be studied in isolation, as the introductory chapter noted.

"Echoes and Reactions"

What is known about the rise of populist discourse in Serbia in the late 1980s? Much of the specialist literature on the former Yugoslavia has focused on the role of the media in the 1990s, not the 1980s (Snyder and Ballentine 1996; Slapšak et al. 1997; Thompson 1999; Skopljanac-Brunner et al. 2000; Kurspahić 2003; Đerić 2008). Some scholars have taken on the topic of populism in Yugoslavia but in their empirical applications actually turn to the rise of nationalism in the 1990s (Bowman 2005; Laclau 2005b: 197–98). When it comes to the late 1980s, scholars tend to give more general assessments about the impact of the media. Thus, scholars speak about the "massive propaganda campaign" of the late 1980s (Doder and Branson 1999: 59), about how "the popular press ran a coordinated campaign" (Pavković 2000: 105), about the way Serbian public opinion was "deliberately manufactured and intensively cultivated by the Serbian media since 1987" (Bennett 1995: 96), or about how *Politika* became "a mouthpiece" of Milošević (Ramet 1992c: 228). Such blanket assessments—even if they are largely correct—can provide only limited insight into the concrete mechanisms used. In order to make some headway, a closer examination of

the main sites of populist discourse is required. "Echoes and Reactions" in particular stands out as arguably the most important two pages in the most important Serbian newspaper of the time.

Superficially, "Echoes and Reactions" was like any other section devoted to letters to the editor. It evolved out of "Among Us" (*Među nama*), a popular but tame section that published letters having to do with quotidian problems, "a pensioners' rubric" (Marović 2002: 237; Mimica and Vučetić 2008: 15). "Among Us" published letters in which readers complained about the inconveniences they encountered interacting with public services or in their communal surroundings. The practice of writing letters in order to complain about services was common in socialist countries and offered an acceptable way in which grievances could be voiced and problems with administration highlighted (Deutz-Schroeder and Staadt 1994; Fitzpatrick 1996; Dimitrov 2014). Beginning in the summer of 1988, the letter section was transformed by printing letters with explicitly political topics written in a highly confrontational tone. It expanded from the single page devoted to "Among Us" to two, sometimes three, pages usually placed in the middle of the newspaper.

However, *Politika* was not the only newspaper to feature a section devoted to readers' letters. Other newspapers, such as the more liberal and Western-oriented *Borba*, also featured readers' letters. But the centrality of *Politika* in the Serbian landscape made "Echoes and Reactions" crucial. Letters published in *Politika* continued to reverberate throughout the public sphere: some of them were read at prime-time slots on TV Belgrade, the monopolistic television station in Serbia (Marović 2002: 239; Mimica and Vučetić 2008: 20). The fact that these letters were presented as coming from "the people" made them difficult to criticize: Who would want to criticize "the people"? And those that did criticize the letters risked becoming targets themselves. Responding to attacks with a letter of one's own was dangerous because such responses would be used as an invitation for further abuse. Persons targeted by "Echoes and Reactions" would quickly suffer great political and personal harm. Careers were ruined this way.

The day-to-day editorial practices of "Echoes and Reactions" remain shrouded in mystery. The general editor of the newspaper has written lengthy memoirs but has not divulged many details about the way the section was run (Minović 2007; 2008). In my own conversations with Serbian journalists, including insiders connected to the rubric, I came across a great deal of unease, which suggests the presence of foul play. Those insiders who are best positioned to provide a detailed account of the day-to-day functioning of the rubric now claim that they were very busy at the time and do not remember much. In itself, this may signal a significant degree of selective

memory and a personal need to block certain unpleasant, unprofessional, and immoral episodes from one's recollection.

Several published accounts exist that shed light on the problem (Nenadović 1996; Marović 2002; Mimica and Vučetić 2008). Based on these accounts and my conversations with insiders, I would suggest that it would not be inaccurate to claim that some letters, especially *ad hominem* attack pieces, were indeed signed by fictional names. Milošević was most probably not involved personally in the day-to-day operations, since most observers claim that his political style usually relied on delegating such dirty work. All media were overseen by the "Committee for Information," a powerful body of the Central Committee, staffed with people who were both ruthless and devoted to Milošević. Connected outsiders volunteered their texts and were subsequently rewarded by advancing professionally and materially. Some politicians wrote under pseudonyms, though this was rare (Marović 2002: 212, 226, 239; Mimica and Vučetić 2008: 25). Even though "Among Us" used to insist that contributors send numbers of their identification cards along with a full address, the editors of "Echoes and Reactions" decided to abandon such scruples. The long-standing editor of "Among Us" was removed (Marović 2002: 238). This way, the space for fabrication and ghost-writing could be expanded.

In other words, the manipulative aspects of "Echoes and Reactions" are clear. Yet, were the analysis to stop there, it would miss the interactive character of the section. The fact that many letters were probably written by members of a secret para-journalist team does not mean that the section did not spark genuine enthusiasm from readers, many of whom decided to become contributors. For example, a photograph in *Politika* showed the quantity of letters that they would receive each day: about half a meter tall (*Politika*, September 24, 1988, 15). If this picture is genuine, it would mean that "Echoes and Reactions" was as much real as it was doctored. Tellingly, one insider told me that several such bundles would arrive daily, while another insider, who was an opponent of those running "Echoes and Reactions," suggested that the picture is probably fake. With "Echoes and Reactions," the truth remains elusive. Other observers have similarly noted this elusive character of "Echoes and Reactions" by speaking of it as "both spontaneous and ordered anger," "organized spontaneity" (Nenadović 1996: 587, 588), or as a "field of interaction" characterized by "why not—the relative spontaneity of reader reactions" (Mimica and Vučetić 2008: 7, 16).

The difficulty with claiming that the letter section was completely manufactured is the presence of counterevidence. In one case, when journalists from other newspapers suggested that authors of two letters were fictional,

one of the two responded publicly thereby "proving his existence" (Mimica and Vučetić 2008: 25). Tellingly, the second of the two never reacted, pointing again to the hybrid character of "Echoes and Reactions." This suggests the way populism works more broadly. As one insider writes, "Echoes and Reactions" "definitely contains something authentically popular. But it also contains something which is without doubt putschist, hounding and totalitarian" (Nenadović 1996: 595). This duality is typical for populism, which frequently combines democratic and authoritarian tendencies into a single, contradictory package.

The rationale behind the rubric, as explained by those behind it, was to give voice to "the people." As the general editor said at the time, *Politika* "has no right to think differently from the people. . . . This creates resistance because we do not want bureaucratic journalism or salon journalism. Some have ironically said that we are succumbing to populism. We are witnesses, but we do not hide that we are also fighters for the truth. . . . *Politika* has no editorial policy but to be with the people" (quoted in Nenadović 1996: 597). Another insider similarly told me that "Echoes and Reactions" was a way to show that "the people" can think and write, that newspapers should not be controlled by elites with an exclusive right to interpret what "the people" want. No reflection, however, was given on the fact that "Echoes and Reactions" would also interpret and construct the thoughts of "the people."

All in all, it seems most appropriate to view "Echoes and Reactions" as a site of elite-mass interaction. The manipulation could work only if it was based (at least in part) on actual popular opinion. Had it been completely artificial, it would not have resonated and become the cult phenomenon that it eventually became. At the same time, "Echoes and Reactions" was actively shaping and molding that very same popular opinion. Over time, the letters were "building a new reality which would soon become more real than reality itself" (Mimica and Vučetić 2008: 5). The central place that *Politika* occupied in the Serbian public sphere made it possible for them "to create the type of people that it preferred, that is, readers who learn from it [from *Politika*] how to think and speak and be Serbian patriotic role-models for others" (Nenadović 1996: 594). In other words, *Politika* was taking on a very active role, one very different from typical journalistic standards of impartiality.

It is important to note that *Politika* was not alone in the practice of publishing letters. Given that *Borba*—the more professional and scrupulous newspaper—also engaged in this practice suggests that many of the letters published in *Politika* were also genuine. Of course, it should not be assumed that *Borba* necessarily presents a "true" reflection of ordinary citizens' opin-

ions. It is not possible to say whether their selection of printed letters is a faithful and representative sample of the letters they received. Nor should it be assumed that those people writing letters are a representative sample of the population as a whole. Yet, the discrepancy between the two newspapers makes it possible to say that one was engaged in more populist construction of "the people" than the other, regardless of where the "neutral" position may have been.

Gradations of "the People"

In order to gain more fine-grained insight into the structure of populist discourse, a coding scheme was devised for quantitative analysis. It should be noted that this type of investigation diverges slightly from dominant trends in the scholarship on populism. The literature on populism seems to have very little interest in issues of measurement. Indeed, most of the literature on populist discourse has not sought a more positivist approach. In particular, this holds true for much of the work inspired by Laclau. His influence seems to steer research away from empirical testing and into other forms of non-positivist scholarship, sometimes even Lacanian psychoanalysis (Laclau 2005a: 101–16). In contrast, this chapter is based on the notion that empirical measurement is both possible and fruitful. Without it, we cannot make assessments about the relative intensity of populist discourse.

The coding scheme was built around the word "people" (*narod*), the key concept of populist discourse. Its various forms and uses were systematically noted through several groups of letters. The main advantage of such a research strategy is that it simplifies the job of the coder, making it possible to produce reliable measures. Inter-coder reliability scores were consistently high, around 97 percent agreement and about 0.94 for Krippendorff's Alpha. As Krippendorff suggests, researchers "can rely" on data where alpha value is equal to or larger than 0.80, consider data between 0.66 and 0.80 only "for tentative conclusions" and "discard" data where alpha is less than 0.66 (Krippendorff 2004a; 2004b: 241–43). In other words, the data used in this chapter are reliable. The methodological appendix provides more information regarding inter-coder reliability.

Which letters were chosen? First, out of the roughly 800 letters that were published in *Politika* during the summer and fall of 1988, I selected all those that featured "the people" in the title. There were sixty such letters. As a comparison group, I also selected a randomly chosen one hundred letters from *Politika* that did not feature the word "people" in the title. This way,

one can compare the extent of populist discourse in those letters that were equipped with titles that mentioned "the people" and those that were not. Although it is not possible to say which letters were written by the secret editorial team and which by ordinary readers, the choice of title is important since it points to an editorial intervention. By itself, the choice of title is a decision which aims to mold public opinion rather than merely reflect it. As one insider told me, they were consciously changing their approach to titles at that time: the goal was to make them more bombastic. Therefore, letters that contain the word "people" in their titles are important since they reveal an ambition on the part of the editors to engage in the construction of "the people." This way, we can gain analytical leverage on how elite intervention into discourse proceeded. The second source of comparison are the letters published in *Borba*, all 131 of them. Given its comparatively liberal orientation, *Borba* provides a useful counterpoint to *Politika*. This approach makes it possible to assess gradations of populist discourse.

The coding relied on an important particularity of the Serbian language. Serbian allows for a distinct use of the word "people" that is not very intuitive in English: it can be used in the singular. In English, it would be unusual or even plain incorrect to say, for example, that "the people has risen." But in Serbian, this comes naturally with the word *narod*. By using it in the singular, an important step is taken toward the image of "the people" as a single and coherent actor.

The second usage that reveals the populist construction of "the people" even more is when the word "people" (*narod*) was used as the subject in a sentence, i.e., the active agent that performs a certain action. For example, when a letter published in *Politika* says that "[t]he people know best what is good for them(it) and what is not" (*Politika*, August 5, 1988, 13), the word "people" is used as the subject of the sentence. In such instances, the populist creation of "the people" comes to life as a single actor and begins to "do" things by itself. When "the people" are used in the singular *and* as the subject of a sentence, the populist construction of "the people" is pushed furthest.

Table 4.1 gives a breakdown of the categories discussed above. It shows how often the word "people" appeared in various groups of letters. As can be seen, the word "people" appeared most often per letter in the first group of letters, i.e., those letters that were published in *Politika* and had "the people" in the title. The figures in the table give the mean and median number of instances that "the people" appeared per letter. On average, a letter that had "the people" in the title used the word 8.9 times. For the comparison group of letters from *Politika*, the figure drops to 2.2 and to 0.7 in *Borba*. The median figures are lower throughout, but the relative differences between

the three groups of letters are similar. The other rows in table 4.1 reveal essentially the same patterns. For example, instances of "the people" appearing in the singular, as the subject in a sentence, and both, all show the same differences across groups of letters.

In other words, the populist construction of "the people" is most pronounced in those letters that featured "the people" in the title. The comparison group of *Politika* letters comes in second, and *Borba* comes in third. In that respect, it would appear that those letters in which the editors of *Politika* decided to put the word "people" in the title go furthest in the construction of "the people." It is impossible to say whether these letters were also the ones written by Milošević's secret team of para-journalists. But it does provide an observable measure of elite manipulation. On the whole, *Politika* is much more prone to populist language than *Borba*.

However, the fact that elite manipulation was present in *Politika* does not mean that both newspapers were not engulfed by a wave of genuine letters written by actual people. The issue of how much popular enthusiasm existed for the practice of letter-writing can be investigated by comparing two periods of the protest wave. As shown in the previous chapter, the party session

Table 4.1. Appearances of "the people" in various groups of letters

		Politika– Letters with "the people" (*narod*) in title (total of 60 letters)	*Politika*– comparison group– no "people" in the title (100 randomly selected letters)	*Borba* (total of 131 letters)
How many times "the people" (*narod*) appear (per letter)	Mean Median	8.933 8	2.200 1	0.717 0
How many times "the people" (*narod*) appear in the singular (per letter)	Mean Median	5.000 4	1.020 0	0.534 0
How many times "the people" (*narod*) appear as the subject (active agent) in a sentence (per letter)	Mean Median	1.950 1	0.320 0	0.152 0
How many times "the people" (*narod*) appear in the singular *and* as the subject (active agent) in a sentence (per letter)	Mean Median	1.833 1	0.320 0	0.145 0

that took place on September 5th, 1988 was a key turning point since this was the session at which Milošević officially embraced populism. Is it possible to trace a change in letter-writing practices by looking at the quantity and content of letters published before and after September 5th? This point in time divides the period into two phases of roughly equal length. The first phase includes the period from the beginning of June to early September, while the second phase includes the remainder of the period until the end of November. *Politika* published about 37 percent of its letters in the first period and 63 percent in the second. *Borba* published about 46 percent in the first period and 54 in the second. In other words, *Politika* did indeed publish more letters in the second phase, while *Borba* remained consistent.

What about the content of these letters across time? Table 4.2 presents the same data analyzed earlier but breaks them down into the two periods. As can be seen, the word "people" in all its variants appeared more often in the period prior to the September session. In other words, the letters en-

Table 4.2. Appearances of "the people" in various groups of letters (before and after September 5th session of the League of Communists)

		Politika– Letters with "the people" (*narod*) in title (total of 60 letters)		*Politika*– comparison group– no "people" in the title (100 randomly selected letters)		*Borba* (total of 131 letters)	
		Before	After	Before	After	Before	After
How many times "the people" (*narod*) appear (per letter)	Mean	11.346	7.882	2.320	2.013	0.816	0.718
	Median	10	6	1	1	0	0
How many times "the people" (*narod*) appear in the singular (per letter)	Mean	5.769	4.411	1.440	1.785	0.533	0.535
	Median	5	3	0	0	0	0
How many times "the people" (*narod*) appear as the subject (active agent) in a sentence (per letter)	Mean	2.076	1.852	0.440	0.280	0.166	0.140
	Median	1	1	0	0	0	0
How many times "the people" (*narod*) appear in the singular *and* as the subject (active agent) in a sentence (per letter)	Mean	1.884	1.794	0.440	0.280	0.166	0.126
	Median	1	1	0	0	0	0

gaged in more populist construction of "the people" in the first period. But as was just mentioned above, the quantity of letters increased in the second period. In other words, as the volume of letters rose, they engaged in less populist construction of "the people." How can this be interpreted?

One interpretation that seems plausible is that ordinary people really did send more letters in the second period. The photograph mentioned earlier—the one that depicted the pile of letters *Politika* would receive daily (*Politika*, September 24, 1988, 15)—was taken in the second period, after the September session. Though one cannot be entirely sure of this, it seems logical that Milošević's endorsement of populism in September resulted in more popular involvement in "Echoes and Reactions." And as the quantity of contributions from ordinary citizens increased, the content of the letters changed. Ordinary people expressed themselves in less schematic, i.e., less "people-heavy" ways. The task of the secret editors of "Echoes and Reactions" changed from soliciting and writing letters to picking the "right" letters from the daily pile. In other words, the secret team behind "Echoes and Reactions" may have been "preparing" the terrain with more schematic, i.e., more "people-heavy" letters in the first period of the protest wave. In the second period, they could take their foot off the gas pedal and let ordinary citizens speak. In my conversations with insiders who were involved in the rubric, I was unable to provide decisive evidence for this interpretation, since they tended to say that they could not remember such details. Therefore, one cannot be completely certain, but there are signs in the data that distinctly point toward this possibility.

What Do the People Do?

The analysis so far showed that the word "people" could be used in new and innovative ways: by putting it in the singular and—even more interestingly—by turning it into the subject of a sentence. But what did "the people" in such sentences "do"? This section focuses attention on the action itself. This can be done by looking at the verbs that form the basis of the predicate in a sentence. While the subject is the carrier or agent of the action, the predicate (verb) tells us what kind of action is taking place. What do "the people" "do" when they are transformed into an agent? By engaging in various forms of action, the people "in itself" are truly transformed into the people "for itself." What are these actions?

Table 4.3 presents a list of the most common verbs used in predicates, once again organized according to the same categories of letters. Only sen-

Table 4.3. Most common verbs in sentences where "the people" is the subject (active agent) and is used in the singular

	Politika– Letters with "the people" in title (60 letters)	*Politika*– comparison group– no "people" in the title (100 randomly selected letters)	*Borba* (total of 131 letters)
How many times "the people" (*narod*) appear as the subject (active agent) in a sentence *and* in the singular	110	32	19
Verbs used at least three times:			
(The people) say (*reći*, *kazati*)	10	1	0
(The people) express (*iskazati*)	5	0	0
(The people) know (*znati*)	5	3	0
(The people) accept/do not accept (*prihvatiti*)	5	0	0
(The people) speak (*govoriti*)	4	0	0
(The people) gather (*okupiti se*)	4	0	0
(The people) understand (*razumeti*)	4	0	0
(The people) demand (*tražiti*)	3	4	4
(The people) want/do not want (*želeti*)	3	0	0
(The people) call out/criticize (*prozvati*)	3	5	0
(The people) enter into politics (*ulazi u politiku*)	3	0	0
(The people) rise (*ustati*)	3	0	0
(The people) state (*izjasniti*)	3	0	0
(The people) decide (*rešiti, odlučiti*)	3	0	0
(The people) attack (*napadati*)	3	0	0
(The people) put pressure (*vršiti pritisak*)	3	0	0
(The people) stay silent (*ćutati*)	3	0	0
(The people) suffer (*patiti*, *trpiti*)	3	0	0
(The people) want (*hteti*)	1	3	0

tences in which "the people" were used in the singular *and* as the subject were examined. The analysis restricts itself to only those verbs that appeared a minimum of three times. The flexibility of language by necessity makes this type of catalog incomplete. There are many other predicates that were used less than three times. For a verb to be represented in table 4.3, repetition had to combine with ease of use.

As can be seen in table 4.3, the most common verb is the verb "say." Several examples can be provided. As one letter suggests: "That is why the people . . . have loudly said what is bothering them and what they want" (*Politika*, November 8, 1988, 13). Another letter attacks members of the Vojvodina elite, who were unsympathetic to the protests, and references the instance in which authorities cut the electricity used by organizers to power their public announcement equipment: "Despite the fact that the power was cut, the people have said loudly and clearly that they want a unified republic, equality of all citizens, that Kosovo Serbs should not be left to fend for themselves, and if the Vojvodina leaders have not understood this then it is time for them to disappear from the political scene" (*Politika*, July 22, 1988, 12). These examples can give the reader a sense of what it means when "the people" "say" something. Most of the letters refer to the protests as instances in which the people "said" something and are taking the opportunity to present this as the opinion of "the people" as a whole.

Usage of the verb "demand" is similar. The following letter is interesting for the way it explicitly references populism: "While sociologists and political scientists argue and diagnose what kind of phenomenon this is (is it populism, a result of socialist spontaneity, or something else), while politicians react with confused and rigid bans on the gatherings of the people, the people are entering political life and demanding that the system be opened (which has for some time been bureaucratically formalized, neglected, and blocked) for their troubles, problems, and interests" (*Politika*, September 25, 1988, 17). The letter does not resolve whether the phenomenon should indeed be called populism. It merely says that popular discontent needs to be addressed. "The people" "demand" that "the system" be opened to their grievances.

Other high-ranking verbs in table 4.3 are very similar: express, know, accept, speak. They all refer to "the people" making up their minds and taking some sort of stand. As one letter said: "Given that the people have expressed their historic interest in the constitution of their republic with regard to the changes of the constitution of the Socialist Republic of Serbia, the question must be asked if the changes that are put forward reflect these interests" (*Politika*, July 19, 1988, 12). Like many letters, this one also links

expressions of the popular will to the proposed changes to the constitution of Serbia, i.e., to Milošević's political agenda. The people are said to have made their opinions crystal clear: they want constitutional revisions, that is, they want the same thing as Milošević.

Some letters explicitly claim insight into what the people "know." For example: "Throughout our history, and thus including the present moment, our people knew which songs to sing and to whom" (*Politika*, November 24, 1988, 16). In other words, "the people" have a wisdom that makes it impossible for them to make a mistake. The following letter makes a similar claim—of the people displaying a certain form of transhistoric wisdom. The people "through the ages always knew who they were and what they want, always firmly in opposition to tyranny and with high patriotic ideals for which they are known in the world" (*Politika*, October 18, 1988, 17). Although "the people" know what is right, this knowledge is not something that comes from any kind of education. Instead, it is a kind of political instinct. As one letter said: "Our people were not taught 'nice manners' in high diplomatic circles, but they knew, though uneducated, usually with only four years of grade school, to sing pretty verses to their party and comrade Tito while he was still alive" (*Politika*, August 18, 1988, 15). In other words, "the people" "know" certain things—indeed very important things—but this knowledge does not derive from sophistication and learning.

Of the other verbs present in table 4.3, the final two that deserve closer attention are "call out" and "enter into politics." They indicate the politicization of "the people" in an even more explicit way. For example, one letter said that "recovery from our very difficult situation will happen when all of those whom the people have called out for their laziness resign and answer to the people" (*Politika*, September 1, 1988, 15). In other words, calling out or criticizing certain politicians is also something that "the people" do as one. The theme of laziness hints at the "unproductive" character of the political elite, a topic dealt with in the next chapter. "The people" can also "enter politics." As one letter said, "[t]here are historic situations where the people, who are stripped of their rights and angry, do not ask for the rules of the game, but enter into politics and spoil the calculations of compromising and alienated political rulers" (*Politika*, September 25, 1988, 17). The year 1988 was seen as one such historic situation in which "the people" have entered politics and complicated the lives of political elites. "The people" cast aside the "rules of the game" and reassert their sovereignty.

Given the diversity of possible verbs that can be used and the predicates that may form in sentences, the numbers presented in table 4.3 are by necessity rather small. Yet, they nevertheless provide an overview of some of

the most common predicates that were used when "the people" were the subject. Most of the time, "the people" would say, express, know, accept, speak, gather, demand, and call out. As can be seen in table 4.3, the most formulaic expressions were made in those letters published in *Politika* that had the word "people" in their titles. They most often resorted to stylized representations of "the people" doing things as one.

Examples from Borba

The innovation introduced by *Politika*—an expanded space for readers' letters with explicitly politicized messages—became something that other newspapers had to respond to. Why do they not provide similar avenues for "the people" to express themselves? *Borba*, the most liberal of Yugoslav newspapers provides a counterpoint to *Politika*. As one insider told me, *Politika* and *Borba* were like *Zvezda* and *Partizan*, the two football clubs in Belgrade. In other words, they were rivals, always keeping an eye on each other.

The approach chosen by *Borba* was different from "Echoes and Reactions." They published letters less often. In addition, the letters would not be so highly politicized as those in *Politika*. Their letters were similar to the predecessor of "Echoes and Reactions," the more timid "Among Us." Throughout the summer and fall of 1988, the letters published in *Borba* did not stray too far from this more conventional model. Most letters dealt with complaints about administration and public services. Only rarely did *Borba* publish letters with explicitly political messages. Thus, one can infer that *Borba* engaged in its own selection processes. It is highly likely that many political letters were shelved, as *Borba* tried to contain the phenomenon of popular letter writing.

At times, *Borba* tried to address the new phenomenon head-on. They did so by trying to engage the letter writers, albeit in polite and diplomatic ways. Here is one example of a letter that attacked *Borba* for its unwillingness to expand the space it gives to letters: "It is incomprehensible, indeed absurd, that *Borba*, as the only Yugoslav [federal] newspaper [. . .] does not have an entire page devoted to readers' letters" (*Borba*, September 26, 1988, 2). As the letter continued in its criticism: "For me, having a narrow letter section in some newspapers is proof of a certain distance, alienation of the newspaper from its readers" (*Borba*, September 26, 1988, 2). In other words, explicit pressures were now exerted onto other newspapers: they should adopt the same practices taking root in *Politika*.

This case however, shows the difference between *Politika* and *Borba*. Not

only did *Borba* print a letter which criticized it, but it also introduced the practice of providing answers to readers' letters. This practice was absent from *Politika*. To this particular letter, *Borba* responded by having the editor of the newspaper pen a response personally. Rather politely, he responded by saying that "*Borba* devotes special attention to so-called outside contributions, the printing of pieces, opinions, and positions of people who are not employed in the paper" (*Borba*, September 26, 1988, 2). Such a direct response indicated a dedication to transparency that was not evident in *Politika*. The editor did not respond to hostility with hostility but aimed to defuse the situation.

