

RUSSIANS AND RUSSOPHONES IN THE FORMER USSR AND SERBS IN YUGOSLAVIA: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF PASSIVITY AND MOBILIZATION (Part 1)

By Taras Kuzio

After the disintegration of Yugoslavia and the USSR in 1991, large numbers of Serbs and Russians, the core nations in each state, were left outside the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY, consisting of Serbia and Montenegro) and the Russian Federation. Twenty-five percent of Serbs were left outside the FRY, the first time this had happened since the first Yugoslav state had been created after World War I (Sekelj, 2000).

The 1974 Yugoslav Constitution upgraded Serbs to a second titular nationality in Croatia due to the large size of the Serbian minority. In May 1990, after the victory of the nationalist Croatian Democratic Community, this status was downgraded to that of a minority. The 1976 Soviet Constitution did not give Russians titular status in any non-Soviet republic. Demand for titular status has been raised in the post-Soviet era, but it was only de facto given to Russians in Belarus after the election of Sovietophile Alyaksandr Lukashenka in 1994. As with Serbs in the former Yugoslavia, Russians find it difficult to accept the status of a national minority in the non-Russian successor states.

Twenty-five million Russians (17 percent of the total number in the former USSR, according to the 1989 census) were residents of non-Russian former Soviet states after 1992 (Harris, 1993). Russian minorities are particularly large in Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Belarus, Moldova, and the two Baltic states of Latvia and Estonia. According to the 1989 Soviet census, nearly half of the Russian minority outside the Russian Federation lived in Ukraine (12 million, or 22 percent of Ukraine's population).

In addition, both the FRY and the Russian Federation themselves have large minorities. Within Serbia, one-third of the population comprises minorities, the largest being in Kosova, where Albanians account for 90 percent of the population. In the Russian Federation, Russians account for 82 percent of inhabitants. Autonomous republics for minority groups were only created in Serbia and in the Russian SFSR. This created resentment in Serbia, where ethnic nationalism was and

remains strong, but less so in the Russian SFSR or the post-Soviet Russian Federation, where state and imperial-great-power nationalism is more predominant.

The main thesis of this paper is that the ethnic mobilization of Serbs and the passivity of Russians in the late 1980s and early 1990s was due to the way in which their identities were defined. Serb identity is grounded in ethnic terms, and there is a strong link to Serb minorities living outside Serbia. Russian identity is defined in statist ways because Russian identity was always based on an imperial or great power state.

A Theoretical Framework And Outline Of Main Thesis

1. ETHNIC and STATE NATIONALISM: The main distinction between the Serbian and Russian cases of mobilization and passivity respectively lies in the different mobilizational capacities of ethnic (Serbian) and statist and great power-imperial (Russian) nationalism.

There is little requirement to prove the existence of ethnic nationalism. One has to only look at the wide range of recent ethnic conflicts in the Balkans, Transcaucasus, Chechnya, Rwanda, Kashmir, the United Kingdom, Sri Lanka, Kurdistan, and East Timor. Ethnic nationalism is invariably seen in a negative light because it is usually violent and hostile to other ethnic groups.

But this (in many ways well deserved) stereotype tells just a small part of the story. Ethnic nationalism can be differentiated into "defensive" and "aggressive" types. Ethnic nationalism is not always violent, as one can see in Wales, Scotland, France's Brittany, and Spain's Catalonia. It can be sometimes defensive in support of repressed language and culture, as in Wales, China's Tibet, or in the non-Russian republics of the former USSR such as Ukraine and the three Baltic states.

In other cases, nationalists see violence as their only recourse, as in the Spanish Basque region, Albanians in Macedonia, and in France's Corsica. In yet other regions, nationalists oppose internationally recognized occupations (e.g., Western Sahara against Morocco and East Timor against Indonesia), which are perceived by the local population as illegal despite this recognition (e.g., Russia's Chechnya, Serbia's Kosova) or racist and/or ethnic injustice (apartheid South Africa, Native Indians in Mexico, Abkhaz and Ossetians in Georgia).

There is therefore a wide range of ethnic nationalisms. Most observers would condemn Serbian and Croatian ethnic nationalism with their

accompanying features of violence and ethnic cleansing in the 1990s. Yet many would not necessarily do likewise in the other examples of ethnic nationalism cited above, such as in Wales, Brittany, or East Timor.

Ethnic nationalism has great mobilizational capacity, something that is not true of state nationalism (Neuberger, 2001, p. 399). Territorially based identities have less capacity to mobilize ethnic groups because of cross-cutting cleavages and the lack of group solidarity; Dawson (1996, p. 24) therefore concludes in her discussion of nationalism in the late Soviet era that:

"Thus, while available for possible mobilization, territorial group identities are not expected to form nearly as potent a base for the social movement emerging in the late Soviet period as national and ethnic identity."

The different mobilization capacities of ethnic and state nationalisms explain why Serbs could mobilize and Russians did not. Only Serbian nationalism is ethnically driven, while the latter is statist and territorial, deriving its legitimacy from the tsarist empire and/or USSR as imperial states and "great powers."

2. ETHNO-CULTURAL RESOURCES AND MOBILIZATION: Ethno-cultural resources are required for the successful mobilization of populations. Theories of mobilization and civic action see the need for a common identity, group solidarity, trust, and cultural and intellectual resources:

"Moreover, for the collective actor to be able to calculate the costs and benefits of collective action and act on strategy, his identity must be established. The process of the creation of identity occurs through collective interaction itself, within and between groups" (Cohen, 1985, p. 692).

These ethno-cultural factors were present among Serbs but not among Russians. "Resources," such as ethno-cultural factors, therefore facilitated mobilization for Serbs but not for Russians. Russian minorities were primarily working class in nature who had been sent to industrialize the non-Russian regions of the former USSR. They had little, if any, cultural intelligentsia to assist in their mobilization (Smith, 1999, p. 501). Political entrepreneurs need the cultural intelligentsia to mobilize the minorities along ethnic lines.

Unlike in the Serb case, there was little group solidarity between Russians living in the Russian RSFSR and external Russian minorities. Russian minorities also lacked an external patron who was willing to violently act in their support, unlike the Serbs (Smith and Wilson, 1997, pp. 853-854, 861).

The most successful manner in which mobilization occurs is based on national identity, as we have seen in the high activity of Serbs and the passivity of Russians. Where countries or regions were recently annexed to the USSR, memory of pre-Soviet civic activity is still alive. This can be built upon to revive pre-Soviet civil society, which also leads to higher civic mobilization (Abdelal, 2002). A comparative study of Galicia in Ukraine and Transylvania in Romania concluded that "[h]istorical legacies of the Austro-Hungarian Empire have left a lasting impression" on the two regions (Roper and Fesnic, 2003, p. 129). On the other hand, all of Russia has been part of the USSR from its inception.

Different regions of the USSR and within republics inherited differing levels of social capital. In Ukraine, for example, western regions have higher social capital, greater trust, and therefore greater involvement in civil society (Aberg, 2000). The Ukrainian Popular Movement (Rukh), which propelled Ukraine to independence and has been dominant in western Ukraine since 1990, is the "most rooted in independent civil society" (Birch, 2000, p. 1034). Ukraine has different levels of civic participation in civic activity, with higher rates in the west than in the east. Based on these findings, Ukrainian analyst Yuriy Akymenko concluded that "the western region upholds its reputation as the most active and radicalized" ("Zerkalo nedeli/Tzerkalo tyzhnia," 2 November 2002). The weakness of Russian mobilization and passivity is encountered in the russified regions of the former USSR, such as eastern Ukraine (Beissinger, 1997, p. 163, Beissinger, 2002, p. 122). The greater the russification of a region, the more the identity of the russified population is grounded in territorial, and not in ethno-cultural markers. "Thus, processes of linguistic assimilation exert a marked effect on elite behavior by reducing the will and capacity of such elites to engage in contentious nationalistic acts" (Beissinger, 2002, p. 117).