In another example, a reader's letter again attacked *Borba*. As the letter said: "some newspapers have opened their pages to readers and introduced new sections in which readers comment on current events in the country and [have therefore become] proper newspapers of the people" (*Borba*, November 21, 1988, 2). To this, the letter writer added a question: "Why does *Borba* not introduce the appropriate section in which citizens could present their opinions and suggestions with regard to all questions of interest to readers?" (*Borba*, November 21, 1988, 2). The letter further suggested that this would increase the circulation figures of *Borba*. This can be taken as a sign that the introduction of "Echoes and Reactions" led to an increase in sales for *Politika*.

In their response, *Borba* noted that the trend of readers' letters was becoming a universal phenomenon: "as is known, all newspapers receive with pleasure an increased flow of letters from readers, and especially *Borba* as a federal newspaper which has the obligation of taking seriously each letter that we receive" (*Borba*, November 21, 1988, 2). The answer again shows the careful and diplomatic tone of *Borba*'s journalists: the reader is not attacked and the numerous letters are said to be received "with pleasure." The journalist again reminds the reader that *Borba* does indeed have a section devoted to letters: "for more than a year, in line with the new editorial policy, *Borba* devotes special attention and secures space for letters from our readers" (*Borba*, November 21, 1988, 2). The journalist in charge of writing this response added that *Borba* not only provided space for letters but also tried to provide answers—often from the very institutions challenged—and concluded that the result was "a sort of collective interview, with which we are especially pleased" (*Borba*, November 21, 1988, 2). Once again, the picture is presented in a non-conflictual way: despite the fact that the letters challenged *Borba* directly. *Borba* remained dedicated to civility, compromise, and discussion.

An even more revealing exchange took place between a factory worker

and the "director" of *Borba* (a political post). The letter attacked the paper's director by saying that "I hope you will publish this letter even though your director Milan Rakas will probably not like it, just as I did not like his article" (*Borba*, August 22, 1988, 3). The letter continued: "As far as I know, Rakas is a good man and a good communist and so I do not understand why in his article he disputes the right of the people (who are seldom wrong) to call out particular functionaries who with their (lack of) work did not justify the confidence of the people who, as he says, 'are publicly labeling and disqualifying individuals'" (*Borba*, August 22, 1988, 2). In a directly confrontational manner, the letter says that "it is clear to everyone today that being silent hurts this country, which belongs to the people and only to the people. Being silent is only in the interest of the enemies of the country, and therefore, comrade Rakas, do not tell the people to be quiet. Be confident that the people will not make a mistake since they have not made mistakes before" (*Borba*, August 22, 1988, 2). This letter talks of "the people" in a way that was common in *Politika*: "the people" know what they want, they do not make mistakes and are now actively taking matters into their own hands.

The response was written by Rakas himself. Once again, not only did *Borba* print an attack on itself, but it treated an ordinary letter writer (a factory worker, in this case) as a contribution that was on par with a top-ranking political functionary. This shows the more tolerant and open-minded orientation of *Borba*. Rakas' response continues with *Borba*'s choice of politeness over disagreement: "I agree with you comrade [. . .] that the people have the right to call out certain functionaries, which as you say have 'not justified the confidence of the people'" (*Borba*, August 22, 1988, 2). After this conciliatory gesture, Rakas concluded that: "With regard to the people, I hope that they will call out all of us more often, and especially those of us who occupy high-ranking positions [. . .] Probably some should not only be called out but also removed, but of course only through our forms of socialist democracy" (*Borba*, August 22, 1988, 2). Rakas here placates the reader by agreeing with him but counters with the hope that potential resignations will follow institutional procedures. This hope that rules will be followed and due process respected was a clear counterpoint to *Politika*'s "Echoes and Reactions."

In summary, this section showed how the introduction of "Echoes and Reactions" reverberated through the Serbian public sphere and forced *Borba*, the more liberal counterpart to the openly populist *Politika*, into a defensive stance. The opposition between the two is useful in framing the continuum of discourse, from more to less populist.

Relationship between Discourse and Protest

What was the impact of populist discourse? "Echoes and Reactions" had many ramifications for those who were attacked on its pages. Those targeted would quickly suffer serious consequences, especially with regard to their careers. However, this type of impact is difficult to trace more systematically. Yet, the connection that can be systematically investigated is between the concerns of this chapter and the previous one, i.e., between discourse and protest. Is there a link between these two aspects of populism? This section will follow the fractal metaphor of this book. I will zoom out in several steps to consider the period from two vantage points.

The first step is to zoom out slightly from the letter as a unit of analysis. What emerges when one considers the day-to-day linkages between the letters and the protests? Table 4.4 presents the results of several Granger causality tests. As a technique, Granger causality tests can be used when one wishes to inspect the temporal ordering of two time series: Do changes in one series systematically and repeatedly precede—or follow on the heels of—changes in another (Granger 1969)? As with the statistical tests performed in chapter 3, these tests depend on "tight coupling," i.e., close temporal linkages between two series. The main logic of Granger causality tests is to use lagged values of one time series to forecast the value of another. It is said that series A "Granger causes" series B if the expectation of B, given the history of A, is sufficiently different from the expectation of B, unconditional on A.

As can be seen in table 4.4, it would appear that protest activity and the populist construction of "the people" "Granger cause" one another. However, the relationship holds only for *Politika* and not for *Borba*. This finding complements the earlier analysis. As in the previous chapter, two measures of protest activity are used: the number of protests and the number of protesters. With regard to the populist construction of "the people," two measures are used. For *Politika*: the number of letters and the number of letters that have the word "people" in the title are used. For *Borba*: the number of letters and the number of mentions of the word "people" in the letters it published are used. The smaller number of letters in *Borba* made collecting this data possible, and, in addition, the number of letters with the word "people" in the title is very low (only two such letters), which would have made the tests meaningless. For *Politika*, the number of letters with the word "people" in the title has been shown to be highly correlated with the number of times "the people" appear and can thus be used as a satisfactory proxy for the latter.

For *Politika*, in most cases, the null hypothesis (that there is no Granger causality) can be rejected at either the $p < 0.05$ level or the $p < 0.10$ level.

Table 4.4. Granger causality tests

Does series A "Granger cause" series B?			
Politika			
A	B	Chi-squared	*p*-value
Number of protests	Number of letters published in *Politika*	5.346*	0.021
Number of protesters (natural log)	Number of letters published in *Politika*	3.102^{+}	0.078
Number of letters published in *Politika*	Number of protests	1.169	0.279
Number of letters published in *Politika*	Number of protesters (natural log)	3.322^{+}	0.068
Number of protests	Number of letters with "the people" in the title	5.661*	0.017
Number of protesters (natural log)	Number of letters with "the people" in the title	4.405*	0.036
Number of letters with "the people" in the title	Number of protests	1.384	0.239
Number of letters with "the people" in the title	Number of protesters (natural log)	4.023*	0.045
Does series A "Granger cause" series B?			
Borba			
A	B		
Number of protests	Number of letters published in *Borba*	0.005	0.939
Number of protesters (natural log)	Number of letters published in *Borba*	0.012	0.911
Number of letters published in *Borba*	Number of protests	1.326	0.249
Number of letters published in *Borba*	Number of protesters (natural log)	1.485	0.223
Number of protests	Number of times "the people" appears in *Borba*'s letters	0.359	0.549
Number of protesters (natural log)	Number of times "the people" appears in *Borba*'s letters	0.408	0.523
Number of times "the people" appears in *Borba*'s letters	Number of protests	0.032	0.857
Number of times "the people" appears in *Borba*'s letters	Number of protesters (natural log)	1.128	0.288

Note: The null hypothesis is that there is no Granger causality.
$^{+}$ $p < 0.10$
* $p < 0.05$
** $p < 0.01$
*** $p < 0.001$

Therefore, populist discourse "Granger causes" popular protest as well as vice versa. For *Borba*, no relationship of Granger causality was discovered. This is consistent with the generally observable intent of *Borba* to stay out of the populist construction of "the people." For *Politika*, however, one can say that not only did they embrace the phenomenon of readers' letters and construct "the people" on the pages of their newspaper, but they also aided the real-life emergence of (a subset of) "the people" in the streets. They truly were a key motor of populism in Serbia. But the reverse also holds: protest seems to inspire "Echoes and Reactions" into an expansion of populist discourse. Therefore, these two aspects of populism feed off each other.

Granger tests investigated the short-term linkages between media content and protest. Is there also a long-term connection between exposure to certain types of media content and levels of mobilization? If one zooms out fully, can a link be found between reading *Politika* and protesting more? Naturally, one cannot say that the link—should it exist—is only due to the letters published in "Echoes and Reactions," since *Politika* featured other content on its pages. Yet, to the extent that the new explosive letter section became one of the primary reasons to buy *Politika*, the claim is not without a basis in fact. It should be kept in mind that the circulation of *Politika* began to grow just as "Echoes and Reactions" was introduced, i.e., in 1988. The circulation of *Politika* hovered around 200,000 copies throughout most of the 1980s. But in 1988 and 1989—when "Echoes and Reactions" were at their peak—it doubled to about 400,000 copies per day (Minović 2007: 282).

How can the potential link between exposure to media and levels of mobilization be measured? One way to gain leverage with regard to this question is to consider all of Serbia's counties and investigate the link between the volume of protest in each county and the numbers of copies of *Politika* sent for sale to each county (data was drawn from Minović 2008: 125–26). The protest data come from the event catalog introduced in the previous chapter, with the difference that it is now coded to location. This way, it becomes possible to assess if the counties that had higher circulation figures also protested more, net of a variety of other potentially important factors. The covariates used in this analysis are a broad selection of cross-sectional (county-level) variables. Levels of protest were operationalized in two ways: as the number of protests and the number of protesters. The methodological appendix provides additional information regarding the way the analysis was handled.

In order to provide an intuitive way to assess the results, I present two graphs. These graphs summarize the results of a large number of multi-variate

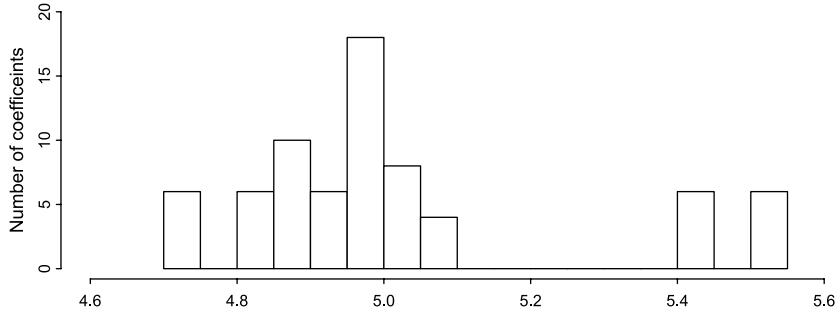

Figure 4.1. Histogram of effect size estimates

Interpretation: When the number of copies increases by 10,000, the number of protests increases by approximately 5 (median is 4.96). That is, an additional 1 protest for every 2,000 copies of *Politika* sent to county on a daily basis.

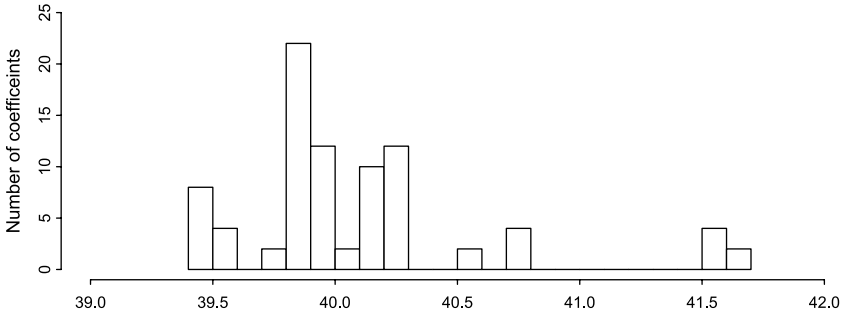

Figure 4.2. Histogram of effect size estimates

Interpretation: When the number of copies sent to a county on a daily basis increases by 1, the number of protesters increases by approximately 40 (median is 39.95).

models. Figure 4.1 and 4.2 present histograms that show the distribution of regression coefficients, i.e., the effect size estimates for the circulation variable in a variety of models. Figure 4.1 shows the histogram for models estimating the number of protests, while Figure 4.2 shows the histogram for models estimating the number of protesters. In all models, the coefficient for the circulation variable was positive and statistically significant. The histograms make it possible to estimate the size of the effect for the entire anti-bureaucratic revolution, i.e., from the beginning of June to the end of November 1988. The models vary estimation techniques (OLS, OLS with clustered standard errors, spatial regression models) and control variables (a variety of demographic, economic and other structural characteristics drawn primarily from the census). The methodological appendix presents several models for inspection.

As can be seen in figure 4.1, for an additional 10,000 copies sent to a county on daily basis, the number of protests in a county increases by about five. Or recalculated, an additional protest took place for every 2,000 copies sent to a county on a daily basis, for the entire duration of the protest wave (from the beginning of June to the end of November 1988). Figure 4.2 shows a similar calculation for the number of protesters. As can be seen, an increase of one copy per day per county lead to an increase of forty protesters for the average county for the entire duration of the protest wave. Overall, these are not small effect size estimates, especially if one keeps in mind that the five newspapers recorded a total of 338 protests with a median event size of approximately 2,500 people. The increase in circulation that took place in 1988 (noted above) would suggest that the editors of *Politika* recognized the power of the newspaper and sought to expand it. In that sense, it is possible to say that the strategy of *Politika*—which rested on the new popularity of "Echoes and Reactions"—had a traceable impact on popular mobilization. This shows that populist discourse does not stay in the sphere of ideas and words but has implications for other, more tangible, forms of social activity.

Conclusion

In our day and age, the practice of writing letters to newspapers seems rather quaint. Yet it was a popular practice in socialist Yugoslavia. Without recourse to other forums of participation, ordinary people took to writing letters *en masse*. But they did so in a forum that elites controlled and tailored to suit their interests. The central section of readers' letters, "Echoes and Reactions," always reflected this paradoxical and contradictory combination of bottom-up and top-down forces. The suggestion of this chapter, and of the book as a whole, is that this is due to the fractal character of populism: it is powered by a form of elite-mass interaction in which elites are always inciting, amplifying, molding, and manipulating mass input.

"The people" did not just arise. They were constructed. This was the result of a lot of identity work, conducted by both elites and masses in a typically populist patchwork. In the process, "Echoes and Reactions" created a special kind of collective identity. "The people" appeared as a single and homogenous force, "the-people-as-one." And furthermore, they appeared as an actor capable of action by itself, the people "for itself." Moreover, this type of populist discourse was not just floating around in the sphere of words and ideas. Indeed, it is closely linked with what was happening in the streets. Levels of protest fell and rose with the ebbs and flows of populist discourse. Moreover, exposure to *Politika* is connected with the propensity to protest,

seen over the period as a whole. In other words, populist discourse and populist mobilization go hand in hand.

There is no direct evidence that the rubric was tampered with by Milošević and his allies. But the fingerprints of manipulation are there, just as they are with protest organization. It would seem perfectly reasonable, and in line with what can be known about the letters, to suggest that some letters were written by Milošević's para-journalist team, that some were solicited from their allies, and that the rest was picked from the pile of letters received daily. This selection process was itself most probably biased toward the elite agenda. But it is important to remain level-headed when faced with such elite manipulation. Tampering does not mean that there was not a lot of enthusiasm from ordinary people. Just as with populist mobilization: the presence of elite involvement and the organizational help of regime institutions does not mean that citizens participated against their will. The same holds for this chapter's findings about populist discourse. A lot of people made their contributions with great enthusiasm. Many more read the newspaper with great interest. This goes to show, once again, that populism is best seen as a fractal phenomenon. It is always about elites and masses interacting. Just as the fingerprints of elites are all over the letters, so are the fingerprints of ordinary people. Together, they constructed "the people."

The emergence of a strong populist discourse in *Politika* was a phenomenon that did not go unobserved in the wider Serbian public. *Borba*, as the most liberal Yugoslav newspaper, tried to navigate the new populist waters carefully and manage the fallout as best they could. Its own section of readers' letters was as an attempt to contain the populist barrage. *Borba* published letters that were not explicitly political and contained conventional political language. They tried to engage the letters in genuine discussion, presenting responses and answers along with the original letters. The final result was a section that was largely disconnected from the protest wave occurring on the streets of Serbia. Unlike *Politika*, which embraced the role of populist instigator, *Borba* tried to remain an observer.

This chapter aimed to show that the field of populism studies and the field of social movement studies can profit from a mutually beneficial engagement. Rarely have scholars of populism investigated the "identity work" that is required for the successful construction of "the people." As scholars of social movements and contentious action show, mobilization can emerge only when a collective identity has been forged. Researchers of populism emphasize the importance of "the people," but do not investigate the identity work that goes into producing "the people." Yet, scholars of social movements can also profit from this sort of academic cross-fertilization.

In particular, populism sensitizes us to the issue of agency. Since elite manipulation is clearly taking place, one must ask who is involved in the process of identity construction. This is a question that could be asked more often in the case of other movements, even if they are quite different from populist movements. Chapter 3 showed that cross-fertilization between the two fields is possible on the terrain of mobilization, while this chapter does so on the terrain of discourse.

Though the analysis provided in this chapter presented an examination of the populist construction of "the people," missing is a more full examination of what made the people "good" as well as an examination of who is on the other side. After all, populism is not just about "the people," but it is also about the vile elite. "The people" that emerge in "Echoes and Reactions" seem to have no opponent, no counterpart. Who is on the other side? The next chapter takes up this challenge by examining a selection of political cartoons. This particular vocabulary seems to have been better equipped at capturing these aspects of populism. As the next chapter will show, the answer lies with a producerist view of "the people" as productive and elites as lazy and parasitic.

CHAPTER 5

Images of Producerism

The previous chapters fleshed out the metaphor of fractal populism, first on the terrain of populist mobilization and then on the terrain of populist discourse. This chapter continues with the investigation of populist discourse but moves to a different aspect of it, using political cartoons as a source of data. The previous chapter investigated the construction of "the people" by examining readers' letters to newspapers. It showed that *Politika*, the foremost Serbian newspaper of the time, established a peculiar public forum in which "the people" were forged as a homogenous and forceful actor. But the chapter did not provide an answer to two questions that are important for populist discourse. First, why are "the people" good? And second, who is on the other side of the populist divide, who is positioned as the counter-part to "the people?" This chapter uses political cartoons collected from the Serbian media to provide answers to these questions.

As the chapter will show, the answers lie with producerism: society as divided into productive and parasitic groups. Producerism complements populism, since it is compatible with its dichotomous interpretation of society: elites can be portrayed as parasitic and "the people" as productive. The main theme that emerges from this chapter is the opposition of the political functionary or bureaucrat to the typical blue-collar worker. In particular, many cartoons present the functionary sitting in an armchair. He is an "armchair politician" (*foteljaš*). The armchair theme signals the politician's passive and parasitic character. All he does is sit and sleep in his comfortable armchair. He stubbornly clings to it, as a symbol of both political power and undeserved privilege. The armchair politician is thus a political and economic nuisance. The blue-collar worker, on the other hand, does all the hard work on which society depends. He is active and productive.

The literature on populism has had surprisingly little contact with the

literature on producerism. This chapter suggests that this link is worth making, since producerism can provide empirical content to the general populist apotheosis of "the people." Yes, populism celebrates "the people"; but why are "the people" worthy of such lavish praise? Producerism can fill in the blanks. Producerist ideology has been documented in most depth in the literature on late nineteenth-century America, especially the ideologies of organized labor and small-scale farmers relative to the business and political elites of New York and Washington (Hattam 1993; Kazin 1995; Huston 1998; Currarino 2011). Workers and farmers were considered productive, while politicians, railroad tycoons, and bankers were considered parasitic.

Producerism is also relevant outside the United States. For example, attacks on the parasitic "bureaucracy" were quite common in other socialist settings. Gorbachev in the Soviet Union and Deng in China attacked the bureaucracy in ways that are very similar to the Yugoslav case (Beissinger 2002: 60; Coase and Wang 2012: 115). It is no coincidence that this type of rhetoric appeared in Yugoslavia, China, and the Soviet Union, three socialist countries that all experienced a domestic revolution. This gave socialist ideas additional legitimacy that did not exist in those countries where the communist regime was brought in and defended by the Red Army. In Yugoslavia, Russia, and China, it was more common to attack the regime from the inside, on its own terms. This usually meant criticizing the communist elite for not having lived up to its own goals. The elite could be criticized for its distance from and disinterest for the productive work of manual laborers. Some groups continue to see themselves in terms of the producerist ideologies that took root during the socialist period. For example, blue-collar workers in Russia and Ukraine continued to have producerist views well into the postcommunist period (Crowley 1997a; 1997b).

In Yugoslavia, producerism was based on a celebration of the blue-collar worker. He was the key symbol of the regime's industrialization and modernization efforts. The further away that one moved from the factory setting, the less the work in question could be called productive. Office work was viewed with suspicion, since it was unclear how such work contributed to society. What do clerical staff and bureaucrats actually produce? The Marxist labor theory of value and the base and superstructure model provided the theoretical underpinnings of such a social philosophy, though the folk version of socialist producerism naturally simplified matters considerably. Political cartoons capture this dimension of the political worldview rather well. Compared to the vocabulary developed by readers' letters, the visual vocabulary developed by cartoons was particularly successful in capturing this aspect of Yugoslav socialism.

In the case of Yugoslavia, socialist producerism was additionally strengthened by the country's break with the Soviet Union. The "bureaucracy" became even more of an enemy of socialism. As mentioned in the second chapter, the Marxist roots of the regime were not put in question by Tito's break with Stalin. Instead, the party sought new forms of legitimation *vis-à-vis* the working class, the main group in whose name it claimed to rule. It therefore embraced "self-management" as the regime's official program. This additionally strengthened the position of workers, at least symbolically. Workers were celebrated by the regime as self-managers and producers: they were the ones whose hard work paid for everything in Yugoslavia, including the comfortable lives of political functionaries. It should be mentioned that this ideal-type of an industrial worker and self-manager is always a man. As the analysis will show, the producerist language of the time was rather patriarchal.

The main finding of this chapter is that the political cartoons of the time emphasize the producerist juxtaposition between the blue-collar worker and the parasitic "armchair politician" (*foteljaš*). This theme is present across the political spectrum: in three newspapers with different political orientations (*Politika*, *Borba,* and *Večernje novosti*). This suggests widespread resonance of producerist themes. Indeed, other scholars have noted that the same theme of the armchair politician also appeared in factory publications (Archer 2016; Archer and Musić 2017). This means that the producerist vision of society had rather firm roots in Yugoslav society as a whole and resonated with many in the public sphere. The same is suggested by the large number of cartoon artists whose work was surveyed for the purposes of this chapter.

How does Yugoslav producerism matter for the main theme of this book, the fractal character of populism and the continuous involvement of elites in creating populism? It matters because it contrasts to the populist language inaugurated by the letters analyzed in chapter 4. The fact that the producerist vision was widespread in the Serbian media suggests that this was something that required little to no elite manipulation. All three newspapers included here shared the same producerist vision. In that respect, the producerist vocabulary was already present and did not need to be constructed, unlike the vision of "the people" analyzed in the previous chapter. Producerism was less artificial and more organic to Yugoslav society. The next chapter brings this comparison into the present and assesses which aspect of populist discourse resonates with people today: the construction of "the people" as a single active force or the producerist juxtaposition of the parasitic elite and the productive workers. This chapter will nevertheless probe the body of cartoons collected here for traces of intervention into the political vocabulary of the

time. As the analysis will show, *Politika* again stands out for its various attempts at populist encouragement and instigation.

Political Cartoons

The data set used in this chapter consists of 844 political cartoons drawn from three different Serbian newspapers (*Politika*, *Borba*, *Večernje novosti*). Cartoons are a source that is particularly apt for the study of populism. They are designed to target the broadest segments of society and can therefore bring out the populist repertoire of a given time and place.

As a source of data, political cartoons are not used often, especially when compared to conventional textual sources. Even so, there is a number of contributions that have used cartoons as data (Emmison and McHoul 1987; Morris 1992, 1993; Gamson and Stuart 1992; Greenberg 2002; Conners 2005; Olesen 2007; Morrison and Isaac 2012). Much like readers' letters, political cartoons seem like a quaint feature of a by-gone world. In the West in particular, the heyday of cartoons has probably passed (Lamb 2004). Changes in the publishing industry, especially in large newspapers, have destabilized the profession (Danjoux 2007), though demand for cartoonists' work has not entirely disappeared and cartoons remain popular with readers (Caswell 1994; Abel and Filak 2005: 161). That the political cartoon can have extraordinary power has been shown with the Muhammad controversy in Denmark and the Charlie Hebdo killings in France (Müller and Özcan 2007; Olesen 2007). In other words, the rise of a new media environment has not completely eclipsed the political cartoon as a genre.

What makes cartoons interesting for the analyst of populism? Cartoons are more immediate than conventional texts. They can help readers quickly interpret and organize events and processes from their social and political environment. Since they present crystallizations of political and social problems, they can offer small narratives regarding social issues (Greenberg 2002). Furthermore, cartoons cater to all segments of the population and do not have high pre-requisites in terms of education and specialized knowledge (Giglio 2002: 910). For example, cartoons are a medium that can reach even illiterate audiences (Long et al. 2009: 654). Therefore, cartoons have an effect of leveling access to political debate. In order to connect to as many readers as possible, political cartoonists must use popular knowledge and widespread representations of the social and political world (Conners 2005). Therefore, political cartoons will probably reflect taken-for-granted cultural meanings and conventional wisdom, especially when they appear in main-

stream media (Greenberg 2002: 182; Morrison and Isaac 2012: 64). This makes them a good source to analyze how broadly a given theme resonates with the broader public.

Cartoons are also an apt source of data for the study of populism since they are a medium that relies heavily on the personalization of social issues and social conflict. For example, instead of speaking abstractly about capital, cartoonists working for the Wobblies in early twentieth-century America depicted capitalism personified in the overweight and overdressed capitalist (Morrison and Isaac 2012: 65). This makes it possible for cartoons to better capture binary oppositions, such as good and evil, and provide a cognitive and moral guide for everyday life (Greenberg 2002: 186; Morrison and Isaac 2012: 65). All of this makes cartoons a source capable of capturing populist rhetoric and imagery. They can quickly tell us who, if anybody, can be blamed for ordinary people's troubles. Therefore, they are a good window into a country's populist repertoire, whatever its particular contents and relative strength may be.

The Yugoslav setting is one in which political cartoons were quite important. All major newspapers regularly printed political cartoons. Often, they would be printed on the cover page as well as on the equally important final page of the newspaper. Most newspapers had cartoon artists who regularly published with them. Indeed, the media environment of the time was rather conducive to the development of the profession. As one cartoon artist with whom I spoke said, the late socialist period was a "golden age." For the period under observation (from June to December 1988), I collected 844 cartoons drawn by a total of eighty-one artists. From this total, 546 cartoons were published in *Borba*, 147 in *Politika,* and 151 in *Večernje novosti*. *Borba*, in particular, was a stimulating environment for cartoon artists. Many of its cartoons were not just political commentary but genuine art. The fact that *Borba* was a federal newspaper gave them access to a larger pool of cartoon artists, and they used this variety to pepper the pages of their newspaper with a great variety of cartoons. In addition, the editor of *Borba* was an aficionado of the genre, as several cartoon artists told me. The data set constructed for the purposes of this chapter included only cartoons drawn by Yugoslav artists. It excludes foreign cartoons that would on occasion be reprinted by one of the newspapers, most notably *Borba*. Cartoons for children were also excluded.

The three sources used here were selected for their diverging political orientations. As has already been shown, *Politika* and *Borba* are in many way opposites. Together, they frame the continuum from most to least populist. As mentioned in chapter 2, *Večernje novosti* is useful precisely because it has no coherent political orientation. It was a typical mainstream newspaper

whose goal was to catch the largest possible reading public. In that respect, it provides valuable insight into what counts as mainstream, as accepted wisdom. The contrast between *Politika* and *Borba* is important for the same reason: if a theme is present in both—as well as in the catch-all *Večernje novosti*—then it really can be said to have been broadly shared by many in the Serbian public sphere. Using these three papers makes it possible to cover the political spectrum: from supportive of populism (*Politika*) to wary (*Borba*) to undecided (*Večernje novosti*). *Dnevnik* and *Jedinstvo*, the two newspapers used for the event catalog introduced in chapter 3, are omitted here. They were essentially local newspapers and, furthermore, *Jedinstvo* did not publish many cartoons.

The collection of cartoons was coded in the following manner. In line with the advice of earlier research (Ball and Smith 1992; Greenberg 2002; Morrison and Isaac 2011), each cartoon was coded inductively by noting the objects physically present in the drawing. This means simply listing what one sees. For example, a worker, a bureaucrat, an armchair, a desk, etc. This type of coding complements the coding of letters used in the previous chapter since it is also based on simply recording whatever the coder observes. Inter-coder reliability was similarly high as with readers' letters, at about 92 percent agreement. In total, there were 469 different themes that were coded in the process. Once again, I will rely on the power of example to communicate how these themes—such as the functionary and the armchair—come together to communicate more complex political messages. This chapter will therefore present examples of political cartoons along with a statistical overview of the main trends in the data set as a whole.

Similarities between Newspapers

What are the main patterns in this collection of political cartoons? This section will focus on commonalities between newspapers and the next section will tackle differences. Which themes are shared by all three newspapers? Table 5.1 presents a list of the most common themes that appear across all three newspapers. Overall, the most common theme is the functionary or bureaucrat. This holds for all three newspapers. The functionary is drawn as a generic character, not as any specific Yugoslav politician. Such a practice was still rare, and only on several occasions did cartoons feature a recognizable politician. With regard to the second and third most common theme, there are some differences between newspapers, but overall, the theme of the worker in particular stands out, followed by the ordinary man.

Which themes appeared most often in cartoons that featured the functionary? Table 5.2 provides an overview. As can be seen, there are some differences between newspapers, but the most common themes that appear with the functionary are the worker and the armchair themes. What about the worker theme? Table 5.3 presents the most frequent themes that appear together with the worker theme. As expected, the worker theme most commonly combines with the functionary theme. This is shared by all three newspapers. In other words, the two most common combinations used by

Table 5.1. Most frequent themes (out of 469 themes)

	All	*Politika*	*Borba*	*Večernje novosti*
1	Functionary	Functionary	Functionary	Functionary
	281	52	162	67
	(33.3%)	(35.4%)	(29.7%)	(44.4%)
2	Worker	Crowd at protest	Worker	Worker
	174	33	115	39
	(20.6%)	(22.4%)	(21.1%)	(25.8%)
3	Ordinary man	Protest sign	Ordinary man	Ordinary man
	158	30	110	26
	(18.7%)	(20.4%)	(20.1%)	(17.2%)
4	Crowd at protest	Armchair	Newspaper	Protest sign
	86	25	47	21
	(10.2%)	(17.0%)	(8.6%)	(13.9%)
5	Arm-chair	Ordinary man	Armchair	Armchair
	80	22	37	18
	(9.5%)	(15.0%)	(6.8%)	(11.9%)
6	Protest sign	Worker	Crowd at protest	Crowd at protest
	72	20	36	17
	(8.5%)	(13.6%)	(6.6%)	(11.3%)
7	Newspaper	Newspaper	Pulpit	Pulpit
	69	17	35	10
	(8.2%)	(11.6%)	(6.4%)	(6.6%)
8	Pulpit	Papers	Sheep	Woman
	54	10	28	10
	(6.4%)	(6.8%)	(5.1%)	(6.6%)
9	Flag	Pulpit	Shepherd	Dinar (currency)
	37	9	27	9
	(4.4%)	(6.1%)	(4.9%)	(6.0%)
10	Woman	Administrative	Bread	Flag
	35	clerk	25	8
	(4.1%)	8	(4.6%)	(5.3 percent)
		(5.4%)		
Number of cartoons	844	147	546	151

Table 5.2. Most frequent themes that appear with the "functionary" theme

	All	*Politika*	*Borba*	*Večernje novosti*
1	Worker	Armchair	Worker	Worker
	103	22	74	20
	(36.7%)	(42.3%)	(45.7%)	(29.9%)
2	Armchair	Worker	Pulpit	Armchair
	62	9	29	12
	(22.1%)	(17.3%)	(17.9%)	(17.9%)
3	Pulpit	Crowd at protest	Armchair	Pulpit
	45	9	28	9
	(16.0%)	(17.3%)	(17.3%)	(13.4%)
4	Crowd at protest	Protest sign	Crowd at protest	Ordinary man
	36	9	21	7
	(12.8%)	(17.3%)	(13.0%)	(10.4%)
5	Ordinary man	Papers	Ordinary man	Crowd at protest
	27	8	17	6
	(9.6%)	(15.4%)	(10.5%)	(9.0%)
Number of cartoons	281	52	162	67

Table 5.3. Most frequent themes that appear with the "worker" theme

	All	*Politika*	*Borba*	*Večernje novosti*
1	Functionary	Functionary	Functionary	Functionary
	103	9	74	20
	(59.2%)	(45.0%)	(64.3%)	(51.3%)
2	Crowd at protest	Crowd at protest	Crowd at protest	Crowd at protest
	28	5	16	7
	(16.1%)	(25.0%)	(13.9%)	(17.9%)
3	Armchair	Armchair	Armchair	Armchair
	21	5	11	5
	(12.1%)	(25.0%)	(9.6%)	(12.8%)
4	Protest sign	Protest sign	Flag	Protest sign
	18	4	10	4
	(10.3%)	(20.0%)	(8.7%)	(10.3%)
5	Bread	Administrative	Pulpit	Expensive car
	12	clerk	9	4
	(6.9%)	4	(7.8%)	(10.3%)
		(20.0%)		
Number of cartoons	174	20	115	39

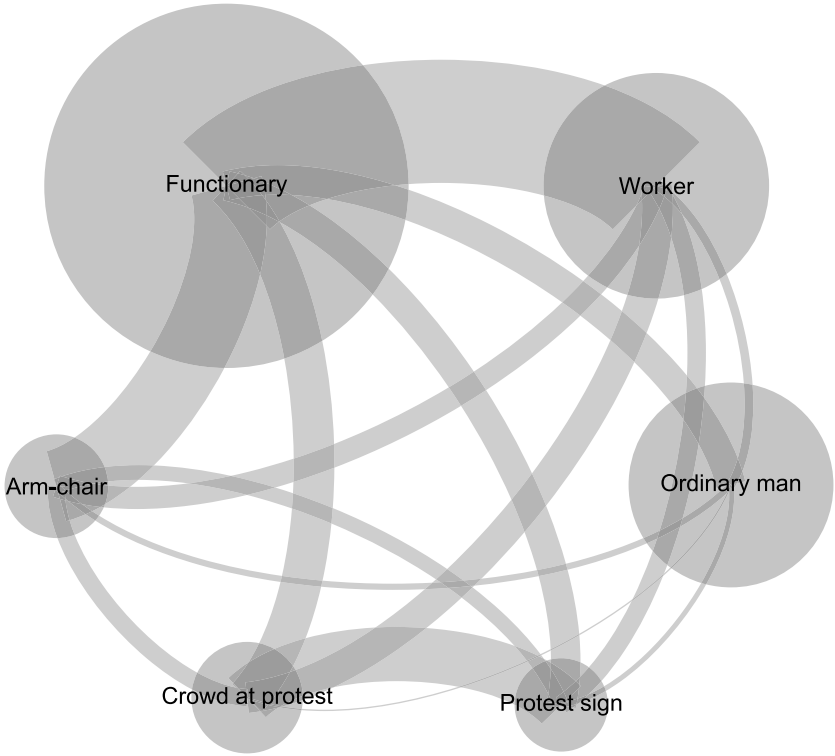

Figure 5.1. All three newspapers
Note: Network of co-occurrence (Size of node indicates overall frequency. Width of tie indicates frequency of co-occurrence.)

cartoonists are between the functionary and the armchair on the one hand, and the functionary and the worker on the other.

The question of co-occurrence can also be investigated visually. Figure 5.1 presents a network representation of co-occurrence for all three newspapers taken together. The size of each node is proportional to the theme's overall frequency, while the width of the ties between nodes is proportional to the number of times two themes appear together. As can be seen, the theme of the functionary is most common and appears most commonly with the theme of the worker and the theme of the armchair. Figure 5.2 presents the same relationship only for the cartoons published in *Politika*, figure 5.3 for *Borba,* and figure 5.4 for *Večernje novosti*. As can be seen, these network graphs look very similar, suggesting broad similarities between newspapers. The functionary, worker, armchair, and ordinary man themes are the bread

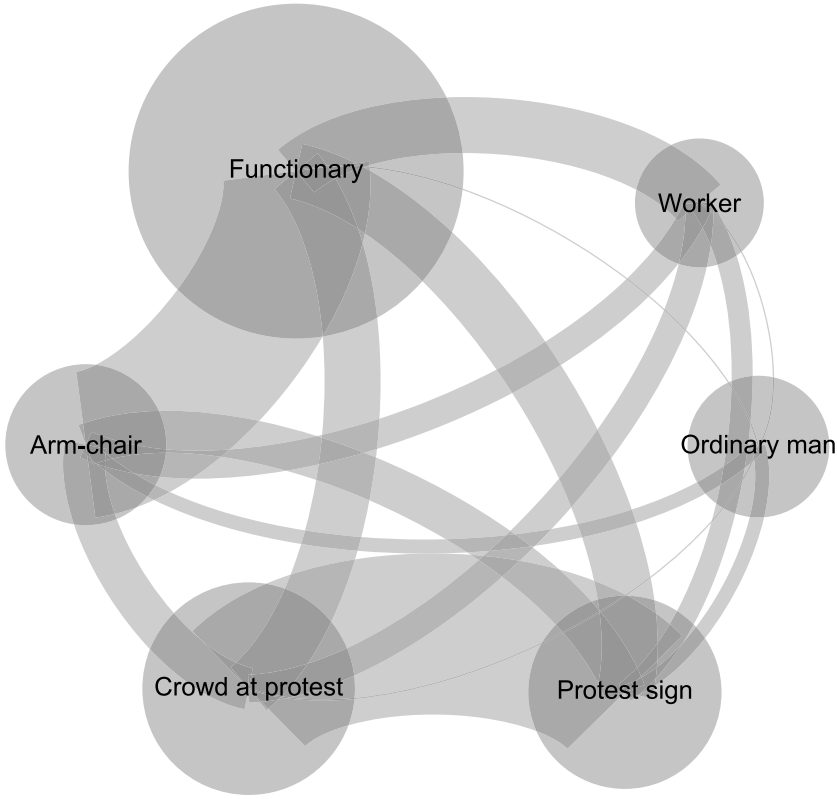

Figure 5.2. *Politika*

Note: Network of co-occurrence (Size of node indicates overall frequency. Width of tie indicates frequency of co-occurrence.)

and butter of political cartoons in Serbia. What do such cartoons look like and what do they communicate?

Here are a few examples. Figure 5.5 (*Večernje novosti*, November 17, 1988, 2) shows a rather typical cartoon. In this cartoon, the political functionary is shown wearing ear plugs. He has pushed his desk against the door in order to prevent anyone from entering. His goal, apparently, is to sleep undisturbed in his armchair. This showcases one of the main arguments of this chapter: the political functionary in an armchair is painted as unproductive and parasitic. The armchair theme made it possible to criticize elites without drawing and naming particular politicians. As one cartoon artist with whom I spoke said, such cartoons "had no address." Yet, they nevertheless provided a way to criticize and ridicule those in power.

Another example can help to bring out the opposition between the pro-

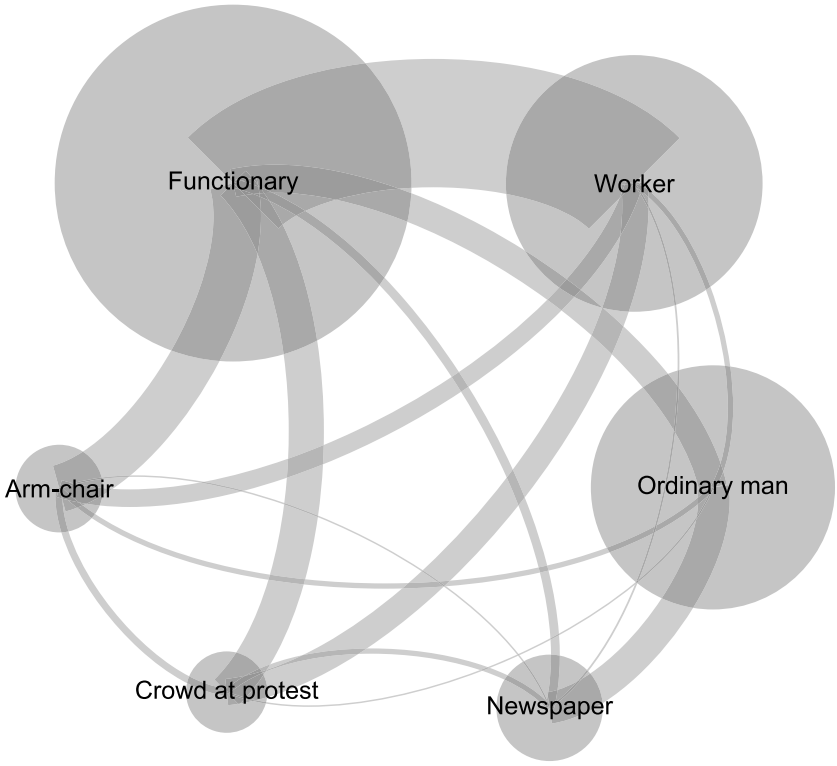

Figure 5.3. *Borba*

Note: Network of co-occurrence (Size of node indicates overall frequency. Width of tie indicates frequency of co-occurrence.)

ductive worker and the lazy armchair politician. Figure 5.6 (*Borba*, October 17, 1988, 11) features an ordinary worker and a political functionary. The worker is dressed in overalls and a cap and is carrying a wrench. The functionary is sitting in an armchair, dressed in a suit. The worker asks: "What if I resigned?" The question implies that while the functionary can step down and give up his responsibilities, the worker cannot. His work is indispensable. The functionary, on the other hand, is replaceable. The cartoon is a nice illustration of the status that the blue-collar worker had in Yugoslav society, at least symbolically.

Another example can further substantiate the division between the productive and the unproductive in Yugoslav socialism. In figure 5.7 (*Borba*, August 19, 1988, 2), the functionary and the worker are shown struggling against each other. The functionary is squeezing the scissors on which both

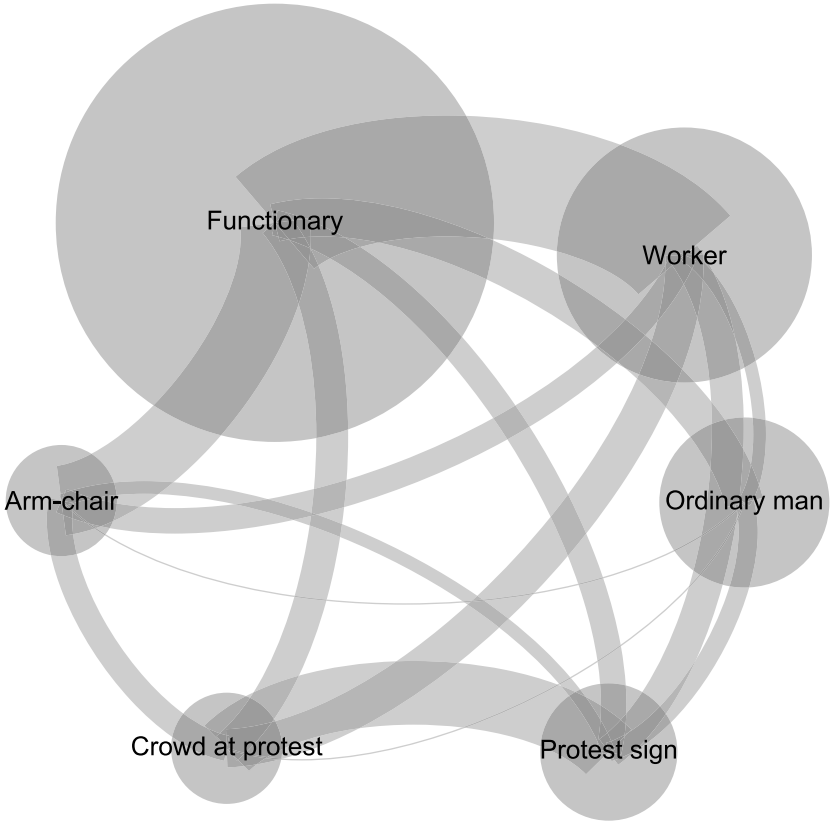

Figure 5.4. *Vecernje novosti*

Note: Network of co-occurrence (Size of node indicates overall frequency. Width of tie indicates frequency of co-occurrence.)

stand, while the worker is struggling to resist. In this cartoon, the bureaucrat is recognizable due to his sleeve protectors, which were often worn by clerks as protection from ink stains. They make it clear that the functionary has an office job. The overalls that the worker is wearing make it clear that he is a blue-collar industrial worker. The scissors suggest that the functionary is making the worker bear the burden of the economic crisis.

While the functionary is often drawn together with the armchair, the worker has no such "prop" to signal his productive character. Earlier, in figure 5.6, he was carrying a wrench. However, the theme of the wrench appears only twice in total. The hammer, a similar theme, also appears only twice. In one cartoon, the worker is driving a forklift. There is no single tool

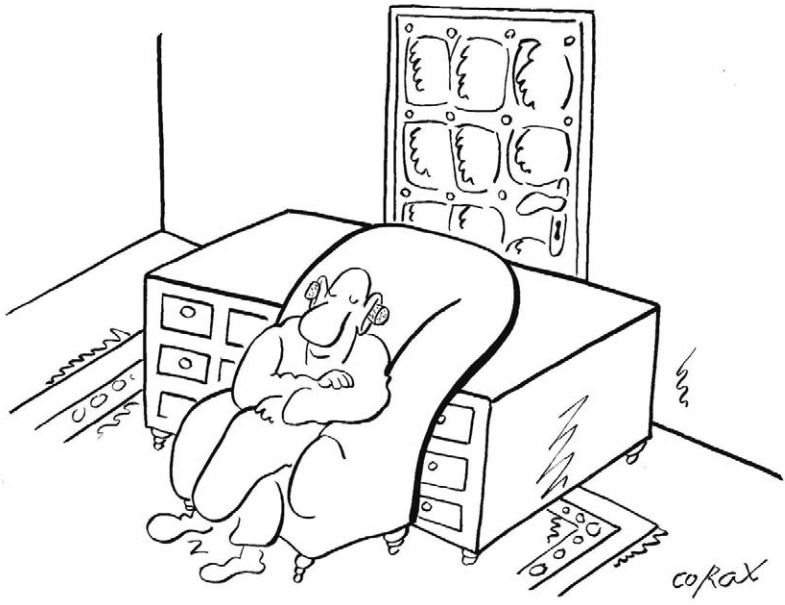

Figure 5.5. *Vecernje novosti*, November 17, 1988, page 2, by Predrag Koraksic Corax

Figure 5.6. *Borba*, October 17, 1988, page 11, by Nedeljko Ubovic, Caption: "What if I resign?"

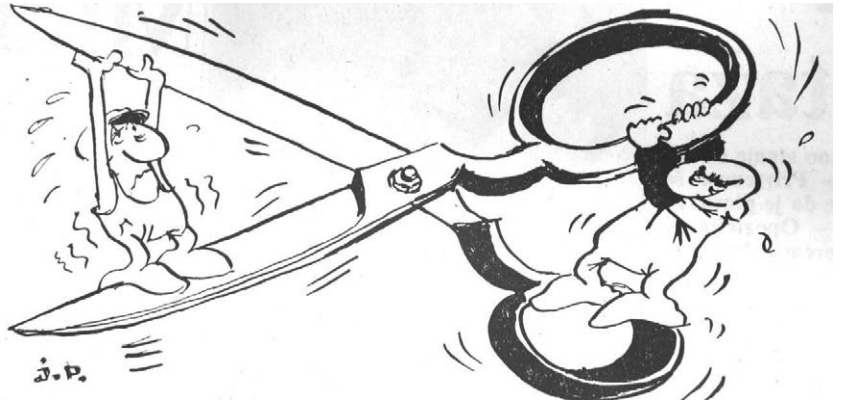

Figure 5.7. *Borba*, August 19, 1988, page 2, by Jovan Prokopljevic

that was paired as consistently with the worker as the armchair was with the functionary. Most probably, the status of the worker as a producer was self-evident and required no elaboration. Yet, there were cartoons that explicitly portrayed the way the worker, through his manual factory labor, pays for everything else in society. For example, figure 5.8 (*Borba*, September 12, 1988, 2) shows a worker whose pocket is being picked by another person, using a fishing rod. This cartoon explicitly portrays the worker as the sole source of income in socialist Yugoslavia, as it was imagined in the public sphere of the time.

Most of the examples described above revolve around producerism: a binary way of sorting society into productive and parasitic groups. But the same theme of the armchair bureaucrat could be used in developing a populist vision of society, i.e., a binary perspective that divides society into "the people" and the elite. Figure 5.9 (*Večernje novosti*, July 10, 1988, 1) shows a ring of functionaries, all sitting in armchairs. They have surrounded a large group of people, suggesting that "the people" have been trapped by the elite. Therefore, the same theme of the armchair bureaucrat was conducive for both a populist and a producerist vision of society. This complementarity made it possible for populism to borrow energy from producerism.

The examples shown so far help to flesh out the main patterns reported in the tables and network graphs. However, there are several additional themes that are important. As can be seen in table 5.1 and in figure 5.1, one of the most common themes was the ordinary man theme. What was this theme like? The ordinary man was a man who was not explicitly drawn as a blue-collar worker. He did not have overalls as the worker in the example above,

Figure 5.8. *Borba*, September 12, 1988, page 2, by Slobodan Butir

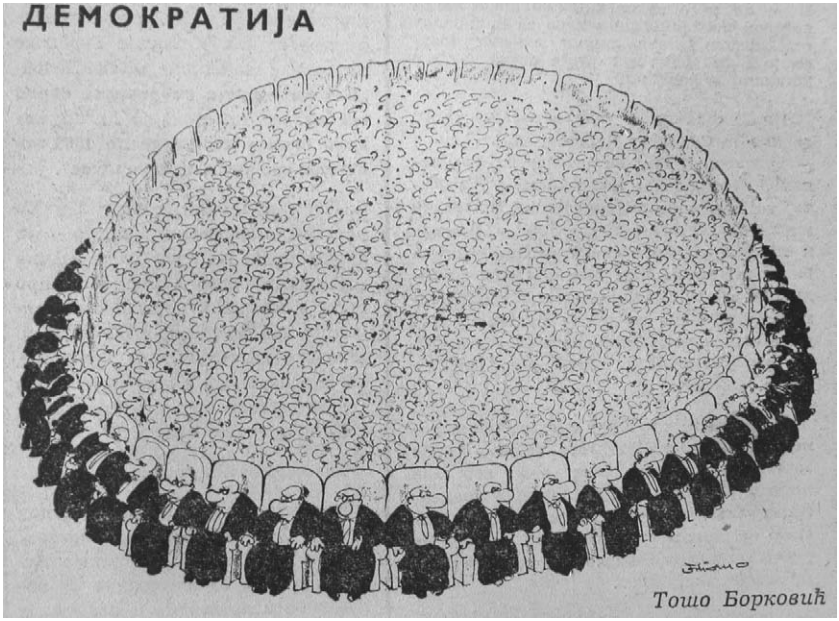

Figure 5.9. *Vecernje novosti*, July 10, 1988, page 1, by Tosa Borkovic

Figure 5.10. *Vecernje novosti*, September 10, 1988, page 2, by Predrag Koraksic Corax. Caption: "We will go to the people's meeting and you go queue for the people's bread!"

nor a typical worker cap, nor a tool in his hand such as a wrench. Therefore, he could be used as a proxy for the typical Yugoslav citizen. The versatility of the theme means that he could be used in both political and apolitical ways, depending on need.