In the Crimea, the only region of Ukraine with a Russian majority, Russian nationalism proved short-lived and weak. Russian separatism remained confined to 1990-91, when it successfully agitated in favor of upgrading the "oblast" to an autonomous republic, and 1994-95, during the Crimean presidential elections won by the separatist Yuriy

Meshkov. By March 1995, the Crimean presidency had been abolished, and since then Russian separatists in the Crimea have been totally marginalized.

In the Crimea, pro-Russian separatists were opposed by "centrists" who hailed from the higher-level communist "nomenklatura" and the Communists. Former Communists became pro-Ukrainian "centrists" -- not Ukrainian or Russian nationalists -- again making this dissimilar to Serbia and Yugoslavia. Those who remained Communists, always the largest party in the Crimea, oppose separatism and agitate for Ukraine as part of a revived USSR or Ukraine's membership of the Russia-Belarus Union.

Ironically, the only permanent ethnic nationalist mobilization in the Crimea is not by Russians but by Tatars, who began to return to the peninsula in the late 1980s. Only Tatars (not Russians) are able to mobilize large crowds in that region.

3. NATIONAL IDENTITY AND DEMOCRATIZATION: Although "aggressive" ethnic nationalism of the type that engulfed Yugoslavia in the early 1990s is undoubtedly a negative phenomenon, the same cannot be said of national identity. A robust national identity will help strengthen civil society (Shils, 1995).

Nationalism and the fate of the Serbian minority outside Serbia dominated the agenda of most Serbian political parties until the late 1990s. It allowed Slobodan Milosevic and his Socialist Party (SPS) to stay in power by riding the nationalist wave and aligning themselves with "loyal nationalist" Vojislav Seselj's Serbian Radical Party ([SRS] Gordy, 1999, p. 46, Bugajski, 1995, p. 149). Seselj's "Cetnik" paramilitaries competed with Vuk Draskovic's "opposition nationalist" Serbian Renewal Movement (SPO) for the right to lead the revival and rehabilitation of the Cetnik movement. They, as well as Zoran Djindjic's Democratic Party (DS) and Vojislav Kostunica's Democratic Party of Serbia (DSS), initially supported paramilitary activity in defense of Serb minorities in Bosnia and Croatia (Gordy, 1999, p. 50).

Vladimir Zhirinovskii's Liberal Democrats have always played a similar role to Seselj's Radicals, as "loyal nationalists" in the Russian Federation. Except that Zhirinovskii, for all his eccentricities, has never organized paramilitaries to defend Russian minorities in the non-Russian republics of the former USSR.

By 2000, the mobilization capacity of Serbs was channelled away from ethnic nationalism toward support for democratic change and opposition to the Milosevic regime. Nearly 1 million Serbs entered Belgrade in October 2000 to support Kostunica's victory in the first Yugoslav presidential elections and to oppose Milosevic's clumsy attempt at election fraud in claiming victory. The large size of this mobilization in favor of democratic change built on many earlier large opposition demonstrations in Belgrade in June 1990 (70,000), March 1991 (500,000), November 1996 (200,000), January 1997 (500,000), and February 1997 (150,000) (Thomas, 1999, pp. 288, 423, 432).

Such large-scale Serbian mobilization (i.e., BOTH ethnic nationalist and democratic) could not have taken place without group solidarity throughout the country and among all levels of Serbs. It again showed that national identity can be mobilized in support of EITHER nationalism or democratization. Nationalist demonstrations in the Russian SFSR were always rare. Those by the Russian democratic movement allied to Yeltsin were confined to the cities of Moscow and Leningrad. Unlike national democratic popular fronts in the non-Russian republics of the former USSR, the Russian democratic movement never succeeded in creating a popular front that encompassed the entire republic.

Consequently, demonstrations since 1992 in the Russian Federation have been very small, with the largest organized by the Communist Party. In areas populated by Russian minorities, there has been near total passivity. The main reason rests in the weakness of Russian national (i.e., ethnic) identity and the amorphous identity of Russophones (Wilson, 1998, p. 135).

Passivity among Russians and Russophones in Ukraine has weakened the antipresidential opposition movement and made it easier for the authorities to treat eastern Ukraine as their base of support. Two Donbas "oblasts" and the city of Sevastopol were the only regions where Viktor Yushchenko's reformist Our Ukraine bloc failed to cross the 4 percent threshold in the half of deputies elected proportionally in the 2002 parliamentary elections. The pro-presidential For a United Ukraine bloc came first in only one region -- Donetsk -- while failing to cross the 4 percent threshold in Galicia and the city of Kyiv.

4. WEAK AND STRONG ETHNIC NATIONALISM: Ethnic mobilization mainly took place among Serbs and the Serbian diaspora in Yugoslavia because Serbian -- unlike Russian - identity is defined in ethnic terms. The Serbian minorities outside Serbia were, and are, seen as an

inseparable part of the Serbian nation. The Yugoslav state was a guarantor that all Serbs, whether inside Serbia or as minorities in other republics, lived within the same state. It meant that the Serbian question was "resolved" (Pavlowitch, 2002, p. 133). Within the first interwar Yugoslav state, the distinction between "Serbia" and "Yugoslavia" was far more blurred than in postwar Yugoslavia, especially after the 1974 constitution, which turned it into a confederation.

Once Yugoslavia disintegrated in 1991-92, the fate of Serbian minorities became a burning issue for all Serbian political groups, dominating the political landscape until the late 1990s. This was due to the fact that nationalism had a "deep resonance in the Serb and the Balkan body politic" and Serbian ethnic nationalism was "deeply rooted in Serbian political culture" (Cohen, 1997, p. 245). Indeed, "[t]he opposition parties ended up competing to prove their patriotism among themselves and within the government, even if the shades of patriotism differed" (Pavlowitch, 2002, p. 203).

Reform (democratization and market economic transformation) was not the priority issue for Serbs, unlike for Russian or non-Russian national democrats. No social strata was interested in, or ideologically prepared to prioritize, reforms in Serbia until after 2000 (Sekelj, 2000, p. 58). The fate of the Serbian minority stranded outside Serbia after the disintegration of Yugoslavia united disparate political groups -- from the Socialists and loyal nationalist Radicals (SRS), to the nationalist and democratic opposition SPO, DS, and DSS. The potential for a reformist agenda to take over from nationalism only began to appear in 1996-97 (Sekelj, 2000, pp. 96-97).

In the late Soviet era, when non-Russians were mobilizing large numbers in defense of sovereignty and independence, Russian ethnic mobilization proved to be weak (Lieven, 1999). As Beissinger argues (2002, p. 400), "mass violent mobilization did not become a major element of the mobilizational repertoire of Russians in the non-Russian republics until after the demise of the USSR, and even here, was almost entirely confined to Moldova." The only recorded case of mobilization that included Russians occurred in the Transdnister region of Moldova, the bulk of which constituted the Moldovan Autonomous SSR in the Ukrainian SSR during the interwar period. But here mobilization was not ethnic Russian but an amalgam of Russian-speaking, Soviet, and pan Eastern Slavic ideology directed against Romanian nationalism. The Krajina separatist revolt in Croatia was

very different, as it was based on Serbian ethnic nationalism (Perica, 2002, p. 153).