For example, in figure 5.10 (*Večernje novosti*, September 10, 1988, 2), the ordinary man is pictured with his wife and children. He is carrying a protest sign and says to his wife: "We will go to the people's meeting and you go queue for the people's bread!" The children are carrying a flag and a framed picture, accessories for the protest. The woman is carrying a shopping bag. In this cartoon, the ordinary man is politicized. His wife, on the other hand, has to take care of the household. She must buy a loaf of "people's bread," i.e., the cheapest bread available in this time of economic crisis. In other words, protesting is defined as very much a man's job, not a woman's. The theme of the woman is mostly restricted to such domestic settings and domestic chores. The absence of women in more political contexts indicates a strong patriarchal element in the public discourse of the time.

These are the themes that dominate most cartoons. As the tables and network graphs show, the functionary theme is most common. He is the

butt of most jokes. He is most often contrasted with the blue-collar worker or paired with an armchair, which is really an extension of his parasitic character. At the same time, the tables and graphs presented here also show some interesting differences, and it is to these that I now turn.

Differences across Newspapers

The three newspapers are, broadly speaking, quite similar in terms of the content of their cartoons. But they are not identical. First, as can be seen in table 5.1, the second most common theme in *Politika* is the crowd at a protest, a theme that appeared in 22.4 percent of its cartoons. This theme went hand in hand with the protest sign theme, which is only natural. As the network graph presented in figure 5.2 shows, the protest sign and the crowd theme combine quite frequently. On the other hand, the crowd theme appeared in only 6.6 percent of *Borba*'s cartoons and 11.3 percent of *Večernje novosti*'s cartoons. The percentages are also low for the protest sign theme: 3.8 percent in *Borba* (not in the top ten) and 13.9 percent in *Večernje novosti*. Thus, the three newspapers were politicized in somewhat different ways. *Borba* and *Večernje novosti* continued to operate with the more traditional socialist language, which emphasized workers in their struggle with bureaucrats, while *Politika* stepped into the brave new world of populist encouragement.

It is interesting to note that the crowd theme became more common in September of 1988, just as Milošević officially adopted populism and just as protest activity expanded to new heights. In September of 1988, about 46 percent of cartoons published in *Politika* contained the crowd theme, while in the other months, it was a much smaller 15 percent. The other two newspapers did not feature such a change. About 12 percent of cartoons published in *Borba* in the protest-heavy month of September featured the crowd theme, compared to 6 percent in the other months. In *Večernje novosti*, the percent is about 11 for both the month of September as well as the rest of the period. In other words, the content of cartoons in *Politika* shifted with the shift in the broader political dynamic, while the other two newspapers tried to keep a steady course.

How was the crowd theme used? Here are several examples. Figure 5.11 (*Politika*, October 5, 1988, 17) shows a large crowd gathering around a microphone. Essentially, this cartoon shows a determined crowd that is now ready to speak. It is an interesting visual parallel to the way the letters published in "Echoes and Reactions" portrayed "the people": as an active and

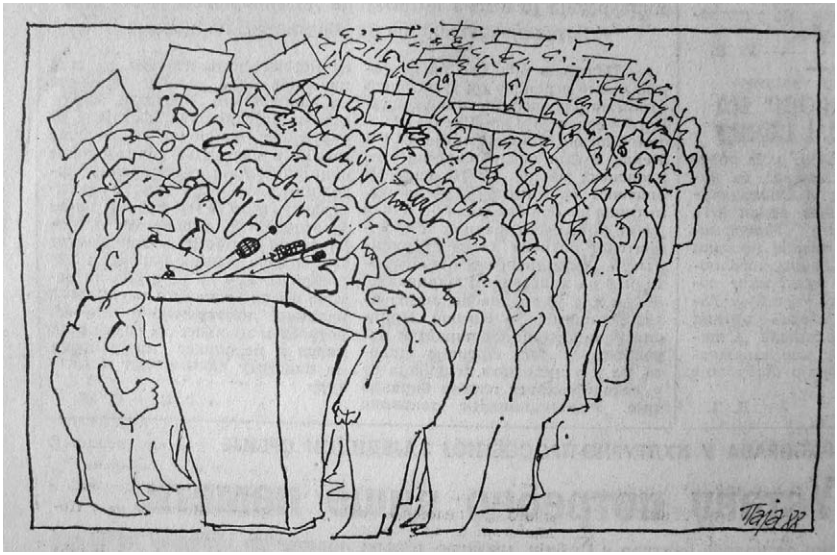

Figure 5.11. *Politika*, October 5, 1988, page 17, by Dragoljub Pavlovic Paja

homogenous force. "The people" in those letters also frequently became an actor, they "said," "expressed," and "demanded" something. This cartoon tries to construct "the people" in the same way: the people are now taking center stage. Of course, as one thinks about the picture more, the whole notion of "the people" really speaking as one becomes nonsensical. In that respect, the cartoon is rather unreflective. Or at the very least, it is overly flattering of "the people" and its capacity to act. The next cartoon is similar. Figure 5.12 (*Politika*, September 12, 1988, 10) presents a crowd of protesters pushing a ball of yarn. Once again, the image is interesting for the way it flatters "the people": they are pictured as determined to see things through to the end, at which, presumably, important truths about Yugoslav politics will be revealed. This is in tune with the mission of *Politika*, i.e., the mission of encouraging popular mobilization.

With the crowd theme, *Politika* took a step beyond the conventional socialist producerism of the period. It was slightly different from the typically socialist way of representing "the people," that is, as embodied in the industrial worker. The crowd theme is also interesting for its lack of broader resonance. *Borba* and *Večernje novosti* did not join *Politika* in using this theme. Going back to this book's theme of populism as a particular pattern of elite-mass interaction in which elites are always inciting, amplifying, and

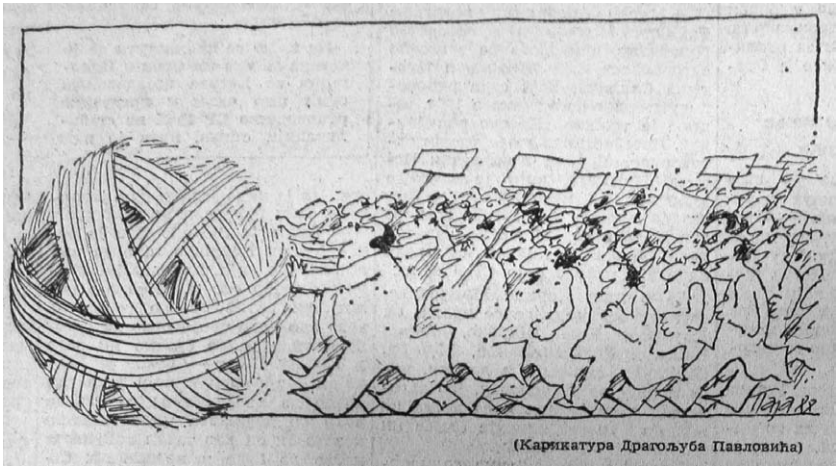

Figure 5.12. *Politika*, September 12, 1988, page 10, by Dragoljub Pavlovic Paja

manipulating mass action, this analysis of cartoons shows that *Politika* was, once again, a vehicle for populist instigation. Its attempt to mold popular opinion is visible precisely in the way it diverges from other newspapers. The crowd theme is the visual translation of "the people" constructed on the pages of "Echoes and Reactions." The vision of bold and powerful crowds is also a way to idealize the protesters. The other newspapers were not willing to go so far. They remained more ambivalent.

This ambivalence can best be traced in the use of another theme, that of the newspaper. *Borba* used the newspaper theme most often. As can be seen in the network graph pictured in figure 5.3, it was one of the most common themes in *Borba*. Table 5.1 shows it to be the fourth most common theme in *Borba*, right after the worker and ordinary man, even ahead of the armchair. By using this theme, cartoonists could take a step back and discuss the nature of public discussion itself. With the rise of populist discourse in general and the fiery rhetoric of "Echoes and Reactions" in particular, the character of discussion in the public sphere had morphed significantly from the sedate tones of the early 1980s. For many, this explosion was worrying. Cartoons in *Borba* expressed this concern. The newspaper theme made it possible to engage in "meta-talk," i.e., discuss the very discussion they are themselves taking part in (Ferree et al. 2002: ch. 12). These cartoons were in effect asking themselves: What is the quality of debate in our public sphere?

Figure 5.13 (*Borba*, September 26, 1988, 2) provides an example of the newspaper theme. An ordinary man is reading a newspaper. A first-aid kit

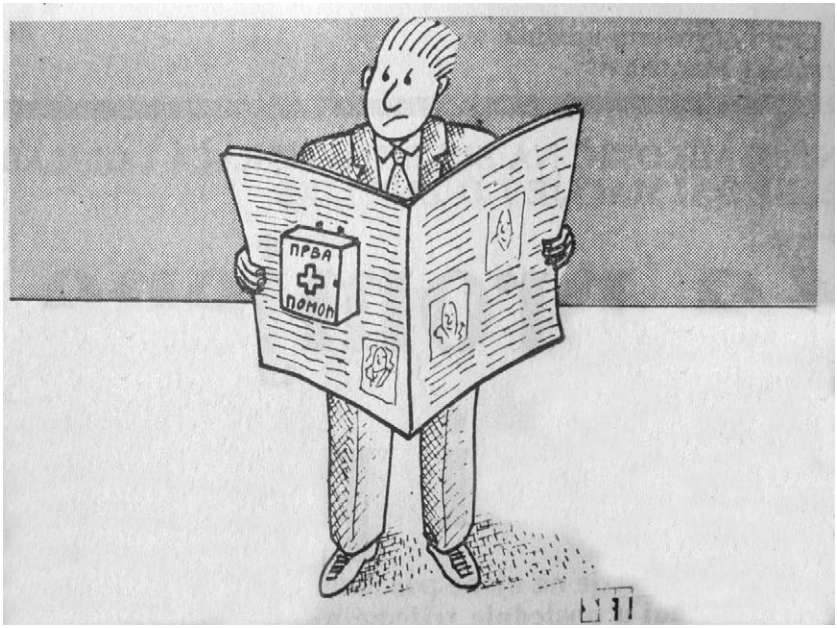

Figure 5.13. *Borba*, September 26, 1988, page 2, by Tome Sekulovski SET

is attached to the newspaper. The exact meaning of the cartoon is left open. Presumably, the man will need the first-aid kit after reading the newspaper, which would suggest that there are harmful things in the paper. But what exactly is it that will cause this harm is not clear. Readers are invited to think for themselves about the potential harm that newspapers may bring, i.e., the possible negative aspects of the kind of discussion taking place in the Serbian public sphere. This is an example of discussion about discussion. The cartoon nudges the door to critical reflection open, without holding the hand of the reader or force-feeding them the conclusion. Another example showcases the same type of "meta-talk." Figure 5.14 (*Borba*, November 4, 1988, 2) shows two paramedics carrying a stretcher with a newspaper. Apparently, the newspaper has suffered some kind of injury. As with the previous cartoon, this image does not insist on a single interpretation but leaves the reader with an opportunity to think for themselves.

Nor was this ambivalence restricted only to cartoons that featured the newspaper theme. Figure 5.15 (*Borba*, August 25, 1988, 2) provides another example of an open-ended cartoon. It shows a crowd of protesters emerging from a recently opened tin can. The message is deeply ambivalent. The im-

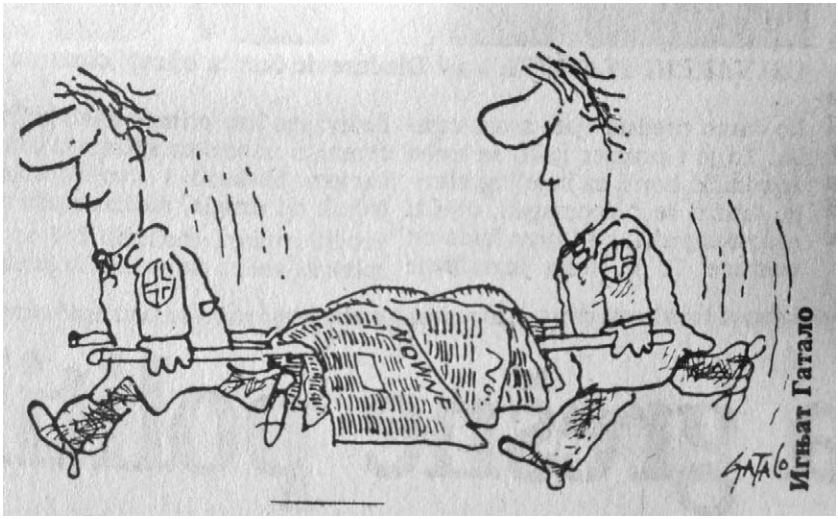

Figure 5.14. *Borba*, November 4, 1988, page 2, by Ignjat Gatalo

age could mean that the cartoon artist is either excited or concerned about the rise of protest, about the rise of "the people." Once let out of the can, what will "the people" do? There is no answer to this question: the punchline is left hanging. This communicates a much deeper uncertainty than what one could see in *Politika*. The cartoon does not mean to mobilize but invites reflection.

This type of ambivalence was intentional. As one cartoon artist told me: "Fuck cartoons for which you don't have a back-up explanation." In other words, cartoons with multiple interpretations are seen by cartoon artists as simply good examples of the craft. They were also better if the artist got into trouble with editors and politicians. Given the contrast between *Borba* and *Politika* analyzed in the previous chapter, it should not be surprising that similar cleavages appear on the terrain of cartoons. As another cartoon artist, who worked for both *Večernje novosti* and *Borba* told me, those cartoons that he could not publish in *Večernje novosti,* he would simply take a floor below, i.e., to *Borba* (the two newspapers had offices in the same building). In other words, the more ambitious, original, and artistic cartoon artists would all eventually find their way to *Borba*. Yet, it should be reiterated that this artistic and professional integrity did not mean that *Borba* abandoned producerist language. On the contrary, it was widely shared across the entire Serbian and Yugoslav public sphere.

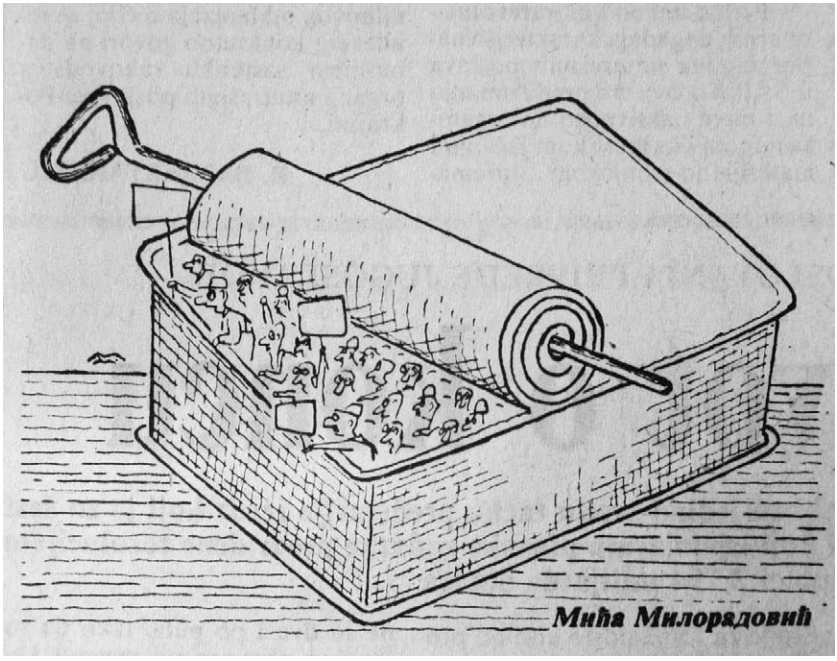

Figure 5.15. *Borba*, August 25, 1988, page 2, by Mileta Mica Miloradovic

Conclusion

This chapter analyzed the producerist language presented in cartoons during Serbia's anti-bureaucratic revolution. The key theme that emerges from the analysis is the juxtaposition of the blue-collar worker to the political functionary. The former is presented as productive and the latter as unproductive and parasitic. In particular, the functionary was often portrayed together with an armchair. In other words, he is an "armchair politician" (*foteljaš*) who is living comfortably while ordinary working people toil and struggle.

An investigation of political cartoons makes it possible to complement the findings of the previous chapter. Looking at the many letters published in the Serbian press, chapter 4 gave insights into how the populist construction of "the people" worked. Yet, it did not provide an answer as to *why* the people should be seen as "good" or why the elite should be seen as objectionable. Producerism makes it possible to fill in the blanks. It provides a compelling answer to the question why "the people" should be celebrated and the elite reviled. The visual vocabulary of the time proves to be quite sensi-

tive to this issue. This is a lesson of wider relevance: visual data such as cartoons may uncover things that textual sources cannot. The binary language of producerism could thus lend energy to the binary language of populism.

Some interesting differences between different newspapers emerged as well. The most important difference has to do with *Politika*. It supplemented the populist divide between worker and functionary with a new emphasis on protesting crowds. This new way of presenting "the people" was not in opposition to the older and more traditionally socialist representation of "the people." But it did indicate a step beyond the usual way of framing the populist divide between ordinary people and the elite. *Politika* raised the stakes by taking the conventional worker-functionary dichotomy and adding to this imagery the new emphasis on powerful and purposive crowds. Basically, this was a visual translation of "the people" constructed in the readers' letters section.

Producerism is important more broadly. Most of the existing literature that discusses producerism deals with late nineteenth-century America. This chapter tackled a very different case: the late socialist setting of Serbia in the 1980s. That producerism and populism appear to be coupled in such divergent cases suggests the wider relevance of the relationship. In the Serbian case, producerist attitudes derived in large part from the Marxist foundations of the regime. Ideas such as the labor theory of value and the base and superstructure model, once they found their way to the popular mainstream, led to widespread beliefs about what constitutes productive and unproductive work. But producerism continues to be relevant today. Competing versions of contemporary populism have tried to forge different producerist narratives of what counts as productive labor. Most obviously, the right-wing populism of the Tea Party locates the producers primarily among entrepreneurs and "job creators," while those living off government "hand-outs" are seen as parasites. Producerism continues to be relevant.

What is the link between this chapter and the book's theme of fractal populism? As the analysis showed, the Yugoslav version of producerism was broadly shared by newspapers across the political spectrum and by numerous cartoon artists. Therefore, one can conclude that producerism was accepted as a form of common sense for many in the Serbian public. This is important since it suggests that it is less artificial than the populist construction of "the people" analyzed in the previous chapter, i.e., the vision of "the people" as an active and homogenous social force constructed by *Politika* in "Echoes and Reactions." If populism is indeed a form of interaction between elite and mass actors in which elites are constantly inciting, amplifying, molding, and manipulating mass input, as is suggested in this book,

then the broad resonance of producerist themes in Serbian society suggests that this particular political vocabulary was rather organic to Yugoslav society as a whole. It did not require political instigation and manipulation to emerge and persist. It came rather naturally to the forefront. Most of the public already had anti-elite sentiments, even before the populist barrage of the late 1980s began. This compatibility between two social visions—both binary in their structure—made it possible for populism to borrow energy from producerism. Whether producerism can indeed be called more organic will be investigated in the next chapter, which turns to the long-run legacies of populism.

CHAPTER 6

Legacies of Populism

This final empirical chapter investigates the legacies of populism. It is interested in what remains after a populist episode has passed. What are the long-term ramifications of populism, especially with regard to people's opinions and attitudes? Once the dust has settled, what do people think of their own participation in such a moment of popular upheaval? What do people think about the emergence of "the people" both in the streets and in discourse? This chapter brings the entire populist episode of the late 1980s into the present. It is based on a total of six focus groups conducted with participants of one particular populist rally, the "yogurt revolution," in Novi Sad. The focus group setting makes it possible to revisit the data analyzed in the previous chapters pertaining to both populist mobilization and populist discourse: populist rallies, party sessions, letters to the press, and political cartoons. This way, a bottom-up perspective can be added to the entire story of Serbian populism. What do ordinary people now think about this populist episode, to which they themselves contributed?

The interactive character of the focus group, i.e., the fact that it aims to generate discussion between participants with different opinions, makes it a tool that is particularly apt for the study of populism. In particular, focus groups can engage in the process of "coming to terms with the past" or *Vergangeheitsbewältigung*, as the original German phrase calls it. This requires participants to critically examine their own role in the episode. As has been shown in previous chapters, populism has a distinct dark side. In particular, it is bound together with the issue of manipulation. As emphasized in the previous chapters, it is driven by a fractal pattern of elite-mass interaction in which elites are always inciting, amplifying, molding, and manipulating mass inputs. Do participants see it that way? Do they feel manipulated? Can they critically examine their own contribution? Although focus groups are

not therapy—indeed no research method should aim to be—they nevertheless provide a setting in which ordinary people can examine their actions with a critical eye.

The issue of individual involvement in a manipulative populist scenario is a sensitive one. Most scholarship on populism has steered clear of the issue of manipulation. Researchers associate a focus on manipulation with the older literature on populism, which was based on structural functionalism and "mass society" theory (e.g., Germani 1978). According to this older view, populism takes place when the "available masses"—which are anomic, poor, and unorganized—are mobilized for political gain by political elites. This approach is not problematic in its entirety, but subsequent analysts have moved away from it because it suggested that a "false" and a "correct" consciousness exist. It also appeared that participants were judged for adopting the former and participating in populism (de la Torre 2000; Filc 2011). Indeed, researchers would be wrong to moralize and reprimand people for taking part in a populist episode. This chapter has no such goal.

However, the question of manipulation remains. For many researchers of populism, manipulation should not be a topic of analysis. Though the fears of more recent analysts are well taken, avoiding the issue of manipulation makes the analysis blind to an important aspect of populism. Luckily, there is a simple solution to this problem: simply asking people if they feel they were manipulated. Or better yet, letting them bring the issue up themselves. Yet, it is surprising how rarely researchers of populism have actually engaged ordinary people. Most research on populism looks primarily at the supply side of populism, by focusing predominantly on the creation and content of populist discourse by politicians and parties. Research on the demand side of populism is rare, although survey-research on the strength of populist attitudes has become more popular in recent years (Akkerman et al. 2013; Elchardus and Spruyt 2016; Roodijn et al. 2016; Castanho Silva et al. 2017; van Hauwaert and van Kessel 2017; Schulz et al. 2017). Still missing, however, is research in which participants of populist episodes would be asked to recount their opinions in an in-depth manner. As the field of populism develops, it will be necessary to include a much more robust bottom-up element to the research agenda. Simply put, it is important to ask ordinary people—either through surveys, focus groups, or some other method—what they think about populism.

Investigating the long-run legacies of populism also helps to give weight to the comparison between populist mobilization and mobilization that occurs through typical social movements, movements that feature less elite involvement. In particular, the micro level is important: What is the impact

of participation on individuals and their subsequent trajectories? As research on the biographical consequences of collective action has showed, participation in social movements has empowering effects on individuals (McAdam 1989; Giugni 2007). This primarily relates to the movements that were formative for social movement scholarship, especially the "new left" movements of the 1960s. It has been shown that those who participated were more likely to take part in later episodes of activism. Populist mobilization is striking because it suggests the opposite. Those who participated in the Serbian populist episode seem to have turned to cynicism and apathy instead. After abruptly becoming politicized during the late 1980s, they have since returned to their private lives and have become politically disenchanted.

This aspect of populism's legacy brings into focus another phenomenon that deserves attention: the naivety on which populism depends. Once again, this may make some scholars of populism uneasy, but the analytical remedy is again simple: let ordinary participants speak. When they look back, do they think they were naive? Chapter 4 suggested that the populist discourse present in readers' letters seems naive to the contemporary reader. What would former participants, some of whom had read the letters regularly, now say? Do they see the populist discourse as convincing or not? The focus group is a setting in which such opinions can be discussed. Therefore, a focus on political naivety is not meant to condemn or moralize, only to understand.

This chapter's empirical findings put the entire populist package into perspective. Populism reveals itself to be a rather unhappy path toward an active political citizenry, toward an empowering political education. Just as the populism of the late 1980s brought "the people" into politics on a massive scale, it also sabotaged them in the long run. Thanks to populism, the base for an active political citizenry has shrunk, not expanded. Of course, many years have passed since the late 1980s. This means that it is not always easy to separate the legacies of those events from later shocks and disappointments. Present problems and nostalgic views of the past weigh down on most people. The only viable solution to this problem is to keep the group talking and flesh out as many aspects of their lives during socialism as possible. Even though the exact impact of their participation in populist politics on their current opinions—relative to the impact of subsequent events or contemporary troubles—cannot be specified, the late 1980s nevertheless remain the clear moment of their dramatic politicization. From a life of political passivity, they were suddenly thrown into politics. As such, the late 1980s remain a key starting point.

Overall, participants do not look kindly on the entire package of political

practices employed in the 1980s. As will be apparent later in this chapter, the sole element of the populist package that still resonates with people is the socialist discourse on producerism, analyzed in the previous chapter with the help of cartoons. The idea that political elites are lazy and parasitic still remains firmly entrenched, despite the passage of time.

Focus Groups

Focus groups provide a way for ordinary people to voice their opinions. This method was chosen because it can provide more in-depth insight into what ordinary participants think. Furthermore, this method is more inductive than a survey, which would have to decide upon particular questions. Focus groups provide more flexibility.

In addition, focus groups have one distinct advantage. They are not only collective but also interactive. A focus group succeeds if it can generate debate between individuals with different opinions. This makes it an apt tool to study the degree of consensus that surrounds controversial topics. Indeed, the collective and interactive character of focus groups is a unique strength of the method (Morgan and Krueger 1993). Such interaction between members of a focus group cannot be fully engineered. Moreover, once it occurs, it cannot be completely controlled either. Often, the researcher feels like they are holding a tiger by the tail (Bloor et al. 2001: 48). The goal is to try to create the conditions under which such interaction can unfold, while steering it away from a potentially destructive or harmful direction.

The focus group has other advantages, too. The interactive character of the focus group may be able to generate more honest answers, especially if participants react to each other in a spontaneous manner (Langord and McDonagh 2003: 20). Such spontaneity is possible because the focus group is a strongly inductive method. Participants are given certain tasks to focus on, but within this skeletal structure, they are free to bring up topics that matter to them (Morgan 1996: 142–43). The goal is to let themes arise in an organic way. In addition, focus groups make it possible for people to use the language they use in their everyday lives, whereas surveys or one-on-one interviews force a more formal language on them.

The main drawbacks of focus groups are their lack of replicability and representativeness (Stewart and Shamdasani 2015: 47–49). With regard to replicability, it should be noted that not even the same group of people could hold the same discussion twice, even if they tried. Therefore, replication is a goal that focus groups cannot reach. With regard to representative-

ness, the small number of people that take part in focus group research, even with a large number of groups, suggests that findings drawn from focus group discussions cannot be treated as representative of a wider population. Although efforts should be taken to include all relevant groups, a focus group is nevertheless not a survey and should not be judged according to the standards of another method. Rather, the focus group should be used as a tool that can deepen our understanding of a phenomenon, in particular by highlighting the various views that surround a controversial topic, and by giving people an opportunity to present their opinions in their own words. They give research a bottom-up element of popular participation.

A single populist rally was selected as the main locus of research: the "yogurt revolution" that took place in early October of 1988 in Novi Sad, the capital of Vojvodina. This event was already discussed in chapters 2 and 3. Since focus group discussion can go in multiple directions, focusing on a single event provides a way to keep at least certain aspects of the discussion constant. In addition, the "yogurt revolution" is one of the best known rallies of the entire anti-bureaucratic revolution. This means that it is still remembered as an important event in the recent political history of Serbia in general and Vojvodina in particular. There are few events that stand out in quite the same way for the entire course of the anti-bureaucratic revolution. In addition, it holds the proper mix of bottom-up and top-down elements, as it was both spontaneous and planned, both driven by mass discontent and by elite involvement. This makes it a good microcosm of the larger populist phenomenon, with its fractal pattern of elite-mass entanglement.

A total of six focus groups were conducted in the town of Novi Sad, with a combined thirty-four participants. Is this enough? There is no strict rule about the proper number of focus groups, but for most social science purposes, saturation occurs after five to six groups (Morgan 1996: 144). In my research, themes began to repeat by the third group. With regard to group size, there is once again no firm rule, as focus groups can have anywhere from four to twelve participants. In the social sciences, smaller group size is usually preferable (Bloor et al. 2001: 27). Smaller groups provide a less intimidating setting for participants. In addition, smaller group size reduces the chances of a particularly dominant individual taking over the debate. A total of thirty-four people took part in six groups. Thus, the average group had about six members. The smallest had four and the largest seven.

In order to reach out to potential participants, an advertisement was placed in the local newspaper *Dnevnik*, as well as a local newspaper that publishes small personal and business advertisements. Flyers were printed and placed in busy locations, such as post offices. After a television journalist

noticed the newspaper ad, I was given a chance to appear on local television. Participants were also asked to inquire with their friends and acquaintances. All in all, the most effective tool for outreach was the ad in *Dnevnik*. However, the fact that it reached a large number of people had certain downsides as well. In particular, it caught the eye of a small right-wing party, whose leader made a public appeal that the research be stopped. Luckily, this incident had little long-term impact, though a few participants decided to withdraw. Nevertheless, it is a reminder that the anti-bureaucratic revolution is still politically controversial in Serbia and that researchers should remain cautious.

Each person was offered modest monetary compensation for their participation. Monetary rewards present their own trade-offs. Their main advantage is that they strengthen the position of the researcher (Bloor et al. 2001: 34). This is useful in terms of establishing a certain amount of authority at the beginning of the focus group and refocusing the discussion when it strays off topic or becomes exceedingly unruly. The downside of the method is that it may appear immoral, especially to hostile outsiders, such as the right-wing party mentioned above. In addition, some people may try to take part solely because of the money. Each participant was screened by a research assistant to see if they really were present at the rally. Although complete certainty with regard to this problem is impossible, the level of detail that participants recalled with regard to the "yogurt revolution" suggests that these memories were indeed authentic.

Although focus groups are not representative of a wider population, efforts were undertaken to include a mixture of men and women, old and young, blue-collar and white-collar workers. The largest difficulty was reaching out to women. Out of the thirty-four participants, only five were women. It is quite possible that this gender imbalance is reflective of the anti-bureaucratic revolution itself. Indeed, photographs from the time suggest that crowds were overwhelmingly male. And as the previous chapter on cartoons showed, discourses surrounding the protests were also centered around men. Therefore, the gender imbalance in the focus groups may reflect the broader character of the anti-bureaucratic revolution. During focus groups, women and men did not present very different opinions, which suggests that nothing dramatically different would have surfaced had more women taken part.

Each focus group lasted between sixty and ninety minutes. The structure was similar in all cases. The focus group began with excerpts from a documentary film about the anti-bureaucratic revolution. This was intended as a way to make participants more comfortable as well as jog their memories.

The first topic of discussion was the day of the event. Participants were asked to remember how they found themselves at the rally. The second topic was to discuss the pluses and minuses of the "yogurt revolution." By this point, most had already conveyed their negative opinion of the episode, which meant that they had to be asked if there were also any positive aspects. Next, they were asked to read and comment on several letters published in "Echoes and Reactions" and several political cartoons. They were also asked to read excerpts from Milošević's speech held at the September session of the Serbian party (discussed in chapter 3). Toward the end of the focus group, I asked them if they have taken part in other protests since the "yogurt revolution." With slight modifications, this structure was used in all focus groups. I decided to depart from this structure only exceptionally, when it seemed that the flow of discussion would be impaired by trying to impose a more rigid structure.

Populist Mobilization and Its Discontents

The ice-breaker in all focus groups was to discuss the day of the protest. How did each participant arrive in the center of Novi Sad on October 5th, the day of the "yogurt revolution"? As many participants recounted, they went to the protest as part of a larger group, usually from their place of work. Large industrial firms were particularly important because they could deliver a lot of bodies, thereby significantly increasing turnout. Managers did not explain in much detail why workers should stop work and head downtown. As one worker remembered:

> Respondent: We came to work and, as usual, we start working, and all. At 9, the boss comes in, a meeting of working people, he gathered all the workers at the meeting, at 10 we all leave together. At this time *Novkabel* had 5 thousand workers, one shift had 1500 workers.
> Interviewer: How did you go? By bus, by foot?
> Respondent: By foot, by foot.
> Interviewer: And the protest signs were given to you?
> Respondent: Everything was organized, ready, distributed to people that went, and so on.

This experience was common. In some settings, people expressed a strong desire to go. In other cases, they were indifferent, while in certain instances they were pressured to attend. For example, one person says: "I have to ad-

mit that many workers pressured [the management] to go. I don't say all of them, but some of them. Like, what are we waiting for, it's happening . . . And then around 11, the news came that we are allowed to go if we want. And, of course, we all left the factory. As to whether we all got to the rally, I have no idea." Another worker frankly admitted that they were ready to pressure those who did not want to go: "I personally made things very uncomfortable for them . . . when they did not want to go [to the meeting] . . . it's not correct to say that there was no pressure, at some places there was, others there wasn't. . . . Who did not want to go, there were firings and all kinds of things." Therefore, some wanted to go, others did not and had to be coerced.

Some participants were merely curious or interested in having a break from work. Several were high school students at the time. As one of them remembered, the entire school was asked to stop class and go to the rally: "The school director came . . . and he said that the police had announced that all schools in the center of town were to close and head to the committee of Vojvodina, organized, this means all professors who happened to be in class, and watch the children while the meeting lasted." Some of the schoolchildren were given special tasks, such as carrying a protest sign: "He gave a sign to me and two other guys, a sign that was too heavy for five, but anyway, the three of us have to be at the front of the crowd, as we go to Novi Sad by foot. Why? We are going to bring down the autonomist government [*autonomaši*, i.e., Vojvodina leadership]. You have no choice, so you go, right?" Another participant was a teacher. They agreed to take the children out, but then told them to go home. He stayed at the rally in order to make sure all students had indeed left. Here is another exchange about the participation of children:

> Respondent: I was in the second year of high school when it happened . . . So, no class, the entire school leaves the building.
> Interviewer: How did the professors explain it to you, that you were going to the rally?
> Respondent: Simply, when we got to class, they told us we are all going to the streets, to bring this [government] down. This is no longer any good. In those words.

As can be seen, in instances of populist mobilization, it is not seen as inappropriate to enlist children. Along with large firms from Novi Sad and surrounding towns, schools were an important reservoir of protest participants.

Shady organizers were important, too. Along with the police, the secret police was involved, too. One person recounted that they were particularly

important in putting pressure on factory directors to make sure their workers came to the rally: "They came with their Motorola phones so that the provincial police could not eavesdrop, and, I don't know, they went to Topola, Palanka, where they prepared things, mostly directors and people in positions [of power]. My brother took part in this dishonorable [activity], he brought people from Zrenjanin, he was ordered to do so, he was a financial director there, he had three young girls, and it was 'either you will do it or you are out.' I did not ask him questions; he was probably ashamed to talk." This story suggests that there was a lot of behind-the-scenes organizing. But there was also a great deal of honest enthusiasm. As one person remembered, there was a worker who would run through the factory with a flag and rile people up to go to the rally. People cried at the sight of the Kosovo Serbs who had arrived by train. The workers of some firms, such as *Jugoalat* and *Majevica*, were enthusiastically taking a leading role in the speeches and the organization of the event.

But the involvement of regime institutions makes the populist rally rather unusual. As one person noted, the police were not really there to do their usual job: "I was afraid of the police. When you get to a protest, you try to be as far away as possible, you might be hit by a baton. But they [the police] are completely relaxed, like they already know who the winner is." In other words, the populist rally is different from a more contentious event. Such traces of regime involvement cannot always be hidden. Cracks will show, as chapters 3 and 4 showed, too. The manipulative aspects of the rally have left a bad taste in many people's mouths. Even those that subscribed to the goals of the "yogurt revolution," and still do so today, admit that they were manipulated, as this rather heated exchange shows:

> Until half past 1, when did they resign, we sat there until 3, half past 3, and then let's go home and back to work.
> You drank, you drank. I have to stop you.
> I never had a drink my whole life.
> It doesn't matter, it doesn't matter. Why didn't Serbs from here and Serbs from Serbia gather in all those buses and go there [to Kosovo] and help Serbs? Why were they helping them from Novi Sad?
> Somebody had to lead them there.
> How do you not see that you were manipulated?
> Partly, yes.
> Well, why didn't we get into buses and go down there . . . I literally feel sick when I hear such things.

The issue of manipulation comes up repeatedly. For many, they were not fully aware that the protest was used as a chip in inter-elite conflicts, a fact that they have subsequently come to resent. As one participant, who at the time was only a high school student, said: "We are turning to the west and that's it. Let's tear down these communists and begin a normal life. But in the end, it turned out to be a conflict within the party." Even older participants, who were not interested in shaking off communist rule, feel resentment, even shame, for the way they were used politically: "I was sad that I took part in something so dishonorable." Another participant similarly admitted: "I now deeply regret that I took part in that. I think I bear part of the responsibility as a participant." As mentioned earlier, one of the goals of the focus groups was to try to induce a process of "coming to terms with the past." However, this also posed an ethical dilemma: participants should not be shamed in any way. As the quotes above show, most of the participants were quite ready to bring up the topic by themselves.

People feel both guilt for taking part and resentment for being manipulated: "I think about the way I was made a fool, an ass, how can I explain it to you? And now I . . . what was I trying to bring down, what did I have against the socialist province of Vojvodina, when I think about it now?" One of the most startling confessions that took place in the focus groups was from a former member of the secret police who came to the focus group precisely because he wanted to get certain things off his chest. As he said, he was present in the crowd, but his involvement also continued in the aftermath of the "yogurt revolution":

> The real yogurt revolution was implemented through ideational-political differentiation . . . I took part in one such differentiation [i.e., purge], and I could not sleep; this was the only period in my life when I could not sleep normally. We were supposed to give suggestions about what to do with people, what measures [punishment] we were going to give [to people], party measures . . . This lasted for a month or two. We had meetings all night, lies, fabrications, all kinds of things.

This particular person readily admitted to taking part in the purges that ruined many people's careers, following the events of early October. For most participants, their involvement was limited to being a body in the crowd. Yet, even this was sufficient for many to feel a degree of guilt. In this respect, most of the participants who came to the focus groups were quite ready to "come to terms with the past." Indeed, it seems they felt the need very strongly. No prodding from me was required.

Populist Discourse and Its Discontents

Participants were also asked to consider populist discourse by reading several letters from "Echoes and Reactions" and by looking at several cartoons. What do they now think about readers' letters analyzed in chapter 4? Many remembered that they had read these letters at the time. As one person said: "I read them. I had to. Well, I didn't have to. They interested me." As this person shows, there is a bit of unease admitting that you used to read the letters willingly. Another person also remembered reading the letters with interest: "I know I did, massively [read the letters]. We read *Dnevnik* . . . And then with this propaganda, we who were nationally more passionate, we stopped buying *Dnevnik* and started reading the Belgrade press [*Politika*]." Another person noted similarly:

> Those letters, yes, I remember the letters from readers. And we read them. I do not want to talk in everybody's name, but I thought of myself as advanced, progressive, a fighter for some sort of better tomorrow. And we supported those who wrote the letters, supported the paper, at least me, when I read it, if there were attacks on our autonomist leadership. I wish they would come back now [laughter]. I was with them [the letters] and cursed the autonomist leadership. That was the way it was . . . but now nobody can influence me, no politics.

As this person states, he read the letters and identified with the viewpoints presented therein. But this is no longer the case. They also noted that the letters are "a monument to my stupidity." In other words, they are no longer persuaded by the content of the letters. Other participants were similarly unimpressed by the letters.

> What do you think about this when you read it today?
> Complete nonsense.
> Pure propaganda.
> Of course, this was all part of the plan.

As this short exchange shows, the populist discourse in the letters is unconvincing to today's readers. It is seen as propaganda, instrumentalized for political purposes. The talk of "the people" was also something that participants did not find convincing. One person directly challenged the possibility that "the people" really can be a unified and homogenous actor. As they asked: "What is the people? Do the people ever really de-

cide anything? The people never really decide anything." Not only was the content unconvincing, but several participants commented how the letters seemed artificial. As one person said: "This seems set-up to me, organized. I don't know what to say. That somebody would have this kind of courage, to publish something like this . . . but as you say, this was serious business at the time." Another person also expressed the same thought— namely, that the letters were not genuine: "Yes, I remember this; there were some [letters] that were real and some that were set up." Another exchange suggests the same:

> Respondent: This was written by three journalists.
> Interviewer: You think so?
> Respondent: Absolutely, look at this.
> Interviewer: You think the letter is not authentic?
> Respondent: This was a journalist, who was for Milošević. This one, too. Journalists who write speeches.

However, their reactions were different when they were given political cartoons with the producerist themes described in chapter 5. These cartoons not only resonated with them, but they also proved to be amusing. This is especially the case with regard to the armchair politician (*foteljaš*), the bureaucrat who is always sitting in his armchair: "He sticks like glue to the arm-chair, twenty years and does not leave until retirement." One person remembered that the arm-chair was not something that appeared only in newspapers. They also carried an armchair at the protest, like a protest sign: "It was carried by my friend from Bečej [laughter], on a pole, an old arm-chair." It was a way to make fun of politicians. Participants also saw that it symbolized unproductive and parasitic work:

> The mayor, the provincial secretary, if they are not doing their job right, if they do not lead the town, if they sit and nothing is happening in town [laughter]. Everybody else works.
> Down with the armchair politicians. We are fighting the bureaucracy. Those were our slogans.
> And even today, here, in Croatia, too, everywhere I am sure, they say: "he has settled into his armchair and doesn't give a damn." And maybe he is not sitting in an armchair, maybe he is sitting in some other chair. But that is the way it is . . .
> among the people.

This exchange shows that the armchair politician is seen in terms of unproductive labor. Others have to do the work. It also suggests that the

armchair theme is seen as something which is widely present, at least in the former Yugoslavia, even to this day. And furthermore, participants recognize that the armchair should not be taken literally. It is only a symbol. The actual chair that the politician sat in is irrelevant. But the vision of the armchair politician was something that was—and still is—present "among the people." The theme is seen as something of a folk theory of politics. Participants also recognized that the armchair theme was something that divided society into two classes:

> You can't say down with the workers, but down with the armchair politicians. He is the one who is up there; he is the problem, not the worker down there.
>
> The government was distant from the people then, too. Workers were the lower class. People now think that workers lived wonderfully then. Managers were alienated [from workers]. They were in a much better position. They got apartments more easily. They had higher salaries. Workers were humiliated even then. Always. Even on workers' councils. They fixed the rankings for apartments, the points . . . The privileged caste of officials, and the workers were the lower class according to rights, salaries, everything.
>
> Yes, but it was 4:1 [salary ratio].
>
> I know, but the manager did not live off his salary then, like he does not today.

In other words, the producerist language of the time is recognized as something that breaks society into two groups, the workers and the managers. And furthermore, the manager was then, and is now, alienated from workers. This exchange notes the continuity of relations between ordinary people and the armchair elites. The armchair theme is still very much alive: "This cartoon could have been drawn in 2016 [laughter]." Or similarly: "Everything is the same. It doesn't matter if this is 1985 or 2016." The following exchange similarly shows that people continue to see the elite as essentially similar to the parasitic elite of the late socialist period:

> Today, the armchair politicians are ministers in the government.
>
> Only their names are different.
>
> Government ministers are armchair politicians, mayors, too, at least I see them that way. They sit there and sleep.
>
> And read newspapers.
>
> And that, too, of course. When you sit down, it's very difficult to get out. There were also arm-chair politicians then, to be clear [in the

> 1980s]. Well, alright, Krunić and his like, but they were armchair politicians less than these [politicians] today.

This person actually sees the contemporary political elite as more parasitic than the one from the late 1980s. The next person echoes this sentiment: "A child of an armchair bureaucrat knew that they would get a good job no matter what school they finished. Armchair bureaucrats were people who could completely take care of their family. But they stole and gave to others, too, so that you could not see it [that they stole]. Now, they steal and don't ask anybody anything." Once again, there is continuity since the contemporary elite is also seen as armchair bureaucrats. The difference is that they do not distribute the gains to the wider population. Correspondingly, workers now have much less prestige:

> The worker has no rights [today].
> What worker!?
> The worker was respected much more then. Up until the nineties.
> Because Tito was a metal worker, too. What was he? A turner?
> A machinist.

All in all, the producerist language of the time lives on. The armchair theme still resonates and continues to provoke a great deal of amusement. Therefore, its power to ridicule politicians and elites has not been diminished since the 1980s. In contrast to the populist discourse in "Echoes and Reactions," the producerist armchair theme continues to be relevant for ordinary people in Serbia. This shows its stronger roots in popular attitudes, its more organic nature. The discourse present in "Echoes and Reactions," on the other hand, is seen as artificial and propagandist. Even those who had read the letters with interest at the time, now see them as unconvincing and fake.

The Fog of Economic Nostalgia

A constant feature of all focus groups was nostalgia for the economic security of the socialist period. Current economic hardships are what most presses on people and what they most feel the need to talk about. Of course, this is informative in itself and speaks to life in contemporary Serbia and former Yugoslavia more broadly. However, it is an obstacle if the researcher is interested in the events of the late 1980s and their subsequent impact. The

cure, once again, is in the discussion process itself. If the discussion proceeds far enough, respondents will work through their contemporary grievances and get them "out of their system." Once this takes place, they also begin to bring up some of the economic difficulties of the 1980s. The fog of economic nostalgia can be lifted.

Out of the many instances in which participants lament on the current economic situation, several examples can be provided. As one person succinctly put it: "I had everything, Marko, I lived like an American, unlike today when I live like a beggar." Or similarly:

> Living standards began rapidly to fall. Then I realized that my grandpa wasn't wrong that he didn't like communists, but that it was much better with the infamous machinist Tito than with all these other democrats, pro-Europeans and so on.
> That's right.
> And now I would send them all to hell.

A common theme that appeared in the discussions was the ability to travel that characterized the socialist period. As many participants noted, they had enough money to travel for leisure: "In the evening, we go out to Panter [a bar in Novi Sad]. And look, we were students. This was a little earlier, 1983, 1984, 1985. You need a pair of jeans and you talk to your friend. I need to go shopping. She wants to buy shoes and some other things. Look, we go out at night at 8 or 9. We go home, take our passports and take 200, 300, 500 [German] marks. And you have this much at home. You tell your mom and dad: We are going to Trieste tonight. We meet at Panter for another drink and drive all night. And now, nothing." Going to Trieste, Italy, in order to buy clothing and shoes was common for many Yugoslavs. It was a recurring theme in the focus groups. It is seen as a sign of the relative affluence that characterized the socialist period. Another person echoed these sentiments:

> I lived like somebody who was able to live, who had the right to live. I was a good worker, an honest worker, I respected that . . . You could go anywhere, to the seaside, to Plitvice [national park in Croatia], to sleep, nobody would bother you, ask you who you were . . . To eat for 3 marks, a group of us 10, in Hungary, for example.
> You mentioned Plitvice. Why don't you go now?
> That's what I want to say. We are reduced to . . .
> Bare survival.
> It's doubtful if we can buy a loaf of bread.

Another common theme that appears in the discussion is the industrial strength of Novi Sad in the 1980s. Novi Sad had many large firms, which employed a large number of blue-collar workers, metal workers in particular. One person tried to count all the large companies in the metal sector of Novi Sad: "*Novkabel* had 5,500 workers, *8. Mart* had 2,500 workers. *Pobeda* another 6,000. Only metalworking, I am talking only about metal. *Petar Drapšin*, 1,500 to 3,000 workers. *Jugoalat*, *Jugodent*, 1,500 to 2,000 workers . . . In Novi Sad there was 28,000 metal workers. That's how many there were. Successful. They were great firms, successful, exporters. I think that 90 percent of them were exporters. Now there are 300 workers, 100 in *Novkabel*. In the other firms, nobody works." People still vividly remember the streams of people that commuted to industrial zones each day: "For example, if you were from the industrial zone. In the morning at two, half past two when you were going home, it was rivers of people, cars, buses. The economy worked." When they talk about the current state of the industrial zone, they only say that it is "sadness and misery."

However, if the discussion proceeded far enough or if they were probed a little, respondents were also able to recall some of the difficulties of life during socialism. As one person said: "Yes, discontent of the people. The standard of living wasn't great. It was a lot better than now, but it wasn't great, no. It wasn't easy to get a job. It was much better than now, but to say that there was wealth, no. That was the germ for something to happen in that regime." Or, as the following exchange shows, people in particular remember the shortages that constrained their consumer choices:

> I remember 1982 or 1983, when my first son was born, there was nothing in the stores.
> Yes, that's right. It was odds-evens [i.e., rules about which registration plates were allowed to buy petrol during shortages.]
> Coffee, diapers, milk, detergent.
> Odds-evens.
> For gas.
> There was nothing [in the stores]. You couldn't buy a nipple for baby bottles.

In other words, it is not impossible to reconstruct a fuller picture of life under socialism. People still have the memories that enable them do so. But researchers have to work a little harder if they want respondents to free themselves of the rosy glasses that usually color people's memories of socialism. In terms of trying to focus solely on the long-run legacies of participation in the populist politics of the 1980s, the economic nostalgia

is an obstacle. It is not possible to say with total certainty whether the anti-bureaucratic revolution is seen in a negative light because of the way participants feel about the event itself or because of the fall in living standards that began soon after. However, it is a little easier to separate these two aspects when the discussion turns to the political side of the anti-bureaucratic revolution. In other words, this difficulty can be worked around by asking more targeted questions about the political ramifications of the anti-bureaucratic revolution. Once respondents have gotten the economic complaints "out of their system," discussion can proceed. The next two sections deal with these political aspects in more detail.

One final point is in order with regard to the intertwining of the political and the economic aspect. Nowadays, people would be willing to forsake their formal political freedoms if they could receive a degree of economic security. As one person puts it: "I would most like it if somebody governed whom I didn't know, but I had the means to live. To pay what I have to and do what I have to. And so long. What do I care if you are in power or you are?" This particular person is nostalgic about the pre-political state that characterized the socialist period. They want a return to economic security and are willing to renounce their political life. Given the economic hardships of the last two or more decades, it is not unusual that people crave economic security. Another person summed it up by saying that "you should bow your head like a horse if you want to live like a man." The current system pacifies people politically by taking away economic security. Of course, it would serve no purpose to admonish participants for being so ready to give up their formal political freedoms in exchange for a dose of economic security. Rather, it may be more fruitful to see economic security as a prerequisite for political engagement.

From Pacification to Politicization and Back

For many, the late 1980s were a time of political awakening. From a state of political disinterest, they were suddenly politicized. Politics entered their lives in an unprecedented way. As one participant noted: "Absolutely, since then politics is all people do. It entered our lives then and has not left since." Another person echoed this sentiment: "Politics entered all pores, families, individuals, society." This was an abrupt change. Prior to the late 1980s, politics was not of much interest: "Look, if somebody asked you in 1985 who the president of some committee was, I guarantee that nobody in Belgrade would know. We were depoliticized to such a degree and later so polarized,

like you say." With the final years of socialist Yugoslavia, the people started paying a lot more attention to politics.