Thus a lack of a Russian identity grounded in ethnic terms (unlike in Serbia) inhibited Russian mobilization along ethnic nationalist lines. As mentioned above, Russian identity is instead grounded in statist -- not ethnic -- terms because the state had always been either an empire or a superpower. Only in the post-Soviet era was the "state" understood as the Russian Federation. Russia's domination of the CIS has majority consensus because it serves to demonstrate that Russia continues to be a "great power" (Urban, 1994, p. 765). There is still a lack of demarcated borders between Russia and the former Soviet republics, which has continued to blur the differences between "Russia," the CIS, and the "Near Abroad."

Russian dissidents did not clamor for an independent state in the former USSR (unlike most non-Russians). Neither did Serbian opposition groups, but the reasons were different, as they saw a Yugoslav state as the only manner in which to unify all Serbs within one state. The diaspora question was not an issue for Russians. Mobilization by Russian speakers in the Baltic states and Moldova "did not find a major following within the RSFSR proper" (Beissinger, 2002, p. 395). In the Soviet era, Russian dissidents either wanted to democratize the USSR or transform it into a more Russian state.

In the late- and post-Soviet eras, the political struggle within the Russian SFSR was also between Russian democrats (best personified by Boris Yeltsin, who was elected as Russian SFSR president in 1990) and Russian nationalists, who were a combination of national Bolsheviks, Stalinists, and imperialists (i.e., Soviet -- not Russian -- statist). Mikhail Gorbachev was caught in the middle of these two warring groups.

Russian democrats and Yeltsin forged alliances with their non-Russian counterparts (Beissinger, 2002, p. 389) -- again, something not attempted by Serbs with other former Yugoslav republics. Nevertheless, although Russian democrats were anticommunists in the same manner as non-Russian national democrats, they differed from them in that Russian democrats were never nationalists (Beissinger, 2002, p. 389).

Russian democratic mobilization remained confined to urban centers such as Moscow and Leningrad (Beissinger, 2002, p. 396), whereas the non-Russians were more broadly based throughout their republics.

The Russian democrats defined themselves as in opposition to the Soviet regime, while non-Russian national democrats defined themselves in opposition to the Soviet state (Beissinger, 2002, p. 401).

In the non-Russian republics, the main competition consisted of a struggle between hard-line "imperial communists," "national communists" (some of whom, as in Central Europe, became social democrats), and national democrats (often drawing on the Soviet-era dissident movement). In neither the Russian SFSR nor the non-Russian republics did former Communists turn into ethnic nationalists, a picture very different from Yugoslavia. Indeed, in the Russian SFSR, "nationalist-conservatives failed to generate a countertide of their own" (Beissinger, 2002, p. 399).

In June 1990, the declaration of Russian SFSR sovereignty began the distancing of "Russia" from the USSR through an overwhelming parliamentary vote of 907 to 13. The Russian SFSR only then began to create its own republican institutions, which were supplemented after the failed August 1991 coup, when Yeltsin's Russia took over Soviet institutions. In Gorbachev's March 1991 referendum, only 54 percent of Russians backed a "revived federation," one of the lowest levels of support in the USSR.

The Communist Party of the Russian Federation (KPRF), created in 1990, was immediately taken over by conservative nationalists and Stalinists hostile to both Yeltsin and Russian democrats, on the one hand, and to Gorbachev, on the other hand. If the Russian SFSR had always possessed its own separate institutions, like Serbia, events in the USSR might have taken a different path, with the KPRF attempting to mobilize support far earlier for a return to pre-Gorbachev policies. This they could only do in 1990-91, as during the August 1991 coup. But by then disintegration had gone too far and the coup failed.

In 1990-91, Russians, unlike Serbs in Yugoslavia, did not come to the defense of the USSR. The Russian statist-nationalist camp had been morally defeated by the failure of the 1991 August coup and republican communist parties were banned in the Russian SFSR, Ukraine, and elsewhere. Yeltsin acquiesced in the disintegration of the USSR together with Ukrainian and Belarusian leaders and its conversion into a CIS as a vehicle for a "civilized divorce" (Kuzio, 1999).

While not defending the USSR, the Russian SFSR did not declare independence from it either (the only Soviet republic not to do so). There is "little evidence that Yeltsin advocated Russian statehood outside of a revamped USSR" (Beissinger, 2002, p. 411). Unlike Milosevic, Yeltsin did not mobilize Russians for a "Greater Russia" that would have incorporated Narva (Estonia), eastern Ukraine and the Crimea (Ukraine), and northern Kazakhstan. Although the Crimea and the city of Sevastopol were contested between Russia and Ukraine until 1997-99, this did not lead to violence. Ostensibly this could have been possible with the presence of the Black Sea Fleet loyal to Russia.

Serbian And Russian National Identities

The scale of the ethnic mobilization of Serbs in Yugoslavia and the FRY was not repeated elsewhere in postcommunist Europe. The large Hungarian minorities did receive attention from the democratic and populist opposition in Hungary. But ethnic mobilization by Hungarian minorities in Romania, Slovakia, the Vojvodina province of the FRY, or Ukraine did not lead to ethnic violence except for sporadic incidents like that in the Romanian town of Targu-Mures in 1990 (Hall, 2003).

The tsarist and Soviet multi-national empires thwarted the development of ethnic Russian identity and national consciousness. Russians have felt more comfortable as part of a Russian-speaking group defined as "compatriots."

The Russian Foreign Ministry and other state institutions, as well as most Russian political parties, speak in defense of "compatriots," not of Russians per se. "Compatriots" refers to Russian speakers living in the non-Russian republics of the former USSR and includes anybody who feels an affinity to Russian language and culture. As part of this concern for the wider Russian-speaking population, promotion of Russian as a second state language has been a long-term Russian policy in the CIS. This policy has been successful in Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan, with Moldova likely to follow suit.

Serbia, like the three Baltic states, had a period of independent statehood prior to becoming part of a larger multinational state, thus making possible the emergence of a sense of national identity prior to the emergence of the multinational state framework. Serbia was first autonomous and then an independent state from 1878 until 1918. The interwar Yugoslav state was seen as a "Greater Serbia," particularly after the 1930s (Anzulovic, 1999, p. 89). Similar nationalizing pressures on minorities took place in other Eastern European states, such as Poland, at that time.

The Serbian national identity was nurtured by centuries of occupation by the Turkish Ottoman Muslim "other." To the north and west of Serbia lay the Bosnian Muslim and the Croatian Catholic "others." To the east lay the non-Slavic Hungarians and the Orthodox Bulgarians, with whom Serbia had been in conflict over the identity of Macedonians. Were Macedonians "Southern Serbs" (the Serbian perspective) confused Bulgarians (the Bulgarian viewpoint) or Slavic-speaking Greeks (the Greek position)? These three viewpoints were, and continue to be, popular across the entire political spectrum in Serbia, Bulgaria, and Greece.

The Russian Federation has to undergo the most traumatic of post-Soviet transitions. Unlike in Western Europe, Muscovy and later Russia did not forge a nation-state before it created an empire. This lack of a Russian ethnic nation was not rectified in either the tsarist or Soviet empires, where both regimes deliberately subsumed the Russian identity within that of the empire of the superpower as a whole.

Contrary to the view of many Western specialists, therefore, Russia did not inherit a robust ethnic identity from the former USSR. The Russian identity is instead territorially bounded, because it has always been linked to imperial territory (i.e., the tsarist or Soviet empire's), not to an ethnic homeland.

In the former USSR, the Russian SFSR was the only republic that was not promoted as a homeland for Russians, because the USSR itself was perceived as a Russian homeland. The Russians had only one homeland -- USSR -- until the election of Yeltsin in 1990. In contrast, non-Russians had two homelands: their republics and the USSR.

Rowley (2000, p. 23) is persuaded that the fact "[t]hat Russians expressed their national consciousness through the discourse of imperialism rather than the discourse of nationalism has far-reaching implications for both Russian history and nationalism theory." The ideology that pervaded the Russian political discourse in the tsarist empire therefore "ruled out nationalism." Russian patriots supported the tsarist or Soviet empires rather than attempt to carve out a separate Russian nation-state. Unlike Turkish nationalist Kemal Ataturk, who carved out a Turkish nation-state from the Ottoman Empire, the Whites, led politically by the Constitutional Democrats, opted in favor of empire -- not a Russian nation-state.

The past has thus imparted a confused legacy on the Russians. First, Russian and Soviet identities overlap. Opinion polls show that fewer

than 50 percent of Russians perceive the Russian Federation as being their homeland (Tishkov, 1996, p. 18, McAuley, 1997, p. 300). Second, the disintegration of the USSR brought into the open a Russian identity crisis. In the Tatar, Tuva, and Sakha autonomous republics of the Russian Federation, the proportion of Russians who agreed with the statement "I never forget I am Russian" varied between 21.5 percent and 27.2 percent, as compared to 50.5-71.5 percent for the titular minority groups when asked a similar question about their ethnic groups (Simonsen, 1999, p. 1077). Only two-thirds of all Russians consider themselves to be even "Slavs," while 22 percent deny this ("RFE/RL Newslines," 27 July 2001). Third, lacking a robust ethnic identity, the 25 million-strong Russian diaspora could not be mobilized in defense of a "Greater Russia" or against their host "nationalizing states" because Russian ethnic nationalism is weak. In the tsarist empire and in the USSR, there was no distinction between the periphery and the metropolis, and ethnic Russian identity was not encouraged. In both states, Russian identity was subsumed under a broader imperial or pan-Soviet identity. Such a merging of Russian and Soviet identities "was not true of the other republics" (McAuley, 1997, p. 16).

(The author is a resident fellow at the Centre for Russian and East European Studies and adjunct professor in the Department of Political Science, University of Toronto).

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By Taras Kuzio

The Russian "homeland" in the tsarist empire or USSR was the entire territory of the state. Only the non-Russian republics had two "homelands": their ethno-cultural republics and the Soviet state. The lack of institutions in the Russian SFSR helped to blur these differences between "Russia" and the USSR. As the Soviet state, not the Russian SFSR, was the homeland for Russians, the large numbers of Russians living outside the Russian SFSR were not considered a "diaspora."

Russians living everywhere in the Soviet state had an ethnic entry -- "Russian" -- on their internal passports, but they were more likely to feel Soviet than Russian. In the Transdnier, eastern Ukraine, Belarus, and northern Kazakhstan, the continued persistence of a Soviet identity is testimony to this.

In Belarus under President Alyaksandr Lukashenka, an amalgam of Soviet Belarusian, Russophile, and pan-eastern Slavic identities merge and compete with one another. Russia has a differing understanding of these same identities, making it difficult for both to implement their long-delayed union. In the fall of 2002, Russia, frustrated by the lack of progress after seven years in union with Belarus, suggested that both countries hold a simultaneous referendum on unification. Lukashenka categorically disagreed with the Russian view of "union," amounting to becoming a part of the Russian Federation (Kuzio, 2002).

In the Transdnier, the Russian-speaking Ukrainian and Russian minorities in the region support a similar Lukashenka-type ideology of

Soviet and pan-eastern Slavic ideas. Transdniestrian hopes for a Soviet revival have proved illusory. At the same time, recent progress toward Moldova's federalization could allow the breakaway region to maintain its separate identity within a communist Moldova that is firmly entrenched within the Russian sphere of influence.

The imperial nature of Russian identity contrasts with that of the Serbs, whose identity emerged after centuries as a nation occupied by a foreign power that was non-Slavic and non-Christian. The analogy would be if Muscovites had failed to overthrow Tatar rule and had instead also developed a Russian identity under a foreign and Muslim occupation. No tsarist empire would have existed, and Russia would likely have also clamored for an independent nation-state.

Serbian identity aspired to create a nation-state by dismantling the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman empires. Many White Russians flocked to the Bolshevik cause in 1919-21 (especially during the Bolshevik-Polish war) because they wished to preserve the tsarist empire in the guise of the USSR. Stalin opposed the granting of republican status to ethnic groups within the USSR, and preferred a unitary state.

Anti-imperial tendencies among Serbs and Poles, who wished to re-create their independent states, did not mean they themselves did not harbor imperialist views. A "Greater Serbia" that incorporates at a minimum all Serbs and at a maximum the southern Slavs who would be slated for assimilation, was a long-standing Serbian goal from the 19th century on (Anzulovic, 1999).

Unification of all Serbs in an independent nation-state was the goal of Serbian nationalism. This goal encouraged nationalists and democrats to back a policy of attempting to preserve Yugoslavia by force in the 1980s and 1990s. Serbian grievances against the Croat Tito and the Yugoslav state were channeled into ethnic nationalism, not democratization, as reflected in the overwhelming election of Milosevic as Serbian president in 1991.

In the late Soviet era, Boris Yeltsin did the opposite, by leading the drive against the Soviet center and unelected Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev. Yeltsin, after being elected Russian president, drew on the democratic tradition of dissent in Russia, which was anticommunist. The language Yeltsin and his democratic supporters used was anti-imperialist, and the fate of the Russian diaspora was not an issue for them.

The Russian SFSR was the first republic to declare sovereignty in June 1990. But the new Russian identity stopped here, as it was difficult to see how "Russia" could be fully divorced from the USSR (or later the CIS). Thus the Russian SFSR was the only Soviet republic never to declare independence from the USSR, and the Russian Federation celebrates its 1990 declaration of sovereignty as its annual "independence day." Only non-Russian republics declared sovereignty in 1990, followed by independence in 1991.

President Yeltsin and the democratic movement supported Russian sovereignty within a loose Soviet confederation, in which the center would be removed or would be very weak. Their main focus was on economic reform, democratization, and the dismantling of communist rule. When the Russian SFSR declared sovereignty in 1990, "almost no one was thinking in terms of actual independent statehood for the RSFSR" (McAuley, 1997, p. 31). For the Russians, "their power and authority was bound up with the party; and hence the Union" (McAuley, 1997, p. 37). A Soviet confederation in which Russia would still be dominant due to its size and resources, was what Yeltsin sought to propose to the non-Russians after the failed August 1991 coup. But they turned it down (Kuzio, 1999).