Key triggers were party sessions. Chapter 3 emphasized the importance of party sessions for the dynamics of the protest wave. Their importance can also be seen in the way they structured the daily lives of ordinary people. When asked about them, many participants remembered watching them on television or listening to them on the radio: "It was interesting. While Tito was alive, they [party sessions] were not on television. They wrote about them and talked about them [later]. Now you could see it, it was interesting." Many were glued to their television sets when an important session was taking place:

> I watched each and every party session.
> We all did.
> [laughter]
> Everything was politicized.

Another person noted similarly: "You could watch the assembly day and night." Several party sessions stand out in particular. People remember the eighth session of the Serbian party, which took place in September of 1987. It was the first important party session that was televised. People recall it for the conflicts between various party factions: "when they tore into each other in the most awful way." The other party session that most people recall is the 14th congress of the federal party, held in January of 1990. At this party session, delegations from Slovenia and Croatia walked out in protest after a confrontation with Milošević, signaling the end of the Yugoslav party. Watching this party session, "we [Serbs] rooted for the Serbs, Croats for the Croats, Slovenians for the Slovenians." These two party sessions are the bookends to a turbulent political period that brought many previously apathetic citizens into politics.

One of the tasks given to participants in focus groups was to read excerpts from the speech that Milošević held at the session of the Serbian party, held in September 1988. As chapter 3 showed, this session was an important turning point in the evolution of the protest wave. Like readers' letters, this speech left participants unimpressed. As one person said: "To me, this is rock-bottom." Though people were not enthusiastic about the speech, they admitted that Milošević would "say what the people want to hear" and present it as "the will of the people, the wish of the people." The following exchange reveals this commonly expressed attitude toward Milošević:

Populism. Pure.
This is nonsense.
This is amusement for the rabble.
The same thing that they do nowadays.

It is interesting to note that participants use the word "populism." However, by this, they mean demagogy and pandering, telling the people what they want to hear. As this short conversation shows, people see a continuity between Milošević and contemporary politicians. The difference is that, nowadays, people are not ready to be drawn in so easily. Back then, Milošević's strategy had worked. As participants remembered, his popularity at the time could not be disputed:

He said what he said a few times, and the people put him next to [religious] icons, which is a sin, God forbid.
Although he was a communist.
Yes [laughter].
Terrible sin. At weddings, you could not avoid nationalist songs, on religious holidays [slave], at celebrations. And Slobo's picture had to be as large as possible.
That's right.
He captivated everybody with his charisma, he had style [šlif], he had class [šmek].

This exchange points to the fact that Milošević enjoyed a great deal of popularity during the anti-bureaucratic revolution. In the contemporary climate, there is much less enthusiasm for any political leader, Milošević included. Indeed, most of the participants of focus groups protect themselves from disappointment by adopting a cynical attitude toward politics in general. In the current political context, Milošević has lost all relevance. It is not so much the case that Milošević is actively criticized by ruling politicians and others in the public sphere, but more that he is simply ignored. He has been dusted aside as if he had never existed. This also means that participants are relatively free to bring forward their opinions of him, whatever they may be. This is advantageous for researchers, since it makes it easier for participants to voice their opinions in an honest way. All in all, he no longer has much sway over people. In this, he is treated much the same as any subsequent politician. They are all seen as similar since they all eventually betrayed ordinary people. Such an approach further strengthens a cynical attitude toward politics.

This cynical attitude was evident in many focus groups. As one person said: "We thought we could change something. We changed only the names

[of those in power]." There is very little trust in politicians: "There is nobody honest in politics, they are all crooks." Or, similarly: "I am sick of politicians. Honestly, I do not trust a single one of them." This contrasts strongly to their attitudes from the late 1980s. For example, one person noted how he idolized Mihalj Kertes, a local populist politician and ally of Milošević: "I was 46 years old, and I acted like I was 15 or 10, listening to this Kertes, like I see God in him. I had a university education, and I listen to him and follow him like sheep. Charge! We should charge on the bunker, if necessary!" This statement is interesting for the way this person admits their naivety, a naivety that they now have a hard time understanding. Others admitted something similar: "I was literally infected; I would call it some sort of infection." Or, similarly: "It was something new for us, some sort of magic, the government is being brought down." In other words, some participants readily admit that they were acting with a degree of naivety. They were swept up.

Their current attitude has swung to the other extreme. Instead of uncritical support for a populist politician, they now reject politics in its entirety. They have become passive, retreating into their private lives. The following person summed it up as follows:

> It was a complete fraud. I felt like Wile E. Coyote. Next time, when they were bringing down Milošević, it was also orchestrated, and I will never again go [to another protest]. I think about myself, I have to earn some money, eat something, drink something. Eat a pizza, a piece of meat, earn something, spend it all quickly, so that I don't regret anything if the system of the Euro goes down. In principle, I live from today until tomorrow. I vote, but I don't discuss politics. In socialism, I now think that the system was nobler than what we have today, which is idiotic and perverse. That one [socialism] was only idiotic. And I will never again go into that kind of mass.

This person's level of disenchantment is particularly high. The scars that they carry are not only from the anti-bureaucratic revolution but also the turbulent transition since then. They have turned away from politics completely and cannot be brought back in. Their only satisfactions are private. Indeed, they are now extremely skeptical of anything with a collective dimension. As they said: "Other people have it even worse, what do I care, they should struggle for themselves." For many participants, the anti-bureaucratic revolution was the first instance of politicization they experienced and the beginning of the end of their apolitical lives. As many have since realized, a complete return to a sheltered, unpolitical life is not possible. Instead, they have become cynical, disenchanted, and bitter.

Creating Political Citizens?

All in all, what kind of political citizen does populism help to create? The previous two sections already provided some answers. This final section gives more detail about the way in which participants in focus groups talked about their role as citizens. One of the final questions that I would ask each focus group was about subsequent protests. Did they take part in other protests after the "yogurt revolution"? There was a wide variety of answers, but for many, this event was one of only a handful, or even the only protest which they attended. Here is one exchange that showcases their lack of interest in protests:

> When I listen to Šešelj at these rallies, I don't see his program, of his party. But, only we-we-we. Then I go and listen to Vuk [Drašković], the same. I don't hear the program of his party, what will he do to get us out of this? When I listen to Pajtić, the same . . . And so I realized that it is dumb to go, I lose an hour, two hours, I can get my head bashed in, since there are drunk people there, that I have witnessed a hundred times.
> What's left then? Gay parades, damn it?
> [laughter]
> What's left, what should we support?
> These who organize meetings now, that's no good.
> What does a meeting mean in the twenty-first century? We are talking about the last century. What is a meeting now? Who would care? Support for what? For who?

As this conversation shows, not only are people not inclined to take part, but they have a very limited perspective regarding political activism: it is about supporting an agenda that some political party offers. A protest is seen as a party rally, in which the crowd is by necessity rather passive. The possibility of taking a more active role in a social movement does not arise. Other movements, such as the gay movement, are not seen as something of relevance for ordinary citizens. For many, the central fear is that they would once again be manipulated: "I didn't go [to other protests]. There were opportunities, far from it. I didn't want to be manipulated." Or similarly: "I will never again go anywhere [to other protests]. I will not allow somebody to take a million Euros while I think to myself that I matter. I am blind, pathetic, small, I can't change anything." Far from instilling a sense of political efficacy, populism seems to contribute to the opposite, a sense of political weakness.

Some participants spoke of the behind-the-scenes organizing as some-

thing that taints the image of large protests: "I think that each large protest is orchestrated by some [secret] service. The people never carry that out by themselves. It's impossible to gather that many people without orchestration." Their experience with the "yogurt revolution," where certain shady actors played an organizing role, makes them skeptical of large protests. In addition, feelings of guilt seem to make some people very cautious about whom they give their support to: "I did not go [to other protests]. I was afraid that I would make another mistake [laughter]. Because I feel guilty." The guilt that some feel also feeds into the general pacification and sense of political weakness that they describe.

But the economic situation matters, too. Economic hardship makes it more difficult to be active politically. As one person said: "I did not go [to other protests]. I went to work to earn money. And not waste time when everything is the same and only worse over time." Various economic crises, which have hit the country in the last three decades, have made it more and more difficult to have an active political life. As shown earlier, people worry primarily about getting by. For most participants, the primary advantage of socialism was economic: unlike the current regime, it gave them economic security. But at times, participants in focus groups also recalled that socialism had certain politically empowering effects, which are now absent. Here is one exchange that points toward this political aspect:

> Respondent: The people are afraid.
> Interviewer: Today?
> Respondent: Today.
> Interviewer: And you feel it wasn't like that before?
> Respondent: We were not afraid. The people have had it up to here; they are in one big awful depression. General, collective.
> Interviewer: And you think this depression did not exist before?
> Respondent: Well, there was less of it, much less.

Although the regime did not formally provide for freedom of expression, assembly, or voting, as the current one does, it nevertheless made people feel politically more empowered. They were citizens with a sense of pride. They were not collectively "depressed," like they are now. The socialist regime may not have implemented all its lofty promises, but many of "the working people" came to believe that they were as important as the regime kept telling them. Furthermore, some participants noticed that a sense of social solidarity existed at the time, something that has since been lost. One person

recalled a recent television commercial in which a woman asks to borrow detergent from her neighbor:

> I saw a commercial the other day, for some detergent. And I think to myself, when was the last time one of you asked for something [from your neighbors], like, give me some sugar, or coffee?
> She comes in with the sour face! [laughter]
> That was completely normal, you don't have coffee, you go the neighborhood.
> My mom sent me . . .
> Nowadays, you don't say hello to your neighbor.
> That collective depression was not there. You don't have any, doesn't matter, you'll give it back, or you won't. Because in a week she will take five from you, and you took three, and so it goes in circles."

This particular discussion is not about populism per se, but about a comparison of life under socialism and capitalism. Something has been lost, something that was important for the daily lives of ordinary people. This sense of solidarity and trust that participants talk about made it possible to create a society that did not suffer from "collective depression," as the participants call the contemporary malaise. The tragedy of populist mobilization in the Serbian case is that it used this underlying social fabric in a way that helped to usher in a society in which people trust each other much less. Naturally, the populism of the late 1980s is not the sole culprit for this outcome. However, for many in Serbia, the anti-bureaucratic revolution was the first episode of political activism that they were involved with. Instead of empowering them, it showed them that politics is a dirty business and nothing more. It convinced them that they are important only as pawns in somebody else's game. As a source of political education, populism is deeply problematic. It cannot help nurture and create political citizens in the full sense of the word.

Conclusion

This chapter brought the entire episode of the late 1980s into the present. It investigated the long-term legacies of populism, with special focus on the way it has helped to shape individual political attitudes and orientations. Populism is not just important for the way it helps to propel a period of mobilization or the way it shapes political discourse in a given point in time.

It also matters in the long run. Once the dust has settled, what is left in its wake? In particular, what do ordinary participants of a populist episode think of their own involvement? Can they engage in a process of critical self-examination and "come to terms" with their own populist past? How has their participation in a populist episode shaped their outlook on politics? This chapter aimed to flesh out answers to these questions by conducting focus groups.

Of course, no research should try to play the role of psychological therapy. The social scientist should not try to engage in something that they have not been trained for. Yet, one of the main goals of the focus groups was to try to get people to open up and talk critically about their own roles in an uneasy and controversial period of Serbia's political history. Ethically, this is rather sensitive, as no participant should be made to feel shame. Interestingly, however, most participants openly discussed their own sense of responsibility, even guilt. Little to no prodding was required from me as the moderator. Therefore, it seems that most participants were quite ready to engage critically with their own past.

What emerges from the often lively discussions of focus groups? There are several conclusions that seem warranted. For many, the manipulation that is inherent to populism has made them feel like they were simply cogs in a wheel. They resent the fact that they were instrumentalized. Some even see their former selves as naive and gullible. But it should be kept in mind that, for many, this was their first foray into politics. Unfortunately, it seems also to have been the last. They now try to protect themselves from any future manipulation by becoming cynical. Though they follow politics, they are not politically active. Indeed, most have turned to their private lives almost exclusively and seek no political engagement outside of voting. Populism's long-term legacy is thus negative: it does not help to create citizens who believe in their own sense of political efficacy. Rather, the opposite seems to be the case. They swung from one extreme to another: from blind enthusiasm to cynical withdrawal. Of course, participation in the populist episode of the 1980s is not the sole culprit for their current political apathy. Most people in Serbia have experienced several shocks and disappointments throughout this period. But the populism of the 1980s did signal their politicization from an earlier life of political passivity.

From the entire populist package of the late 1980s, the one element that still resonates with them is the language of producerism captured in cartoons and analyzed in chapter 5. In particular, the armchair politician is a figure that is still relevant for their understanding of politics. It seems to have great staying power as a tool with which to ridicule elites. On the other hand,

the populist discourse of readers' letters analyzed in chapter 4 is now seen as artificial. It is unconvincing to most. It is dismissed as something that obviously aims to instrumentalize and exploit popular sentiments. Although participants do not define populism in the way that this book does—as a patterned form of interaction in which elites are constantly inciting, amplifying, molding, and manipulating mass input—they are aware of these dimensions. In particular, they are keenly aware of the issue of manipulation. This is something that they have felt on their own skins. They now regret their involvement in the populist episode of the late 1980s. They think that their enthusiasm was used for political purposes by ruthless and Machiavellian elites.

These legacies of populism show that, while populism is quite effective in creating and constructing "the people" in the short-run, it also sabotages the emergence of an active political citizenry in the long-run. This suggests certain trade-offs with regard to populism: What is won, and what is lost when resorting to populism? These questions have recently gained in importance. Not only are populist movements of both the left and the right appearing in many countries in Europe and North America, but prominent scholars of the academic left have tried to revive the concept of populism and recommend it as a useful set of political tactics. Therefore, it is time to engage this broader picture. The concluding chapter does so.

CHAPTER 7

Conclusions

We are in the midst of an age of populism, a period defined by a populist zeitgeist (Krastev 2007; Mudde 2004). The financial crash of 2008 and the "Great Recession" have led to an explosion of populist politics throughout Europe and America (Judis 2016; Aslanadis 2016). The cases that have made the largest splash, such as Brexit in the United Kingdom and the election of Donald Trump in the United States, have taken on a right-wing form. But there are also distinct left-wing challenges to the status quo that have been called populist: Syriza in Greece, Podemos in Spain, Jeremy Corbyn in the United Kingdom, and Bernie Sanders in the United States. If populism really is on the increase, then it is important to understand the phenomena. What is it? How does it work? This book has tried to offer some answers. It presented a new approach to populism as a fractal phenomenon. The main suggestion of the book is that populism is a specific mode of elite-mass interaction, one in which elites are constantly encouraging, amplifying, molding, and manipulating mass inputs. No matter where one looks or how closely one zooms in, one sees the same pattern.

Fractals are a metaphor. Why rely on a metaphor? I would suggest that a metaphor provides something quite compatible with the way the human brain works: a cognitive shortcut, a way to quickly understand a phenomenon in an intuitive way. As Robert Nisbet says in his discussion, a metaphor is one of the most natural and oldest ways of knowing. Its main advantage is that it is "a way of cognition in which the identifying qualities of one thing are transferred in an instantaneous, almost unconscious flash of insight to some other thing that is, by remoteness or complexity, unknown to us" (Nisbet 1969: 4). In other words, a metaphor is useful because it allows one to grasp a complex phenomenon in a flash of intuition. Of course, the goal of

the rest of the book is to unpack all that the metaphor encapsulates. But the fractal metaphor provides the foundation for the rest of the analysis.

The goal of this book is to respond to several holes in our understanding of the populist phenomenon. First, political sociology in general and social movement studies in particular have done surprisingly little to come to grasp with populism. This will undoubtedly change as sociologists begin working on the phenomenon. However, much of the field of social movement studies has been built on the new left movements of the 1960s as grounding, orienting cases. In these instances, it was relatively easy to see who the challengers were and who the targets were. It was easy to separate "the good guys" from the "bad guys." But populism makes such a simple divide useless. A different way of seeing is required. I would suggest that a fractal approach gives us the foundations for a new approach. Furthermore, instead of simply saying that populism is complex, the fractal approach cuts through the complexity and tells us *how* it is complex. As awareness of new populist politics spreads, there is little doubt that political sociology will begin to address this hole. Furthermore, there is much to be gained from a closer conversation between the fields of political sociology and populism studies. This book showed two areas of cross-fertilization—eventful history and collective identity—but more will undoubtedly emerge as knowledge accumulates.

The second hole that this book aims to fill is in the area of populism studies. There can be little doubt that this field has grown incredibly in the last decade or so. Many interesting and valuable contributions have been made. Yet, much of the literature remains focused on populism as a type of discourse. And while it is that, it is not only that. My hope is that this book will encourage more scholars to consider populism as a set of practices that can be employed both in the area of discourse and the area of mobilization. Populism is a way of doing politics, a tool kit of political practices. It is not something that you are but something that you do. Once again, the fractal metaphor points us to a description of what these practices revolve around: they are ways in which elites encourage, amplify, mold, and manipulate the contributions of ordinary citizens. Once this type of approach is adopted, it also becomes much more natural to add a bottom-up element to our understanding of populism. Populism is not just something that elites offer. Ordinary people may also request it and respond enthusiastically to it. In other words, once a fractal approach is adopted, it becomes necessary to investigate not just the supply side but also the demand side of populism. Scholars have not engaged ordinary participants of populist episodes very often. Simply put, it is important to ask them why they took part and what they think of their own participation.

And third, this book aimed to fill a hole in the literature on the former Yugoslavia. Specialists on the region have most often dismissed the populist explosion of the late 1980s as simply an instance of elite manipulation, emphasizing the role of Slobodan Milošević as the main mastermind behind a ruthless media campaign and a series of large populist rallies. This is not so much incorrect as inadequate and incomplete. It does little to enhance our understanding of an episode that was one of the main links in the chain of events that led to the violent disintegration of Yugoslavia. This book joins several other recent contributions in the field in trying to "bring the people back in." It is important to show how elites and masses interacted in the particular political patchwork that characterized the period. "The people," however, remain in quotation marks throughout, as they are primarily a populist construct. The goal is not to flip the story from elites to the masses but to show the form of interaction between the two.

This final chapter provides an opportunity to address some concerns of broader relevance. First, how can the analysis offered in this book be extended to other cases, both historical and contemporary? Can the lessons gained from the Serbian case illuminate other instances of populism? Second, how should populism be assessed? Is it primarily a force for the good or the bad? Or to reformulate, what are the main trade-offs associated with populism? What do we stand to lose and gain by using populist practices? And third, what are some lessons for contemporary politics? The resurgence of populism has led some to a defense of populism as a new basis for left-wing politics. First espoused by the post-Marxist left, this new agenda has gained traction in the world of concrete political struggles. What insights can this book offer to such new left-wing populist projects? What are the do's and don'ts of populism, as suggested by the Serbian experience?

Extending the Analysis

How can the lessons reached in this book be used in other cases? Are they useful beyond socialist Serbia in the 1980s? I would suggest that they are. Here are a few cases of populism, both historical as well as contemporary, that can be further illuminated by the insights of this book. They can demonstrate the wider applicability of this book's ideas. The setting is, of course, quite specific. The Serbian political landscape of the late 1980s was characterized by some elements that will not be present in other cases. This refers especially to the presence of the party-state, which, despite a general social and political crisis in Yugoslavia, nevertheless maintained vast resources and

a significant degree of control over ordinary people. With these caveats in mind, what are the lessons of this case?

The main suggestion of this book concerns the fractal character of populism. I believe this approach makes it possible to sidestep simplifying narratives that lead to the dismissal of some cases as fabricated and artificial. If the analyst is sensitive to the possibility that elite and mass inputs interact and intertwine, they will be better able to spot such instances and provide a more accurate description. For example, protests of the Tea Party movement in the United States have been dismissed as "astroturfing" (Krugman 2009), referencing the artificial grass surface used for sports and implying that the events in question tried to impersonate real grass-roots movements. Simply put, they were fake grass-roots. Before such assessments are made, however, it is important to keep in mind that the presence of moneyed interests and elite sponsorship (Martin 2015) need not take away from the genuine enthusiasm of the people involved. It is more fruitful to say that such a patchwork of elite-mass action means that we are probably on the terrain of populist mobilization. Indeed, an important reason to retain the concept of populism in our analytical toolbox is precisely the ability to classify cases such as this one accurately. After classification, an analysis of how elites and masses interacted can follow.

Nor is this type of mobilization specific only to instances of right-wing populism. For example, elite and mass action also intertwined to produce a particularly powerful dynamic in the case of Mao's Cultural Revolution. For most observers, this case is simply another instance of mass manipulation by a ruthless leader. Yet, the presence of genuine enthusiasm and willing participation on the part of so many ordinary Chinese citizens makes it difficult to simply dismiss the case. Furthermore, the presence of interesting historical experiments such as the Shanghai Commune makes the Cultural Revolution a source of inspiration for some on the European left, notably the French philosopher Badiou (2016). Or consider the recent case of Thaksin Shinawatra and his "red shirts" in Thailand, another important instance of populism, one that cannot be seen as exclusively left-wing or right-wing. In this case, elite and mass inputs once again intertwined: Shinawatra's personal wealth combined with the enthusiasm of rural workers to produce another instance of populist mobilization.

Furthermore, this book suggests that the long-term legacies of such mobilization are likely to be negative. It will be quite interesting to see how those who took part in Tea Party protests, for example, view their own roles in about ten to twenty years. Will they turn to cynicism like the people in Serbia have? Will they also resent the way they were manipulated by elites

and business lobbies? This book suggests that the answer to these questions will be yes, but it should be noted that many participants will probably avoid a frank and honest "coming to terms with the past." However, if the broader political climate does allow for such a discussion, it will be possible to gain more truthful answers. For historically more remote cases, such as the Cultural Revolution, the necessary historical distance exists, but the broader political environment of a one-party regime is not the most conducive to an honest discussion about the legacies of the period.

Moving from populist mobilization to populist discourse, this book provides some insights of potential relevance to other cases. Scholars of populism often note that "the people" have to be constructed in a similar way. "The people" have to be extracted out of the mass of citizens and molded into a single homogenous actor, a new collective person. Of course, such a person is an illusion, but its usefulness lies in the way it gives momentum to the broader populist project and political agenda associated with it. The interesting thing to note with regard to the Serbian case is the way "the people" were constructed: by the joint participation of elite and mass voices in the daily newspaper section devoted to publishing readers' letters. In other words, the forum in which "the people" are constructed is important. The genre of readers' letters allowed for a typically populist mixture: some letters were probably written by Milošević's allies, many were probably written by ordinary people, and all were carefully chosen to advance a particular elite agenda. This type of populist patchwork is not easy to replicate in all media genres, but there are some examples that are relevant.

There is, for example, Hugo Chavez's TV show *Aló Presidente*, in which he delivered long-winded speeches and attacked his enemies in front of an active audience (Frajman 2014). This is yet another case of a populist forum, a place of discourse-making in which "the people" can emerge, but in which elites determine the rules of the game. It is important to note, however, that the public was not passive in the show. Indeed, they would ask questions or bring issues to Chavez's attention. Since much of the show was unscripted, it was always a little unpredictable: Chavez would react based on what the people brought forward.

Or to return to Mao's Cultural Revolution. One important aspect of it were *Dazibao* or large character posters, handwritten and placed in the open for all to read. Anything from a short poem to a long essay could be a *Dazibao*. During the height of the Cultural Revolution, thousands upon thousands of them were written and placed in open spaces, especially on university grounds. When all space was taken up, people would string up clotheslines in order to hang new ones. When the popularity of *Dazibao* led

to a shortage of paper and glue, people began to use old newspapers instead of paper and mud instead of glue (Cushing and Tompkins 2007: 30; Sheng 1990: 240). Even Mao wrote a *Dazibao* in which he spurred mobilization. In typically populist fashion, he urged the people to "bomb the headquarters." This type of elite-mass interaction is what produces particularly powerful instances of populist discourse as well as populist mobilization. The contemporary media landscape is quite different, of course, but such phenomena as talk radio, Internet comments sections, and social media present comparable venues for populist manipulation and populist discourse-making.

And finally, the focus that this book places on producerism is another contribution that may help to make sense of other instances of populism. As suggested, populism can borrow energy from producerism. Both are characterized by a binary logic: all of society is simplified into two groups pitted against each another. It is not unusual that a socialist setting, such as the Yugoslav one, was characterized by producerism. After all, public discourse in the country was grounded in Marxism and its materialist philosophy. However, the relevance of producerism is not restricted to socialist settings. It can appear in conjunction with ideologies that are not necessarily leftist.

Consider the example of Boulangism in nineteenth-century France. This case of populism takes its name from Georges Boulanger, a French general and politician who in the 1880s amassed a great deal of popularity and was in a position to take power through a coup, though he eventually decided not to do so (Laclau 2005a: 178–82). Boulangism relied on the support of small shopkeepers, i.e., the *petit bourgeoisie*, not industrial workers. But even so, his populism relied on a version of producerism: the Parisian shopkeepers were productive, while big business and especially large department stores were the parasites. In addition to department stores destroying the small businesses of Paris, Boulangism counted several other groups as enemies of "the people": financiers, foreigners, Jews, and monopolists. They all had, "like a colony of parasites, infested the productive body of the nation" (Nord 2005: 326, 328). This vision of politics was not primarily socialist or working class. Indeed, cafés serving workers were much less prominent among the groups that supported Boulanger than their counterparts in richer neighborhoods (Haine 1999: 149). In other words, the link between populism and producerism need not exclusively rest on socialist or left-wing foundations. It is more general.