As already indicated, in the interwar period Serbia saw Yugoslavia as a "Greater Serbia." Poland also wished to return to its 18th-century borders (i.e., Greater Poland) that would have included large parts of Ukraine, Belarus, and Lithuania. Minority policies in both interwar Yugoslavia and Poland were poor and democratic institutions weak. These and other factors helped encourage the rise of the extreme right in Croatia (Ustasa) and among Ukrainians (Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists), who sought to resolve their predicament with the help of the Nazis by setting up their own independent, homogenized nation-states. Only in Croatia, however, did the Nazis allow a puppet regime to be installed (no puppet regimes were created in Ukraine or Russia).

Long after the "civilized divorce" from the USSR was completed, the CIS continues to remain in place as a psychological prop for many states and an "old boys club" for former communist and KGB officials now in power as state leaders. The Russians continue to prefer to blur the distinction between the Russian Federation and the CIS (as they did between the Russian SFSR and the USSR).

Although President Vladimir Putin no longer believes the USSR can be revived, he, like most Russians, still sees the CIS as the un-foreign "Near Abroad" (unlike the "Far Abroad" outside the CIS). Russia

continues to oppose the demarcation of "internal" CIS borders, as this would divide the CIS into independent nation-states and overcome the fuzzy division between Russia and other CIS members. With demarcation, the "Near Abroad" would cease to exist and would become similar to the "Far Abroad."

Of the eight CIS states that it borders, Russia has consequently signed border treaties only with Lithuania and Ukraine. Over a decade after the USSR disintegrated, Soviet passports can still be used to cross the Ukrainian-Russian border. Russia is to allow non-Russian citizens from the remainder of the CIS to join its armed forces.

The anti-imperial outlook of Serbian national identity and nationalism was therefore different from that of the Russian national idea, which was universalist and imperialist. In both interwar Yugoslavia and communist Yugoslavia, Serbian identity continued to independently develop. In the USSR, Russian nation building was thwarted, which hindered the development of a Russian non-Soviet national identity. In the 1930s, Russian identity was incorporated into Soviet ideology as the "leading nation" and "elder brother" of the USSR.

Serbia And Russia Within Yugoslavia And USSR

In communist Yugoslavia, there was no possibility of Serbian nationalism being officially promoted until 1987-89 under Slobodan Milosevic (who prior to this date had shown no nationalist inclinations). In the USSR, Russian nationalism became an organic component of Soviet ideology from the mid-1930s in what Agursky (1987) defines as "National Bolshevism."

In the 1920s, the Soviet state was hostile to Russian nationalism and chauvinism, which it perceived as a threat. At that time, it promoted "indigenization," ("korenizatsiya"), which allowed local national communists to take control of the non-Russian republics, such as Ukraine, where indigenization became "Ukrainianization." The Soviet state saw itself as hostile to its tsarist imperial predecessor and wished to increase communist support among the non-Russian in republics, where the Bolshevik party was weak.

The Soviet experiment with indigenization ended in the 1930s. In 1934, the Soviet state re-incorporated many of the tenets of tsarist historiography when dealing with the non-Russians. From the mid 1930s, and particularly after World War II, Soviet communism and Russian imperial nationalism were integrated together. Tsarist colonialism was no longer condemned, the Russians were proclaimed the "elder brother" and leading Soviet nation, and tsarist imperialists

and colonizers became once again heroes. This "blurred the differences between Russian empire and Soviet Socialist Union" (Brandenberger, 2001, p. 278).

In Yugoslavia, by contrast, prewar Serbian leaders were always vilified until Milosevic's rise to power. Hostility to Serbian nationalism was continued until the mid-1980s. Consequently, Serbs felt they had suffered the most during World War II and had then been humiliated by Tito in Yugoslavia. Communist Yugoslavia saw both Serbian and Croatian nationalism as its greatest threats.

In the 1920s, Russian chauvinism was seen as a "greater danger" than non-Russian nationalism, a thesis that lasted from 1923 until 1932 (Martin, 2001). In the 1930s, however, the main threat-perception was switched from Russian to non-Russian nationalism, such as that of Ukrainians.

Indigenization in communist Yugoslavia encouraged the growth of a separate Macedonian nation to ensure it could not be claimed by Serbia, on the one hand, nor allow Bulgaria to harbor territorial claims, on the other. After the 1974 constitution and reform of the federal system, the Serbian province of Kosova was de facto turned over to the majority Albanian minority, who took control of key state institutions and the police.

Institutions Matter

Institutions are central to understanding the different trajectories of Russian and Serbian nationalism. During periods of crisis in both Yugoslavia and the USSR, there were always calls for greater decentralization and republican autonomy, which were combined with outbursts of nationalism.

The USSR and Yugoslavia after the 1974 constitution were very different states. Yugoslavia was a de facto confederation, where the republics were able to "act as nearly independent political and economic units" (Bunce, 1997, p. 356). The Yugoslav republics even exercised control to some degree over the militaries on their territories. The Yugoslav League of Communists held the country together, but after Tito's death in 1980 the party went into decline. In the USSR, the military was far less involved in the political process than it always had been in Yugoslavia.

In the USSR, the merging of Russian and Soviet identities had its institutional aspect in the absence of institutions for the Russian SFSR. The Russian SFSR lacked basic institutions that could have mobilized

ethnic Russian nationalism such as its own Academy of Sciences, KGB, Communist Party, Writers Union, and Komsomol. As Vujacic (1996, pp. 779-780) points out, one reason for this was that the Russian SFSR, which has no historical legitimacy, "was somewhat of a residual category, a kind of Russian nation-state by default."

Within Yugoslavia, on the other hand, the Serbian republic had all of the institutions that the Russian SFSR did not possess. These became vitally important in the 1980s in mobilizing Serbian nationalism.

Institutions can facilitate the mobilization of nationalism, as seen in a comparison of the Crimea and Eastern Ukraine. In the Crimea, the Ukrainian authorities made a strategic miscalculation when they allowed the region to have its own presidency, believing that Crimean Supreme Soviet Chairman Mykola Bagrov would be elected in the January 1994 Crimean presidential elections. Instead, separatist Yuriy Meshkov was elected, and his increasing conflict with Kyiv prompted the Ukrainian authorities to disband the institution in March 1995. In eastern Ukraine, no regional autonomous institutions were permitted, a factor that discouraged autonomous trends that were already weak.

The existence of Serbian institutions in Yugoslavia separated Serbian and Yugoslav identities as well as created "the structural preconditions for nationalist (as opposed to purely statist) political mobilization" (Vujacic, 1996, p. 783). Milosevic took over the Serbian Communist Party, and its institutions and media, and his ideological platform was developed by the Serbian Academy of Sciences and other Serbian intellectual bodies.

In 1990-91, Russian nationalist opposition to Yeltsin and his democratic allies, on the one hand, and to Gorbachev on the other hand, found it difficult to mobilize support in a country where the Communist Party and security forces were already disintegrating and where they had no republican institutions. In Serbia, where there had been a tradition of backing hard-line policies, reform was not prioritized by most political forces in the 1980s and 1990s.

Only in 1990, a year before the USSR disintegrated, did the Russian SFSR set up its own Communist Party, Academy of Sciences, and Writers Union. These quickly became dominated by Russian nationalists who were "empire savers," rather than separatists in favor of an independent Russian state. Their allies were the hard-line Stalinist wing of the Communist Party, which staged a failed coup in

August 1991 to forestall the signing of a new Union Treaty that planned to give more power to the republics.

After the failed August 1991 coup, Soviet institutions were also taken over by the Russian SFSR. The nationalization of Soviet institutions had a direct impact upon Russia's view of the outside world and the CIS. It contributed to a "distinctive culture and style in policymaking" (Malcolm, 1996, p. 105). Incorporating Soviet institutions into the Russian Federation served to continue to blur the differences between Soviet and Russian identity and strengthened the influence of Soviet political culture within Russia.

Serbian And Russian Nationalism

Neither Serbian nor Russian opposition groups clamored for the independence of their republics from the USSR. The reasons for this similarity, though, were different.

The Yugoslav communist and military leadership was largely from Serbian communities in Bosnia and Croatia. These Serbian communities "participated en masse in Tito's partisan movement, playing an important role in the reintegration of Yugoslavia in the aftermath of a devastating civil war" (Vujacic, 1996, p. 780). The large number of Serbs from Bosnia and Croatia over-represented in the party and security forces meant "they had a vested 'ideal' and 'material' interest in the preservation of Yugoslavia, or by default, a Greater Serbia" (Vujacic, 1996, p. 786).

The role of "Western Serbs" in Yugoslav and Serbian politics has no analogy in the Russian case. Russians from the Russian minority did become Soviet leaders, notably Nikita Khrushchev and Leonid Brezhnev from Ukraine. But they were always more Soviet in their identities than Russian.

Serbs saw the continuation of Yugoslavia as the only guarantee of the safety of the large Serbian minorities lying outside Serbia. The unification of the South Slavs after 1918 facilitated the incorporation of all Serbs within one state -- Yugoslavia. This unification was a paramount objective of the Orthodox Church and most political parties. It allowed the revival of the Serbian Patriarchate in 1920 (Ramet, 1996, p. 167). The Serbian national question was the factor that prevented the rise of a democratic opposition to Milosevic in Serbia. Instead, "the opposition tried to beat Milosevic on the national question, but without having an alternative program" (Sekelj, 2000, p. 61). The democratic opposition in Serbia "constantly tried to take over Milosevic's precedence on the national cause." (Sekelj, 2000, p. 60).

The diaspora played a large role in Serbian politics, unlike in the Russian case. As Serbs struggled, often violently, for a separate nation-state, the cost, especially in human suffering, became part of the shared myths of a "valiant, little Serbia." The final outcome -- independent statehood -- could then be glorified.

In World War II, Serbian suffering was no worse than that experienced by Russians and other Soviet peoples at the hands of Nazis. Nevertheless, the two produced different outcomes. The Serbs felt that they had defeated the Nazis and their puppet Croat and Slovene allies. Victory was understood as a Serbian ethnic victory, even though the Communist Partisans portrayed the victory in multiethnic terms.

In the former USSR, the "Great Patriotic War" was developed as a pan-Soviet myth, although the victory was supposedly led by the Russian "elder brother." In both states, the anticommunist Serbian Cetniks and the Russian Vlasov Army were attacked as "Nazi collaborators," and both of their leaders were executed. But only in Serbia have center-right and nationalist groups, such as Seselj's SRS and Draskovic's SPO, backed the revival and rehabilitation of the Cetnik traditions. In the Russian Federation, the fusion of Russian nationalism and Soviet internationalism has not led to calls for the rehabilitation of the Vlasov movement.

Russian nationalist groups never called for the secession of the Russian SFSR from the USSR. Instead, they were either co-opted by the Soviet regime (i.e., the All-Russian Social-Christian Union), or created by it (i.e., Vladimir Zhirinovskii's Liberal Democratic Party [LDPR]). Zhirinovskii's LDPR has continued to play the role of a "loyal nationalist opposition" in post-Soviet Russia, in the same manner that the Serbian Radical Party played that role under Milosevic. Russian nationalist groups backed the continuation of the USSR and preferred a Russian-dominated multinational state to an independent nation-state. As Suny (2001, p. 56) points out, "The imperial tended to thwart, if not subvert, the national, just as the national worked to erode the stability and legitimacy of the state."

Russian nationalism as a force demanding the "dismemberment of the multinational Soviet state" was a myth, Motyl argues (1990, p. 163). No Russian dissident groups -- from either the democrat or nationalist wings -- backed the secession of the Russian SFSR from the USSR. Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn backed such a step but demanded that Ukraine and Belarus be part of the new "Russian" state. In other words,

"Russian," as in the tsarist era, was understood as eastern Slavic. In a sample of 802 prisoners of conscience in the Soviet era, only 36 were Russian nationalists, five fewer than the number of Latvians (Motyl, 1990, p. 165). Half of these Russian nationalists were from the All-Russian Social-Christian Union. The Russian nationalists complained that the USSR was not Russian enough. Non-Russians complained it was too Russian, and that it had russified them.

In the non-Russian republics of the USSR, the dissident movement was democratic, like its Russian colleagues, but also nationalist (unlike in Russia). Non-Russian national democrats supported at a minimum the decentralization of the USSR, greater republican rights, and an end to russification. At a maximum, they backed the transformation of the USSR into a loose confederation or independent statehood. After the USSR disintegrated, reform was the priority of Russia's leaders, while nation- and state building was prioritized in most of the non-Russian successor states (McAuley, 1997, p. 27).

The "other" for the non-Russian national democrats was Russia or Russians (Kuzio, 2001); the "other" for Russian dissidents was Stalinism; and for the Russian nationalists, the "others" were the Jews and Masons, who were allegedly plotting against Russia. Anti-Semitism was therefore a common feature of Russian nationalism, something not found at that time among non-Russian national democrats, who were often allied to Zionist prisoners of conscience in the Gulag (see Kheifets, 1984).

The Communist Party of the Russian Federation (KPRF), like Milosevic's SPS, combines nationalism and communism. For KPRF leader Gennadii Zyuganov, the national idea is more important than Marxism. Although both the KPRF and the SPS espouse nationalism, the former is state- and great power-based while the latter is ethnically driven.

Communist parties in the remainder of the CIS are anti-nationalist and closer to authentic Stalinist and Marxist parties. The KPRF supports a revived USSR based on a return to the pre-Gorbachev Soviet federation. Meanwhile, communist parties in the remainder of the CIS see a revived USSR as a loose confederation of sovereign states (Urban, 1999). The latter position resembles Gorbachev's after the failed August 1991 coup. It is similar to that of the non-Serbian republics in Yugoslavia, which supported the 1974 constitution, whereas the Serbs preferred a highly centralized state.

The combination of post-Soviet Russian great-power nationalism and communism inherits the same ideological mix that made up Soviet communism from the 1930s. The 1999 KPRF program describes the party as a "patriotic movement," linking nationalism with the geographic expansion of the Soviet state, not just the Russian Federation (see the electoral "Platform of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation," 1999). The association of dominant groups with the larger state is "accompanied by a rejection of narrower particularist goals and aspirations" (Vujacic 1996, p. 774).

The KPRF calls for the eastern Slavs to be united in a "single union state." This should be a prelude to the gathering of "the fraternal peoples under the sky of a common homeland" ("Platform of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation," 1999). Although the revival of the Soviet state is still paid lip service by non-Russian communist parties, they differ fundamentally from the KPRF in three areas. First, the KPRF and Russian nationalists believe that Ukrainians and Belarusians are "Russians," something non-Russian communists and even Sovietophiles (such as Lukashenko) refuse to accept. Second, communist parties in the non-Russian republics are antinationalist. The national-communist wing left the non-Russian communist parties in 1989-91 and in the 1990s went on to create centrist or social-democratic political parties. Third, non-Russian communists or Sovietophiles do not agree with their countries being absorbed into the Russian Federation, and instead back a confederal union of sovereign states.