Nor does the link depend on the presence of modernizing ideologies and modernization efforts. For example, most versions of peasant populism are backward-looking and nostalgic, not modernizing. Yet, they often combine their populism with specific versions of producerism. In such agrarian vi-

sions, it is the peasants who are the productive class. After all, it is their labor that produces food. And without food, the rest of society would starve. For example, in the case of late nineteenth-century Russia, it was the movement of the *Narodniki* that celebrated "the people" on such grounds. Most of Eastern Europe witnessed some form of peasant populism in which peasants were celebrated for the way they were productive, while urban sectors depended on peasant labor. In other words, it seems that the link between populism and producerism is quite common: the former can borrow energy from the latter.

Populist Trade-offs

One of the final tasks of this book is to provide a broader assessment of populism. Of course, this book is primarily an academic analysis of populism, but the final chapter nevertheless provides an opportunity to engage the broad questions of contemporary relevance pertaining to populism today. What are the relative merits of populism? Instead of assessing it as either good or bad, I believe it is more appropriate to approach the problem in terms of the trade-offs that accompany it. What do we stand to lose and gain with populism?

The perception of populism outside of academic debates is almost universally negative. Indeed, the term is often a pejorative label that one can use to discredit one's political opponents. It is unlikely that academic analysis alone will be able to fix populism's image problem. Intriguingly, some recent academic debates have tried to re-appropriate the term and to use it as a basis for a new political project on the left. In particular, this refers to Laclau's (2005a) intellectual and political agenda, recently followed up by Mouffe (2018). The work of Laclau and Mouffe has been most influential in reestablishing populism not only as an academic topic but also as a political strategy. It marks the end point of a trajectory that some on the Marxist and post-Marxist left have been undergoing for a while, transitioning from the industrial proletariat to "the people" as the main subject of radical democratic change (beginning in Laclau and Mouffe 1985). Other left-wing intellectuals, such as Alain Badiou, Jacques Ranciere, and Judith Butler have similarly argued for the utility of populism and the category of "the people," even if they do also raise some concerns about this strategy (Badiou and Gladding 2016). For Laclau, Mouffe, and many on the academic left, populism can provide a political platform for an attack on the current liberal democratic order, the hegemony of neoliberalism in the

sphere of political ideas, and the constant retrenching of previous progressive and leftist achievements. In the current political climate, a new version of progressive left-wing populism may actually be the most reasonable way forward (Stavrakakis 2014: 513–14). Yet, if the contemporary left is to embrace populism as a new foundation for radical democratic politics, it should be made clear what such a choice entails.

This book has proposed that we study populism as a fractal form of interaction. With populism, wherever one looks, one can see the input of elites. They are involved, in one way or another, every step of the way. They are involved both in terms of the street mobilization that popular forces engage in and the discourses that they produce in the public sphere. Populism entails elite involvement in both aspects, as chapters 3 and 4 have showed. But this involvement does not entail demobilization. On the contrary, populism implies that elites are trying to encourage and amplify the input of popular actors. The masses are given space to participate in politics and in the public sphere in quantities that are usually unthinkable. The flip side of this is that elites will manipulate popular input to suit their goals and interests. "The people" are asked to come to the streets and to bring their stories and opinions into the public sphere, but their input is molded to suit elite interests.

In other words, what is won in terms of scale is paid by a corresponding loss of autonomy. Elite involvement can lead to larger and more frequent protests. This solves the collective action problem for ordinary people. Elites have at their disposal the kinds of resources that ordinary citizens and activists can only dream of. But such protests will constitute events in which some things cannot be said, though they may be on the minds of citizens. The same holds for popular contributions to the public sphere. The emergence of populism means that ordinary people will have more space to contribute their thoughts to the wider social conversation. Yet, this conversation is not really a debate between individuals with different opinions. It is more like the echo of the same voice, repeated ad nauseam. Only those messages that are compatible with elite agendas will be given space, though such opinions may indeed be genuinely shared by many ordinary citizens. Autonomous public spheres—ones in which ordinary citizens would not be under the tutelage of elites but would be encouraged to find and construct their own discourses—are not allowed. Just as the possibility of autonomous organizing disappears, so does the possibility of autonomous discourse-making. In other words, the main trade-off associated with populism is scale versus autonomy.

This trade-off is connected to what can be seen as the main sin of populism: ordinary citizens are not treated as political adults, as citizens in the

full sense of the word. Instead, they are kept in a state of political naivety, even as they are asked to enter politics on a massive scale. Populist episodes typically feature the entry of an assertive and combative "people" onto the center stage. It is indeed impressive to see so many people politically striving to achieve a goal about which they feel so strongly. Yet, the dark side of such populist mobilization is always present. They are somebody's else's pawns, even though they are not only that, i.e., even as the control that is being exercised over them is imperfect and incomplete. Ultimately, this makes populism an unhappy choice when it comes to the long-term political education of a citizenry.

The new left's recent emphasis on populism is not unwelcome. The contemporary political landscape may indeed benefit from a dose of populism. The diagnosis and treatment put forward by Laclau and his allies on the academic left resonates with many. The hegemony of neoliberalism has produced a politics without politics, without antagonism, without collective agency. A dose of populism may indeed be beneficial in such a situation: to disrupt the cozy status quo of ruling elites and underscore the principle of popular sovereignty. Of course, there is no guarantee that the populism that arises in such occasions will necessarily be a left-wing populism. As we have witnessed in various countries, it is often right-wing populism that has been quicker to formulate an attack on elitist neoliberalism. The most dramatic instances have come with Brexit in the United Kingdom and the Tea Party and Trump in the United States, but a variety of other right-wing populists have paved the way in the last two or three decades: Silvio Berlusconi and Lega Nord in Italy, Jean-Marie Le Pen and Marine Le Pen in France, Geert Wilders in the Netherlands and many more.

This points to a certain fluidity in the contemporary populist zeitgeist. Populism may be both good and bad for democracy. The analysis presented in this book also shows that populism is a double-edged sword. Any defense of populism should therefore proceed with caution. A defense of populism is not impossible, even with everything that has been written about it both in this book and in the broader literature. Scaling-up smaller initiatives among ordinary people may indeed require a dose of populism. At the very least, it may entail the discursive construction of "the people" as a united front against some distant and corrupt elite. It may also entail organizational involvement of elites at various levels. Yet, should the left proceed down this path, it will be important to be mindful of the all the manipulations, large and small, that such a choice entails. And should such manipulations accumulate, who is to say that "the people" will not once again withdraw from politics and leave politics in the hands of the elite, however loathsome?

The trade-off between scale and autonomy is particularly biting. Left without elite allies, without access to the resources controlled by elites, and without entry to forums for public discussion that elites typically control, popular initiatives and social movements can rarely, if ever, hope to scale-up their efforts in such a way that they can produce real social change. Yet, once elites are involved, their interests, whatever they may be, will undoubtedly play a role. Politicians, no matter how enlightened and benevolent they are, still remain politicians. The resulting lack of autonomy for mass actors will be felt sharply, especially for those actors who pride themselves on independence. Some may opt for autonomy thereby ruling out a populist path and, most probably, condemning their efforts to remain of small scale.

This type of analysis—which focuses on the trade-offs associated with populism—also makes it possible to avoid some of the pitfalls associated with the way the academic left, notably in Laclau's approach, sees populism. In this perspective, all politics is redefined as populist (see notably Laclau 2005: 18, 67, 154). It is not possible to conceive of a type of politics that is not populist since the construction of "the people" is the central political task. However, as in the trade-off outlined above, it is possible to do politics while prioritizing autonomy. In this case, the link between elites and masses is much more tentative and the fractal intertwining of the two is absent. Even if one agrees that the construction of a larger collective identity such as "the people" is required, one need not pursue other aspects of the populist package, especially on the terrain of mobilization and organization. Therefore, it is important to avoid squashing the autonomy of ordinary actors merely for short-term political gain.

Lessons for Political Practice

The main pull of populism for many on the academic left is the category of "the people." Most rich democracies are no longer industrial societies with a large and homogenous working class. As such, a new revolutionary actor, a new carrier of left-wing politics, has to be found. Or, if it does not exist, it has to be forged. That is the promise that the concept of "the people" extends. There are also distinct pitfalls to the embrace of populism by the left. The central one—autonomy versus scale—was described above. But there are also several other problematic aspects to the populist route to a new left-wing vision of political change. These are more specific to the way "the people" are constructed, i.e., to the area of populist discourse.

Movements instigated by actors such as Bernie Sanders in the United

States, Jeremy Corbyn in the United Kingdom, Podemos in Spain, and Syriza in Greece are, broadly conceived, all part of the same impulse toward a new left-wing response to current political problems. Some of these are more and some are less populist in nature. If a newly defined left-wing populism is to be successful in combating the current hegemony of neoliberalism and re-anchoring democracy, what should it look like? The analysis of Serbian populism, offered in this book, provides several lessons. So, what are the main do's and don'ts of populist discourse, as suggested by the Serbian case?

One key challenge is keeping the category of "the people" open. As chapter 4 showed, the goal of populist discourse is to construct "the people" as a unitary agent that can act for itself. Such a people can much more easily be forged if the debate about who gets to be a member of "the people" is short or absent. In the Serbian case, this debate was never actually opened since it would take the wind out of the sails of Milošević's populist project. Though never explicitly specified, "the people" in this case were restricted to ethnic Serbs. Access to this category was in principle extended to other Slavic groups (most obviously Montenegrins) and a few non-threatening minorities (Hungarians, for example). As nationalism was still politically taboo, populism offered a kindred spirit, a political platform that nationalist actors could exploit. For some actors, most notably the Serbian nationalist activists from Kosovo, the populist platform was really a fig's leaf. But for some other actors, who had to maintain a degree of respectability in the wider public, populism could serve precisely this purpose.

In other words, the danger with populism is that it can quite easily transform itself into nationalism, i.e., begin to define "the people" in exclusionary ways. The enemy is no longer exclusively the elite, but some minority, racial or ethnic, which is not allowed into "the people." That is why it is important to keep the category of "the people" open and not close it for newcomer groups. In the Serbian case, an exclusionary definition of the people was emerging in 1988 but was consolidated afterward, in the final years of Yugoslavia's crisis. The main question then becomes: Is it possible to keep the door that leads into "the people" open while still constructing "the people" as a forceful collective agent? Can a twenty-first-century left-wing populism achieve this? This question is still to receive an answer, and the political projects mentioned above are still struggling to provide it. Too much debate about the issue will very likely remove all effectiveness from "the people" as a political force. But too little could lead a populist project, even if it was conceived in the beginning in left-wing terms, onto the chauvinistic terrain of the reactionary and exclusionary right.

Furthermore, the particular version of "the people," as constructed in

older cases of populism, like the Serbian one, is unlikely to resonate with the citizens of today. Even amongst the middle-aged and older participants, as shown in chapter 6, this version of "the people" is no longer appealing. And in Western settings, where people live much more individualistic lives compared to several decades or half a century ago, the conventional populist discourse will likely provoke only amusement. If a new left-wing populism is to emerge, it will most likely have to come to terms with a much more individualistic society. The building blocks for a new collective force are different. This shift toward a more individualistic lifestyle needs to be taken into account. People must be approached as persons and citizens first, not as a raw mass for a homogenous people. This is yet another hurdle for a contemporary left-wing populist project. A populist discourse that does not adjust to the new individualist, post-modern and post-industrial landscape will seem anachronistic at best and laughable at worst.

The other lesson suggested by the analysis of Serbia is about producerism. Chapter 5 sketched a specific version of socialist producerism that was quite resonant in Yugoslav society. This vision of society celebrated the productive nature of ordinary workers and ridiculed the elite as parasitic armchair bureaucrats. While the populist discourse analyzed in chapter 4 no longer resonates, the producerism of the socialist period does, despite the fact that socialism is long gone. This is important. Populism can borrow a lot of energy from a complementary producerist vision of society. Do contemporary projects of left-wing populism have such an ally in a new version of producerism? From what can be observed, the answer seems to be no. Nothing comparable to the socialist version of producerism exists, not even on the distant political horizon.

For example, the "Occupy" movement in the United States and beyond owes a lot of its success to the resonance of its main formula: the 1 percent versus the 99 percent. This type of discursive juxtaposition is populist in nature. It pits two groups against each other, one comprising the elite and the other "the people." With rising income inequality and a renewed debate about the sky-rocketing wealth of the 1 percent, this framing has shown itself to be quite resonant. Yet, this vision has no producerist ramifications. There is nothing in the formula that explicitly celebrates the 99 percent as productive. Nor does it attack the 1 percent as parasites. Of course, one may say that this is self-evident or that it is implied. The 1 percent is obviously benefiting from lower taxes and the financialization of the U.S. economy, not from productive forms of investment. But the populist discourse forged by the Occupy movement would certainly pack a bigger punch if it could develop some theme, akin to the armchair theme from Yugoslavia, which

makes this producerist divide more explicit. Are the 99 percent "good" simply because they are the majority or because they are productive? It would be beneficial for left-wing populism if it could transition from the former to the latter.

It should be kept in mind that one main advantage of contemporary right-wing populism, especially in the United States, is precisely the fact that it has combined with a specific producerist vision of society. According to this vision, racial and immigrant minorities are parasites living from government "hand-outs." On the other hand, "the people" are personified by the "Mom and Pop" shops on "Main Street." They are the small entrepreneurs who pay the taxes that finance the parasitic racial and ethnic minorities. The "Mom and Pop" businesses are forced to "meet payroll" each month and survive the economic uncertainty of post-crash America. This horizontal divide within "the people" is supplemented with a vertical divide between Main Street and Wall Street. Tax-paying entrepreneurs in small-town America are the ones who are productive: they financed the bailouts of Wall Street, the lavish lifestyles of Washington, D.C. politicians and the parasitic "moochers" all across America. In Western Europe, the influx of immigration is frequently framed in quite similar terms. Immigrants are "welfare scroungers," living off benefits. The problem for left-wing populist projects is that they have no counter-narrative to this right-wing producerism. Ordinary people tend to see society as divided into those who work and those who live off the backs of others. Producerism seems to come very naturally to most people. If so, new left-wing projects should respond to this demand for a producerist narrative.

And finally, one main advantage of socialist producerism was that it was humorous. It not only summarized what many already thought about the main divides in Yugoslav society, but it also portrayed them in a funny way. It provided a way for ordinary people to ridicule elites. The power of humor should not be underestimated. Elites are often dumb-founded when ridiculed, while ordinary people experience not only a sense of release but a very real sense of empowerment. It is not clear that contemporary versions of left-wing populism are as fully aware of the power of humor as would be beneficial. This is another area where innovations are needed. As many social movement veterans will know well, it is easier to bring people aboard if a political project has a sense of humor. Populist movements are no different. There is no reason why populism needs to be serious all the time.

Methodological Appendix

This appendix supplements the analysis offered in the main body of the book. The goal of the appendix is to provide additional information that some readers, especially those with a statistical orientation, may find useful. The appendix focuses mostly on the statistical analysis developed in chapters 3 and 4.

Protest Data

Chapter 3 relies on an event catalog built around newspapers as the main source of data. How sound is this source? The press has often been used for event data because it presents the most readily accessible source. However, questions arise as to the possible selection bias of newspapers. Within this debate, some scholars hold that the press is a source of sufficient quality while others maintain that press coverage needs to be taken with a grain of salt (for the debate, see McCarthy et al. 1998; 2008; Oliver and Myers 1999; Oliver and Maney 2000; Earl et al. 2004; Myers and Schaefer Caniglia 2004; Ortiz et al. 2005; Davenport 2010). In the case of Serbia, the rise of Milošević and his growing support for protest activity means that protests would be more, not less likely, to be reported by the press. In that respect, one can expect that event coverage, while not necessarily completely exhaustive, will nevertheless approximate reasonable levels of completeness.

In compiling the event catalog for Serbia's anti-bureaucratic revolution, I relied on five newspapers. These sources maximize variation on political orientation and geographical scope, two factors the methodological literature suggests must be paid attention to in order to construct relatively comprehensive catalogs (Davenport 2010). Two of the newspapers were national

(i.e., Serbian): *Politika* and *Večernje novosti*; one was federal (i.e., Yugoslav): *Borba*; and two were regional: *Dnevnik* (Vojvodina) and *Jedinstvo* (Kosovo). Out of the five, two were enthusiastic supporters of the protests (*Politika* and *Jedinstvo*), two were cautious (*Borba* and *Dnevnik*), while one was not explicit about their attitude toward protest (*Večernje novosti*).

Unfortunately, no police data appear to have survived in Serbia. This makes it impossible to check newspaper data against an alternative source. However, it is still possible to assess the existence of relative selection bias by comparing newspapers against each other (Strawn 2008). Table A.1 presents the descriptive statistics on the main sources of selection bias. Using the same categories, table A.2 presents an overview of protests unique to each newspaper, i.e., protests mentioned only by a given newspaper.

Which sources of selection bias should one be wary of? The main sources of selection bias located by the social movement literature can be summarized as follows: (1) event size (McCarthy et al. 1996; Mueller 1997; Barranco and Wisler 1999; Hocke 1999; Oliver and Myers 1999; Oliver and Maney 2000); (2) the presence of powerful sponsors and politically significant protesters (Snyder and Kelly 1977; Oliver and Maney 2000; Myers and Schaefer Caniglia 2004); (3) the proximity of the event's location to the media source (Snyder and Kelly 1977; McCarthy et al. 1996; Mueller 1997; Barranco and Wisler 1999; Hocke 1999; Davenport 2010); (4) the relative importance of particular cities, political centers in particular (Myers 2000; Ortiz et al. 2005); (5) shifting temporal priorities, what is sometimes referred to as "media attention cycles," which lead to fluctuations in media interest over time (McCarthy et al. 1996).

The factors listed above can be operationalized in the following manner: (1) average and median reported event size; (2) several organizational variables: whether protest organization included the help of local branches of the Socialist Alliance of Working People, whether a delegation of Kosovo Serbs came to a protest outside of Kosovo, and whether the protest was organized by Albanians; (3) two geographical variables that track if the protest took place in Vojvodina or Kosovo; (4) a variable that tracks if a protest took place in the administrative centers of Vojvodina (Novi Sad), Kosovo (Priština), or Serbia (Belgrade); (5) several temporal variables: a simple day counter that tracks if coverage is more likely as the protest wave progresses, a categorical variable that switches to one after the September 5th session of the Serbian party, at which Slobodan Milošević officially endorsed protests, and, lastly, a variable that tracks days when important sessions of the party were held. These events could be used by protesters to put pressure on the elite and may therefore be more "newsworthy" to reporters. Also, all models

Table A.1. Descriptive statistics for newspaper coverage

	Overall	*Politika*	*Borba*	*Večernje novosti*	*Dnevnik*	*Jedinstvo*
Number of events recorded	338	151	143	141	103	190
Mean protest size (number of persons)	17,318	34,407	31,065	29,105	40,972	28,852
Median protest size (number of persons)	2,500	6,000	9,000	5,000	5,000	3,000
Number of protests where local political organizations helped organize	111 32.8%	71 47.0%	67 46.9%	61 43.3%	44 42.7%	78 41.1%
Number of protests that featured arrival of Kosovo Serbs (for protests outside of Kosovo)	65 19.2%	44 29.1%	46 32.2%	39 27.7%	34 33.0%	44 23.2%
Number of Albanian protests	51 15.1%	12 8.0%	14 9.8%	22 15.6%	15 14.5%	42 22.1%
Number of protests in Vojvodina	66 19.5%	32 21.2%	28 19.6%	26 18.4%	47 45.6%	26 13.7%
Number of protests in Kosovo	171 50.6%	64 42.4%	53 37.1%	67 47.5%	31 30.1%	126 66.3%
Number of protests that occurred in administrative centers (Belgrade, Novi Sad, Priština)	87 25.7%	50 33.1%	38 26.6%	40 28.4%	29 28.2%	42 22.1%
Number of protests that took place after the September 5th session of the Serbian party	256 75.7%	142 94.0%	107 74.8%	110 78.0%	82 79.6%	153 80.5%
Number of protests that coincided with sessions of the communist party	126 37.3%	45 29.8%	49 34.3%	44 31.2%	30 29.1%	82 43.2%
Number of protests with socioeconomic demands	91 26.9%	48 31.8%	49 34.3%	48 34.0%	43 41.8%	33 17.4%
Number of protests with nationalist demands	211 62.4%	119 78.8%	102 71.3%	99 70.2%	63 61.2%	130 68.4%

Note: Protest size figures do not include events that did not feature an estimate size (31 such events for *Politika*, 41 for *Jedinstvo*, 18 for *Večernje novosti*, 16 for *Dnevnik*, 23 for *Borba*).

presented in table A.3 include variables that track if protests had socioeconomic or nationalist demands. And finally, to better tease out the specific biases of each newspaper, there is also a control variable for the number of newspapers that recorded any given event.

Tables A.1 and A.2 provide an overview. The first thing to note concerns event size, i.e., the number of people estimated at each event. Comparing each newspaper's mean and median participation to the mean and median participation of all five newspapers taken together, it would appear that events not covered by multiple newspapers were small. In other

Table A.2. Protests unique to specific newspapers

	Politika	*Borba*	*Večernje novosti*	*Dnevnik*	*Jedinstvo*
Number of events recorded uniquely by given newspaper	29	25	18	13	70
Mean protest size (number of persons)	8,481	15,836	6,782	4,262	6,389
Median protest size (number of persons)	2,500	10,000	1,000	1,750	650
Number of protests where local political organizations helped organize	4 13.8%	3 12.0%	1 5.6%	2 15.4%	17 24.3%
Number of protests that featured arrival of Kosovo Serbs (for protests outside of Kosovo)	2 6.9%	6 24.0%	1 5.6%	1 7.7%	5 7.1%
Number of Albanian protests	0 0%	2 8.0%	4 22.2%	0 0%	18 25.7%
Number of protests in Vojvodina	3 10.3%	4 16.0%	3 15.7%	0 0%	1 1.4%
Number of protests in Kosovo	10 34.5%	4 16.0%	9 50.0%	0 0%	60 85.7%
Number of protests that occurred in administrative centers (Belgrade, Novi Sad, Priština)	11 37.9%	3 12.0%	2 11.1%	5 38.5%	15 21.4%
Number of protests that took place after the September 5th session of the Serbian party	18 62.1%	18 72.0%	11 61.1%	8 61.5%	57 81.4%
Number of protests that coincided with sessions of the communist party	6 20.7%	16 64.0%	7 38.9%	2 15.4%	34 48.6%
Number of protests with socio-economic demands	9 31.0%	5 20.0%	8 44.4%	11 84.6%	7 10.0%
Number of protests with nationalist demands	22 75.9%	12 48.0%	7 38.9%	2 15.4%	40 57.1%

words, each newspaper missed some small events. But the mean and median figures for event size drop substantially in table A.2, which focuses on events unique to each newspaper. In other words, each newspaper's uniquely covered events were also small. In that respect, while all newspapers tended to miss smaller events, each also reported on a unique class of small events missed by the others.

What about other factors? Table A.3 presents a multivariate analysis that assesses the likelihood of coverage by any given newspaper measured against the pool of events that combines all newspapers. As can be seen, *Politika* is particularly biased in favor of protests with nationalist demands and against protests that took place in Kosovo (i.e., they had trouble covering protests in Kosovo). *Borba* has different biases. It is biased against protests that took place in Vojvodina and Kosovo, which means that it has a corresponding bias in favor of protests that took place in central Serbia. On the other hand, *Večernje novosti* was more likely to report on a protest if it had socioeconomic demands. This suggests that *Večernje novosti* was indeed a mainstream socialist newspaper that did not go out of its way to pursue a nationalist agenda. *Jedinstvo* has a bias in favor of protests that took place in Kosovo and protests that took place outside of Kosovo but featured a delegation of Kosovo Serbs. This is understandable given that it was a newspaper of Serbs in Kosovo. And finally, *Dnevnik* has a bias in favor of protests that took place in Vojvodina, which is to be expected given its regional focus.

All in all, each newspaper has its own biases, but they do not overlap. This suggests that what one may have missed another caught. Another way to inspect the reliability of data is to return again to event size. As the literature on selection bias shows, the police tend to record many of the smaller protests that the press usually misses. Indeed, event size is singled out as the most common source of selection bias for newspapers (McCarthy et al. 1996; Mueller 1997; Oliver and Myers 1999; Oliver and Maney 2000). Inspecting distributions of events according to event size can give us a reasonable basis of adjudicating the completeness of an event catalog.