Apart from Zhirinovskii's "loyal-nationalist" Liberals, other Russian nationalist parties have not been successful in Russian elections. In contrast, statist parties and views did get the upper hand over reformist parties by the mid-1990s in the Russian Federation (Molchanov, 2000). Such views became the basis for Putin's campaign for a strong "derzhava" (state) and the platform of his "party of power," the Yedinstvo party, in the 1999 elections.

On the eve of Putin's ascendancy to power, 81 percent of Russians were in favor of Russia asserting itself as a "great power" (Snyder, 2000, p. 249). Moscow Mayor Yuriy Luzhkov said that all parties in Russia had declared themselves to be "patriotic." Had they not done so, he said, they "would not obtain any recognition on the part of the nation" (interview with "Krymskaya pravda," 3 August 1999).

Could Russia become a "great power" without the CIS being within its sphere of influence? The Russian elites think not. If Russia wishes to

assert itself as a "great power," they believe, it has to negate nation building in favor of empire building in the CIS. Russia's demands for the CIS to be recognized as its exclusive sphere of influence are an attempt to carve out a neo-imperial role for itself in the post-Soviet era.

The growth in Russian statism is also paralleled by the rise in Soviet nostalgia. The Russian Federation has had difficulties introducing new national symbols. In a January 1998 vote, only a quarter of the State Duma backed the new flag, coat of arms, and anthem. The majority wished to maintain the Soviet anthem. Meanwhile, those in the Russian autonomous republics, such as Tatarstan, see the Russian double-headed eagle as imperialist.

In April 1997, the KPRF moved an amendment to return the Soviet flag and anthem. The proposal obtained 239 votes with only 90 against, but fell short of the 300 votes necessary for constitutional changes. As late as 2000, only 11 percent of Russians knew the lyrics of the Russian anthem, whereas 79 percent could sing the Soviet one. As Kolsto (2000, p. 245) points out, these symbols do not draw upon Russian ethno-cultural identity. The Russian Federation, unlike Serbia, "lacks any generally agreed-on symbols and state attributes on which to pin this loyalty" (Kolsto, 2000, p. 246).

Putin overcame Boris Yeltsin's inability to resolve Russia's national symbols by reviving the Soviet-era anthem with new lyrics. In a State Duma vote in December 2000, only nine months after he came to power, 378 voted to reinstate the Soviet anthem, with only a small minority of 53 opposing the move (Whittell, 2000).

The tricolor flag and tsarist coat of arms have been maintained alongside the revived Soviet anthem with new lyrics. The Russian military has also reinstated Soviet Red Army insignia. Russia's national symbols therefore reflect the fusion of Russian, tsarist, and Soviet identities that make up Russian identity.

Why has Russian ethnic nationalism proven weak compared to Russian statism? If we define nationalism as desiring to possess an independent state, then, as Motyl (1990) has pointed out, Russian nationalism in the tsarist empire and USSR was a myth. The use of "Russian nationalism" is "inaccurate and misleading," as we are really talking more about "imperialism" (Rowley, 2000, p. 23). The Russians have remained proud of their multinational empire, which has become "an integral part of the Russian tradition" (Hosking, 1998, p. 453).

Russification was selectively applied to the population of tsarist Russian population and was not part of a strategy to build a homogenized nation-state. The White Armies in the Russian civil war did not seek a Russian nation-state but to rebuild the tsarist empire in a more "democratic" manner and opposed proposals for a Ukraine to be federally tied to Russia (let alone Ukrainian independence) (Procyk, 1995). Russian Liberals "could not abandon the idea of a centralised Russian empire" (Rowley, 2000, p. 27). Furthermore, "there was no political party -- or even a single individual -- calling for the Russian heartland to let go of its empire and to create a government of, by and for Russians" (Rowley, 2000, p. 28).

The Russian elites did not propagate nationalist demands. They saw the world in universalist terms through religion, imperialism, Soviet internationalism, or Marxism, which "ruled out nationalism" (Rowley, 2000, p. 33). According to Rowley (2000, p. 36), Yeltsin was the first Russian leader to act as a "nationalist," as he defined the Russian SFSR as a separate entity from the USSR. This is to some extent true, although Russia never declared independence from the USSR.

Lieven (1999) has therefore concluded that Russian nationalism is "weak." There are no mass Russian nationalist organizations among Russian minorities, no effective Russian nationalist paramilitaries; Russian nationalist parties have not been successful in elections; and the state has not provided consistent support to Russian nationalists.

The reasons for this weakness are identified by Lieven (1999) as the lack of a deep identity and cultural traditions, absence of institutions facilitating mobilization, the weakness of civil society and religion, and the identification of Russian identity with the state, not with the ethnic nation. In Serbia, the situation in all of these areas was different.

Soviet ideology, not Russian nationalism, created the Transdniester separatist enclave, which opposed demands by the Moldovan Popular Front for Moldova's reunification with Romania. "The social base of this right-wing coalition consisted of young male volunteers from the Transdniestrian diaspora, declassé policemen and officers, fascists recruited from working-class 'toughs,' neo-Stalinist pensioners, and the lumpen proletariat" (Vujacic, 1996, p. 771).

Although some of these social strata were also present among Milosevic's supporters, the ideology was different in the two cases (pan-eastern Slavism/Soviet revivalism for the Transdniester, and Serbian ethnic nationalism for Milosevic). In addition, the peasantry

backed the Serbian Socialists and nationalists, whereas in the Transdnier the ethnic Moldovan peasantry has not given its support to the separatists. Within Russia, the peasantry has not supported nationalist groups, preferring instead leftist parties.

In the Baltic states, few Russians joined the Internationalist fronts. In Ukraine, the granting of minority rights, the lack of a memory of past atrocities (for which most Ukrainians -- at least in the eastern part of the country -- blamed communism and Stalinism rather than ethnic Russians), and the absence of conflict all served to maintain good relations with Russia. In the Crimea, separatism was unsuccessful "because it failed to generate either unity among the Russian elites in Crimea or mass mobilization in the population" (Lieven, 1999, p. 60).

After 1992, Russian officers swore the oath of allegiance to Ukraine. This "contrasts with the behavior of the majority of Serbian officers in Croatia and Bosnia, almost none of whom endorsed the new states." Many of these officers formed the core of the Bosnian Serb army. Russian officers did not feel threatened in Ukraine (Vujacic, 1996, p. 767).

In the former USSR, the weakness of civil society, the existence of amorphous identities, lack of mutual trust, and atomization of the population all served to dampen the ability to mobilize. All three eastern Slavs had an "embryonic notion of nationalism and a very murky definition of the 'other'" (Prizel, 2001, p. 57), which made it difficult to create populist movements.

(The author is a resident fellow at the Centre for Russian and East European Studies and adjunct professor at the Department of Political Science, University of Toronto.)

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RUSSIANS AND RUSSOPHONES IN THE FORMER USSR AND SERBS IN YUGOSLAVIA: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF PASSIVITY AND MOBILIZATION (Part 3)

By Taras Kuzio

Serbian Diaspora And Russian Minorities

Most Western scholars have used the term "diaspora" to describe Russians living outside the Russian Federation (Melvin, 1998, Chinn and Kaiser, 1996). As Kolsto (2000, p. 83) argues, however, talk of a single Russian diaspora is "highly misleading." Khazanov (1995, p. 239) describes Russian minorities as at the "Ottoman stage of national identity," where identity is state- or empire-, rather than ethnically, based.