What does the distribution of events according to event size look like for data drawn from Serbian newspapers? Figure A.1 presents a histogram for all protests smaller than 10,000 people. As can be seen, the distribution looks more like those that social movement scholars present for police data than those they present for press data (for example, McCarthy et al. 2008: 137). Figure A.2 zooms in on protests smaller than 1,000. Even here, there are more smaller protests than larger ones. This can increase our confidence that the main source of selection bias was avoided. Additionally, figures A.1 and A.2 exclude protests for which no newspaper provided a size estimate (about one fifth of all protests). Since these can be assumed to be small, figures

Table A.3. Logistic regression models of protest coverage

	(1) Event recorded by *Politika*		(2) Event recorded by *Borba*		(3) Event recorded by *Večernje novosti*		(4) Event recorded by *Dnevnik*		(5) Event recorded by *Jedinstvo*	
	Coefficient	Odds ratio	Coefficient	Odds ratio	Coefficient	Odds ratio	Coefficient	Odds ratio	Coefficient	Odds ratio
Average protest size (natural log)	–0.069	0.933	0.070	1.073	0.022	1.023	0.024	1.024	0.013	1.013
	(0.092)		(0.092)		(0.097)		(0.110)		(0.082)	
Local political organizations helped organize protest	0.148	1.160	–0.210	0.809	–0.571	0.564	–0.606	0.544	0.452	1.572
	(0.422)		(0.424)		(0.471)		(0.519)		(0.366)	
Arrival of Kosovo Serbs at protest	–0.577	0.561	–0.086	0.916	–0.606	0.545	–0.179	0.835	1.074*	2.928
	(0.601)		(0.582)		(0.629)		(0.633)		(0.477)	
Albanian protest	–0.134	0.874	–0.780	0.458	1.105	3.020	0.337	1.401	0.233	1.262
	(0.791)		(0.745)		0.773)		(0.878)		(0.667)	
Protest in Vojvodina	–0.585	0.556	–1.669**	0.188	–1.203*	0.300	3.486***	32.687	0.200	1.222
	(0.471)		(0.501)		(0.508)		(0.590)		(0.444)	
Protest in Kosovo	–0.962*	0.382	–1.421***	0.241	–0.316	0.728	–0.419	0.657	2.261***	9.601
	(0.447)		(0.462)		(0.482)		(0.591)		(0.431)	
Protest in administrative center (Belgrade, Novi Sad, Priština)	0.663	1.942	–0.325	0.722	–0.109	0.896	0.381	1.463	–0.431	0.649
	(0.353)		(0.378)		(0.383)		(0.459)		(0.351)	
Time (days)	–0.001	0.998	–0.007	0.992	–0.006	0.993	0.001	1.001	0.010	1.010
	(0.007)		(0.007)		(0.007)		(0.009)		(0.007)	
September 5th session of the Serbian Party (dummy)	–0.096	0.908	–0.062	0.939	0.427	1.533	0.863	2.371	–0.709	0.492
	(0.598)		(0.616)		(0.634)		(0.733)		(0.591)	

Sessions of the Communist Party (dummy)	–0.205 (0.323)	0.814	0.261 (0.331)	1.298	–0.479 (0.343)	0.618	–0.331 (0.395)	0.717	0.696* (0.300)	2.006
Socioeconomic demands	0.328 (0.463)	1.389	0.014 (0.446)	1.014	1.069* (0.486)	2.914	–0.263 (0.487)	0.768	–0.629 (0.399)	0.533
Nationalist demands	1.164* (0.521)	3.204	–0.549 (0.465)	0.577	0.403 (0.555)	1.496	–0.933 (0.611)	0.393	0.281 (0.425)	1.325
Number of newspapers that reported on an event	1.378*** (0.167)	3.968	1.524*** (0.177)	4.592	1.606*** (0.181)	4.986	1.501*** (0.195)	4.490	0.687*** (0.132)	1.988
Constant	–2.670** (0.994)		–1.669 (0.965)		–3.335** (1.028)		–5.201*** (1.238)		–3.743*** (0.961)	
N	338		338		338		338		338	
Log likelihood	–141.773		–137.434		–135.164		–107.973		–161.366	
Chi-squared (df)	181.18*** (13)		185.67*** (13)		188.92*** (13)		199.67*** (13)		140.60*** (13)	

* $p < 0.05$
** $p < 0.01$
*** $p < 0.001$

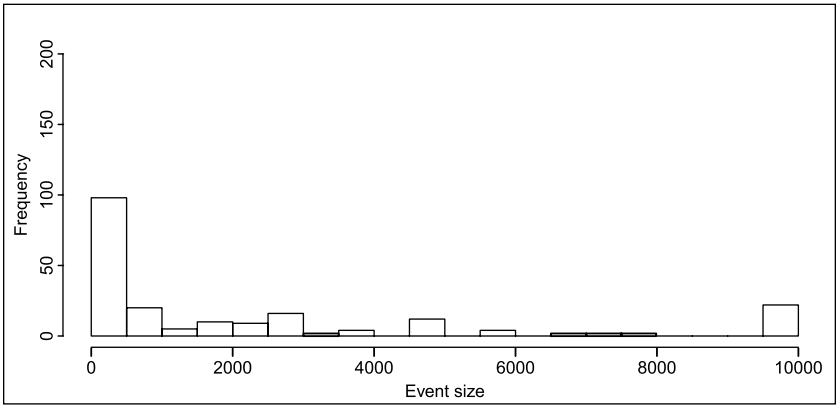

Figure A1. Histogram for event size, protests up to 10,000 people (all newspapers)

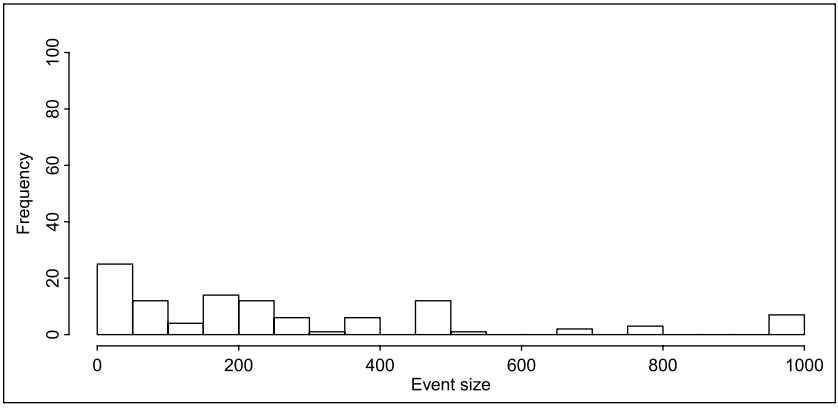

Figure A2. Histogram for event size, protests up to 1,000 people (all newspapers)

A.1 and A.2 in all likelihood underestimate the number of smaller protests. While any one source, taken individually, would not be able to provide a reasonably complete event catalog, taken together these five newspapers appear to fare rather well.

Event History Models

This section is devoted to a multivariate analysis of protest occurrence that complements the analysis of particularly important party sessions developed

in chapter 3. In that chapter, four party sessions were investigated as potential turning points in the dynamics of the protest wave. The insights of the intervention analysis performed in chapter 3 can be expanded with the help of models that encompass variables that vary cross-sectionally, temporally, or both. In the literature on contentious politics, most scholars rely on event history models for this kind of analysis (Hedström 1994; Soule 1997; Myers 1997; 2000; Andrews and Biggs 2006; Beissinger 2007). The question these models ask is: How long is the duration of time until the unit of observation experiences some event? For protest analysis, this usually means asking about the duration of time until a city or a county experiences a protest. From the family of event history methods, this chapter relies primarily on Cox regression (Cox 1972). It has the key advantage that it fits a baseline hazard rate automatically, which makes it preferable to alternatives such as logistic regression models.

All the models shown in this section were also double-checked with other models such as Poisson models, negative binomial models, logistic regression models with various time functions, variance correction models, and zero inflated count models. The results were robust to model choice, with the same variables emerging as statistically significant. In order to allow for repeated events in a Cox regression setting, a running sum of past protest was included for each municipality (following Myers 1997; 2000). Additionally, standard errors were clustered so as not to assume that counties on a given day are independent from one another.

The dependent variable in Cox regression models is the duration of time until an event, in this case a protest, takes place. The data set tracks all of Serbia's 165 counties through the entire period of six months or 181 days. For each day that passes without a protest in a given county, the duration variable increases by one. After a protest occurs in a given county, the duration variable resets for that county.

What are the relevant independent variables? The same list of party sessions that was used in chapter 3 was included here: (1) the session of the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, held on July 28th, 1988; (2) the joint session of the Presidency of the Central Committee of Serbia and the Presidency of Serbia, held on September 5, 1988; (3) the extraordinary session of the Provincial Committee of the League of Communists of Vojvodina, held on October 6th, 1988 ("yogurt revolution"); and (4) the session of the Provincial Committee of the League of Communists of Kosovo held on November 16, 1988. The main goal of the analysis is to investigate if the same party session isolated by intervention analysis—i.e., the September session at which Milošević endorsed protest activity—also appears to be relevant in multivariate models.

The multivariate context allows for the inclusion of a wide set of potentially relevant variables. The analysis performed here includes a number of institutional and structural variables, most of which vary cross-sectionally, i.e., at the county level. As mentioned in chapter 3, an analysis that places events center stage by necessity suggests that long-run factors do not tell the whole story of a period of revolution or contentious mobilization. Therefore, eventful analysis goes against the advice of famous French historian Fernand Braudel, who suggested that events are merely temporary and random fluctuations that are irrelevant compared to long-run factors. However, a multivariate analysis can include both eventful and long-term factors side by side. A broad selection of variables was included in the statistical testing and a selection of them are reported here. They can be broken down into institutional and structural variables.

First, institutional variables. These include the status of autonomous province, the status of administrative center, and certain characteristics of local-level assembly bodies. Autonomous provinces (Vojvodina and Kosovo) may have witnessed more protest since they were headed by sections of the elite that Milošević wanted to defeat. Similarly, capital cities (Belgrade, Novi Sad, or Priština) may have attracted more protest simply because they housed the relevant institutions that were the main targets of protesters. As for local-level institutions, they may have mattered for the facilitation of protest locally. Several variables were tested here, and the models from table A.4 include two that make the most intuitive sense: that protests were more likely when the local assembly featured a higher share of younger delegates and a higher share of worker delegates. Both of these groups can be seen as more open to protest.

Second, the analysis also included a variety of structural variables, i.e., variables that change even more slowly. First, it is important to test the impact of local-level ethnic composition. In particular, this includes the share of Albanians living in a county, since tensions between Serbs and Albanians were an important factor motivating many to protest. In addition, it is important to test the rate of increase of the Albanian population, since changes in relative group size may be more important than absolute levels. Another important variable that is mentioned in some accounts of Serbia's anti-bureaucratic revolution is the relevance of the "colonist" population (Kerčov, Radoš and Raič 1990: 58–59; Doderović 1990: 57; Vladisavljević 2008: 140). Following World War II, the communist regime relocated many families from Kosovo, Montenegro, and eastern Bosnia to Vojvodina. Serbian activists from Kosovo could thus draw on extended family and kin networks to help with organization and turnout at protests in Vojvodina. "Colonist"

counties may, therefore, be more likely to experience a protest. The criteria chosen is that at least 500 families were settled in the postwar period (data from Gaćeša 1984: 353). And finally, the influence of local-level economic conditions was tested by including data on unemployment. Most of the county-level data is drawn from the census.

As can be seen in table A.4, the results of the Cox regression models provide additional support for the conclusions offered by the intervention analysis from chapter 3. Since the inclusion of repeated events makes the coefficients and hazard ratios difficult to interpret substantively, it is best to restrict the discussion to direction and statistical significance. The variable for the September session of the Serbian party is positive and statistically significant both when it is included on its own as well as in the fifth model, which includes all four party sessions. Table A.4 also suggests that the October session ("yogurt revolution") had a negative statistically significant effect on the likelihood of protest, just as the intervention analysis performed in chapter 3 suggested.

Among the other variables that proved to be consistently relevant, there are three that stand out in particular: the status of autonomous province, the status of administrative center, and the variable that tracks the rate of increase of the Albanian population. The first two are not overly surprising since they track the main targets of protest activity. The third is interesting since it suggests that local ethnic composition did matter for mobilization but in relative terms, i.e., operationalized as the rate of growth of the Albanian population. Those counties that witnessed a higher growth rate of the share of Albanians were more likely to see more protest in the summer and fall of 1988.

A variety of robustness checks were included as well: variables for days of the week, spatial diffusion, exposure to mass media such as television and press, changes in the daily value of the Yugoslav currency relative to the Deutschmark (as a proxy for the deterioration of the economy), population density, economic output, share of industrial workers, crime levels, etc. The most robust of these was exposure to mass media (county-level circulation of *Politika* in particular). However, they never impacted the results presented in table A.4. The impact of the media—especially *Politika*—is a separate topic that will be assessed a little later in this appendix.

Inter-coder Reliability

The data constructed for the purposes of chapter 4 were all derived from a corpus of readers' letters published in the Serbian press. How reliable is the

Table A.4. Cox regression models

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Key party sessions					
Session of the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, July 28, 1988 (regarding Kosovo)	0.651*				0.294
	(0.312)				(0.316)
Session of the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Serbia with the Presidency of Serbia, September 5, 1988 (Milošević's endorsement)		0.722**			1.124***
		(0.271)			(0.232)
Session of the Provincial Committee of the League of Communists of Vojvodina, October 6, 1988 (resignations of Vojvodina politicians)			–0.623*		–1.317***
			(0.259)		(0.188)
Session of the Provincial Committee of the League of Communists of Kosovo, November 16, 1988 (removal of Albanian politicians)				0.395	0.794**
				(0.290)	(0.299)
Control variables					
Running sum of past protest (county specific)	0.038**	0.028	0.067***	0.043**	0.041*
	(0.013)	(0.016)	0.015)	(0.013)	(0.019)
Institutional factors					
Autonomous province (Vojvodina or Kosovo)	0.802*	0.814*	0.784*	0.801*	0.834*
	(0.377)	(0.386)	(0.360)	(0.378)	(0.383)
Administrative center (Beograd, Novi Sad, Priština)	2.676***	2.830***	2.354***	2.625***	2.712***
	(0.538)	(0.558)	(0.537)	(0.554)	(0.551)
Share of young delegates (27 to 39) in local political assembly	–0.123	–0.131	–0.109	–0.117	–0.129
	(0.196)	(0.202)	(0.189)	(0.195)	(0.199)
Share of industrial worker delegates in local political assembly	–0.342	–0.331	–0.364	–0.348	–0.368
	(0.209)	(0.211)	(0.208)	(0.209)	(0.210)
Structural factors					
Albanian population	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.003)	(0.004)	(0.004)
Increase in Albanian population (1981 to 1991)	0.221***	0.225***	0.213***	0.220***	0.227***
	(0.033)	(0.034)	(0.031)	(0.032)	(0.032)
Colonist county (more than 500 families settled after WWII)	0.597	0.567	0.673	0.612	0.591
	(0.444)	(0.469)	(0.400)	(0.440)	(0.435)
Unemployment rate	0.009	0.009	0.009	0.009	0.009
	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)	(0.005)
Number of observations (failures)	30026	30026	30026	30026	30026
	(313)	(313)	(313)	(313)	(313)
Log pseudo likelihood	–2660.764	–2655.238	–2657.872	–2663.776	–2620.166

Note: Coefficients (not hazard ratios) and robust standard errors (clustered on county) in parentheses.
* $p < 0.05$
** $p < 0.01$
*** $p < 0.001$

Table A.5. Assessment of inter-coder reliability (3 coders, 50 cases per category)

		Percent agreement pairwise					Cohen's Kappa pairwise			
	Percent agreement	Coders 1 and 3	Coders 1 and 2	Coders 2 and 3	Fleiss' Kappa	Cohen's Kappa	Coders 1 and 3	Coders 1 and 2	Coders 2 and 3	Krippendorff's Alpha
Overall	0.968	0.964	0.972	0.968	0.968	0.936	0.928	0.944	0.936	0.936
"The people" (*narod*) used in sentence	0.986	0.980	0.980	1.000	0.987	0.973	0.960	0.960	1.000	0.973
"The people" used in singular or in the plural (*narodi*)	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
"The people" used (*narod*) as subject of sentence	0.963	0.920	0.980	0.900	0.933	0.866	0.840	0.960	0.799	0.867

coding scheme used in that chapter? This section provides more detail with regard to inter-coder reliability. Table A.5 presents the basic information. The goal of these tests is to show that the coding was conducted in such a way that it could be replicated by other researchers.

Which measures of reliability should be used? Percent agreement is the simplest and most common measure. Yet, as the literature on inter-coder reliability suggests, it should be reported alongside other measures that take into account the agreement that happens solely by chance (Lombard et al. 2002; Neuendorf 2002; Krippendorff 2004a, 2004b). Other measures, such as Cohen's kappa (Cohen 1960) and Fleiss' kappa (Fleiss 1971) address this concern. The most versatile measure is Krippendorff's alpha (Krippendorff 1970; Krippendorff 1979), which combines several measures in a single number: Pearson's correlation coefficient, Spearman's rank correlation coefficient, Scott's pi, and Fleiss' kappa. Krippendorff's alpha can be used with any number of coders, with binary, nominal, ordinal, and other types of data and is automatically adjusted according to sample size. It thus has the virtue of being comparable across data sets.

The question of what counts as a sufficiently high reliability score is by necessity a bit arbitrary. For percent agreement and Cohen's kappa, for example, Landis and Koch suggest that scores from 0.01 to 0.20 be interpreted as slight agreement, between 0.21 and 0.40 as fair agreement, between 0.41 and 0.60 as moderate agreement, between 0.61 and 0.80 as substantial agreement, and between 0.81 and 1 as almost perfect agreement (Landis and Koch 1977). Fleiss offers an alternative scale: below 0.40 as poor, between 0.40 and 0.75 as fair to good, and above 0.75 as excellent (Fleiss 1981: 218). Krippendorff suggests that researchers "can rely" on data where alpha is equal to or larger than 0.80, consider data between 0.66 and 0.80 only "for tentative conclusions," and "discard" data where alpha is less than 0.66 (Krippendorff 2004b: 241–43).

As table A.5 shows, three coders were asked to make decisions regarding several aspects of the way the word "people" (*narod*) was used in a given sentence. This coding scheme was used in chapter 4 to determine the content and relative strength of populist discourse across several groups of letters. First, coders noted whether the word "people" appeared in a sentence or not. Second, whether the word "people" was used in the singular (*narod*) or plural (*narodi*). And third, whether the word "people" was used as the subject of the sentence or not. This coding scheme required little to no interpretative inference from the coder. Yet, even such a coding scheme will not lead to perfect reliability scores since the element of human error inevitably creeps in.

Table A.5 presents the results of the inter-coder reliability tests. All calculations were done using "ReCal" (Freelon 2010; Freelon 2013). This is a very practical tool for all researchers who wish to report a variety of inter-coder reliability scores. It is freely available on the Internet (http://dfreelon.org/utils/recalfront/). As can be seen in table A.5, and as is consistent with the methodological literature, scores for percent agreement are higher than the stricter statistics such as Krippendorff's alpha. The percent agreement figures range from 0.92 (or 92 percent) to 1.00 (or 100 percent), which means that the coding is characterized by "almost perfect" agreement. Krippendorff's alpha figures range from 0.80 to 1.00, which places the coding into the category in which researchers "can rely" on the data. The figures for Fleiss' kappa and Cohen's kappa are quite similar to Krippendorff's alpha. In addition, there are no large differences between the three coders. Nor are there large differences between categories. All of them have reliability scores of 0.87 or higher, while some are characterized by complete agreement (no differences between coders).

How does this coding compare with other attempts to measure aspects of populist discourse? As was mentioned in chapter 4, much of the literature on populist discourse has been qualitative. This is by no means a problem *per se*. Such analysis is certainly valuable. However, it seems that the general thrust of the literature has not been geared toward measurement and testing. Partly, this may be due to the influence of Laclau (2005a), who has pushed scholars toward non-positivistic genres of scholarship, including Lacanian psychoanalysis (Laclau 2005a: 101–16). Yet, there are several studies of populist discourse that have attempted to measure populist discourse.

For example, Hawkins adopts what he calls holistic grading: coders were asked to assess if the speeches of Latin American politicians were "non-populist," "mixed," or "populist" based on a list of elements that populist discourse usually contains (Hawkins 2009: 1062–64). He reports correlation coefficients of 0.79 and 0.87, 78 percent agreement, and a kappa of 0.68. Additional aspects of his analysis revealed that percent agreement dropped at times to 70 percent while Cohen's kappa dropped to 0.44 (Hawkins 2009: 1052–53). Further analysis of particular politicians revealed that reliability dipped toward the 60–70 range for percent agreement and the 0.27 to 0.33 for kappa (Hawkins 2009: 1060). In other words, attempts to code aspects of populist discourse in which the coder is asked to infer and interpret tend to lead to lower reliability scores.

Another study ran into similar issues. For example, Rooduijn and Pauwels report alphas ranging from 0.66 to 0.92 (Rooduijn and Pauwels 2011: 1278). Once again, attempts that tried to code more complex themes—in

this case, concepts such as "people-centrism" and "anti-elitism"—ran into more issues with reliability. It is not easy for different coders to come to an agreement when independently coding such subtle themes. The approach adopted in chapter 4 was to simplify. The preference was to measure a more focused aspect of populist discourse more mechanically and reliably. In other words, there is a clear trade-off: if one wants more reliable data, the coding has to be as mechanic as possible, with little to no interpretation and inference required from the coder.

As the field of populism studies grows, it will become increasingly important to conduct detailed inter-coder reliability testing. It is highly likely that the field will see a flood of methodological innovations given the rising importance of populist discourse across Europe and America. Furthermore, the use of software will make it easier to code large bodies of text quickly. Yet arguably, these advances will not by themselves solve the problems identified here and in other attempts to measure populist discourse. The trade-off identified here—reliability versus complexity—will very likely continue to persist.

Protest and Politika

Toward the end of chapter 4, the analysis of the relationship between the media and protest zoomed out to consider the protest wave as a whole. The analysis was summarized in figure 4.1 and figure 4.2. Those two graphs present histograms of regression coefficients for a large number of models that estimate levels of protest activity regressed on circulation data for *Politika*, net of a variety of additional variables. The units of analysis are Serbia's 165 counties. In this way, the macro-level link between exposure to populist media and propensity to protest can be examined. This section provides additional information regarding the analysis. Table A.6 presents four models that are representative of the wider set of models used for the creation of figures 4.1 and 4.2.

As was mentioned in chapter 4, protest activity was operationalized in two ways: as the number of protests and the number of protesters (both summed for the entire protest wave). The models reported in table A.6 include many of the same cross-sectional variables used for the purposes of the event history analysis reported in this methodological appendix (see table A.4). To this list of variables, several additional variables were added. The most relevant one is the circulation variable, which provides information on the number of copies that *Politika* sent to a given county for sale on each

Table A.6. Regression models

	(1) Number of protests	(2) Number of protests	(3) Number of protesters	(4) Number of protesters
	OLS	OLS with clustered standard errors	OLS	OLS with clustered standard errors
Autonomous province (Vojvodina or Kosovo)	1.413**	1.413**	–5380.001	–5380.001
	(0.533)	(0.489)	(6424.306)	(3343.965)
Administrative center (Beograd, Novi Sad, Priština)	24.620***	24.620**	24110.93	24110.93
	(1.811)	(8.436)	(21827.140)	(57575.370)
Share of young delegates (27 to 39) in local political assembly	–4.902	–4.902	–20503.570	–20503.570
	(2.602)	(2.704)	(31350.540)	(21651.020)
Share of industrial worker delegates in local political assembly	–3.103	–3.103	–29092.270	–29092.270
	(2.941)	(2.719)	(35434.050)	(35954.320)
Population density	0.004	0.004	160.591**	160.591
	(0.004)	(0.005)	(48.902)	(95.275)
Serbian population	0.015	0.015**	77.885	77.885
	(0.009)	(0.004)	(110.528)	(75.361)
Albanian population	0.023*	0.023	–120.257	–120.257
	(0.011)	(0.012)	(134.523)	(112.565)
Increase in Albanian population (1981 to 1991)	0.994***	0.994***	2184.298	2184.298
	(0.113)	(0.193)	(1362.381)	(1237.040)
Colonist county (more than 500 families settled after WWII)	0.077	0.077	–17191.17	–17191.17
	(0.772)	(0.891)	(9301.410)	(10674.260)
Unemployment rate	0.015	0.015	332.171**	332.171*
	(0.009)	(0.008)	(110.693)	(128.857)
Copies of *Politika* sent to a county			40.402***	40.402***
			(1.243)	(1.949)
Copies of *Politika* sent to a county (in 10,000s)	5.631***	5.631*		
	(1.032)	(2.836)		
Constant	0.616	0.616	–15086.790	–15086.790
	(1.442)	(1.328)	(17376.43)	(11974.680)
R-squared	0.865	0.865	0.950	0.950
Number of observations	165	165	165	165

*$p < 0.05$
** $p < 0.01$
*** $p < 0.001$

day. Several additional control variables were also included. Out of these, the one that is perhaps the most important is the variable for the share of Serbs in a county. This variable matters because *Politika* was the main "Serbian" newspaper and as such was the default choice for Serbs in Yugoslavia, much like *Delo* was for Slovenians or *Oslobođenje* for Bosnians. Additional demographic and structural variables, mostly drawn from the census, were also used in the creation of the histograms but are not shown here.

The models estimated and included in table A.6 are ordinary least squares models and ordinary least squares models with clustered errors. Not shown here, but also estimated for the creation of the histograms, are spatial regression models that incorporate the possibility of spatial auto-correlation in the dependent variable. As can be seen in table A.6, the coefficient for the circulation variable is positive and statistically significant in all the models, predicting both the number of protests and the number of protesters in a given county. This suggests that the macro-link between exposure to *Politika* and the propensity to protest is strong. Those counties that were exposed to more copies of *Politika*, also tended to protest more.

The unit of measurement was changed for the two dependent variables in order to make substantive interpretation easier. One uses the number of copies sent to a county in 10,000s while the other uses the original measure. The effect size of the circulation variables can be estimated in the following way: Had the number of copies of *Politika* sent to a given county increased by 10,000, that county would have witnessed an increase of about five additional protests for the duration of the entire six-month period (5.6 in the case of the models reported in table A.6). Alternatively formulated, this means that an additional 2,000 copies would have produced one additional protest. With regard to the second dependent variable, an increase of one additional copy of *Politika* would have led to an additional forty protesters for the duration of the entire six-month period (40.4 in the case of the models reported in table A.6). In other words, the effect of *Politika* on mobilization was quite palpable. Indeed, as can be seen in the models presented in table A.6, the variable for *Politika* is the only variable that was consistently statistically significant in estimating both dependent variables, i.e., the number of protests and the number of protesters.

What else can be concluded from the results presented in table A.6? When estimating the number of protests, the results are quite similar to the results of the event history analysis presented in table A.4. The analysis similarly points to the status of autonomous province and administrative center. Therefore, the autonomous provinces of Vojvodina and Kosovo saw more protest relative to central Serbia as did the administrative centers of

Belgrade, Novi Sad, and Priština. In addition, the rate of growth of the Albanian population also matters for the occurrence of protest, as was also shown in the event history analysis. The models for the number of protesters show different results. The only variable which was statistically significant in both model 3 and 4 is the unemployment rate, pointing to a structural economic aspect behind a higher number of protesters. Only the variable for *Politika* was statistically significant in both cases, i.e., estimating both the number of protests and the number of protesters.

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