There is no evidence that Russian minorities, as Zevelev (1996) claims, see the Russian Federation as their external homeland (Simonsen, 1996). Their homeland was, and in some cases continues to be, the USSR (Poppe and Hagendoorn, 2001).

In addition, fears voiced by Brubaker (1994, pp. 70-72 and Wilson, 1997) that the interplay between Russian minorities, "nationalizing" non-Russian successor states, and the Russian state would be the catalyst for interethnic conflict have not materialized (Kuzio, 2001). Let us emphasize again that with the exception of Moldova, no ethnic conflict involving Russian minorities has taken place in the former USSR.

The lack of a pan-Russian diaspora identity is replicated by the lack of a pan-Russophone identity. It is therefore surprising that some Western scholars have accepted both of these categories (Russian diaspora and Russophone identity). As Barrington (2001) concludes in a study of Russophones in Ukraine and Kazakhstan, Russian-speaking identity is far weaker than ethnic- or civic-based (i.e., citizenship)

identities. This weakness of a Russophone identity is an additional factor explaining why Russian mobilization has been weak. As russified locals, Russophones tend to support parties backing a civic and territorial approach, such as the local communist parties (Beissinger, 2002). Russian ethnic nationalist parties have failed to make inroads into Russophone communities in the non-Russian successor states of the USSR.

Advocacy of secessionism and of joining the Russian Federation in regions such as Northeast Estonia, Eastern Ukraine, and Northern Kazakhstan has been consequently remarkably negligible as well. If Russian minorities were to perceive the Russian Federation as their genuine "homeland," pro-Russian secessionism would have been more widespread. In contrast, Serbian minorities in Croatia and Bosnia did see the Former Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) and Serbia as their homeland and acted accordingly.

The borders of the Russian Federation remain problematical for Russians because Russian identity was so closely bound up with Soviet identity, and the Russian Federation was the "imperial residue" of the USSR. As Yugoslavia disintegrated and became the FRY in 1991-92, the issue of borders also became a central issue in Serbia. If the FRY was to incorporate all Serbs in a "Greater Serbia," the state would have to include areas taken from Croatia and Bosnia.

In the former USSR, this was more confusing -- a factor amplified by the existence of the CIS, which continued to blur the boundaries between the Soviet successor states. The Russian Federation was only too happy to continue to maintain fictitious "internal CIS" borders along the same lines as the former administrative boundaries dividing Soviet republics. Delimitation was acceptable to Russians, but demarcation was ruled out.

Both Serbia and the Russian Federation faced a similar problem in deciding where their borders should be drawn -- that of historic memory. In both cases, it was felt that the boundaries should incorporate important and painful areas of perceived past communitarian suffering. For the Serbs, "Serbia" was where there were Serbian Orthodox Churches and graves (Anzulovic, 1999, p. 79). The Serbian Orthodox Church and nationalist groups had long clamored for the site of the Croatian World War II-era Jasenovac concentration camp to become the second sacred shrine for Serbs after Kosovo. But the camp was depicted in Yugoslavia as a shrine for

Yugoslav peoples, rather than one dedicated exclusively to Serb suffering in World War II.

In the Russian case, the two most visible historic "places of memory" lying outside the Russian Federation are Sevastopol, the "city of glory" (Plokhy, 2000), and the city of Kyiv (Kuzio, 2003c). The Sevastopol and Crimean issues held up Russia's recognition of Ukraine's borders until a treaty was signed in May 1997, and further delayed until 1998-99, before the Russian parliament agreed to ratify it. The concession came only after Ukraine signed a 20-year lease (1997-2017) allowing Russia's Black Sea Fleet to use the bays in Sevastopol. Kyiv has long been depicted as the "mother" of "Russian" cities. If it is now the capital city of independent Ukraine and 600 years older than Moscow, should Ukrainians not be viewed as being the "elder brothers" of eastern Slavs, rather than Russians (see Kuzio, 2003b, 2003c)?

Serbian minorities outside the Serbian heartland were a central factor in Serbian politics throughout the 1980s and 1990s. Although Russia also threatened to intervene on behalf the Russian minorities in the "near abroad," such an intervention never materialized, with the exception of the 14th Army in Moldova in defense of pro-Soviet separatists in the Transdnier. Since they have a weak sense of (ethnic) group identity (unlike Serbs), the Russians did not engage in collective action. Smith (1999) describes them as a "failed imperial diaspora" because they looked to the USSR, not the Russian SFSR, as their "homeland." Cohen (1996, p. 139) also describes Russian minorities as "imperial agents" left behind after the imperial state had disintegrated. They resemble Turks living outside Turkey in Greek Thrace, the Anglo-Irish in Eire, and the French settlers in Algeria.

More common were calls by Russia's Foreign Ministry and security forces for the defense of "compatriots" (Russophones), not ethnic Russians per se. In the Baltic states, Ukraine, and elsewhere, Russia intervened diplomatically and spoke out on behalf of Russophones. This irritated the non-Russian states of the former USSR, which argued that Russia had no right to intervene on behalf of Russians. By widening this intervention to Russophones, however, Russia was claiming to speak on behalf of the majority of Belarusians, half of Latvians and Kazakhs, and one-third of Estonians and Ukrainians.

The relationship between Serbia and the Serbian minorities beyond its borders was complex. There was a "fundamental and enduring core belief, that the two groups constituted one national community" (Thomas, 1999, p. 205). This feeling was augmented by the

movement of Serbian refugees to Serbia during the conflicts that rocked Yugoslavia, who would back Slobodan Milosevic's Socialists in after-elections. Similarly intense feelings of a common Russian diaspora stretching from Estonia to Tajikistan were lacking in the former USSR.

At the same time, there were strong differences in character, language, and culture between the Serbian diaspora and Serbs living in Serbia. This sentiment was also found in the former USSR, where there was resentment at the influx of "different" Russians from the CIS into the Russian Federation. As most of the Russian returnees were from Central Asia and the Trans-Caucasus -- not from Ukraine, Belarus, or the Baltic states -- there was a large social distance between Russians living in the Russian Federation and those who had lived for decades or centuries among Muslim or Caucasian peoples. Russians living in Estonia have closer basic values to Estonians than to Russians living in the Russian Federation proper (Laitin, 1996).

The boundaries of the Russian diaspora remain fluid, a factor that increased after the USSR disintegrated (Melvin, 1998, p. 29). Because "Russian" was tantamount to "Soviet," Soviet citizens, especially from mixed marriages, often chose to identify themselves as "Russians" for career purposes. Leonid Kuchma declared himself to be a Russian when he was elected to the Ukrainian parliament in March 1990. Two years later, as prime minister, he had become a Ukrainian. A similar switch from Serbian to Croatian was unlikely to take place. Ukraine's first defense minister, Konstantin Morozov, is another case in point. In the Soviet military, the top positions were exclusively reserved for Russians (as they were for Serbs in the Yugoslav Army). If one's parents were mixed and only one was Russian, children usually became "Russian." In the late Soviet era, when Morozov supported the Ukrainian Popular Movement (Rukh), he researched his family background and found it to be Ukrainian. As he would eventually put it: "I personally know Ukrainian families in the Donbas who officially registered as Russian because they did not want to be considered second-class citizens or associated with a politically disenfranchised ethnic group" (Morozov, 2000, p. 5).

The fluidity of "Russian" identity can be seen in post-Soviet censuses. In both Ukraine and, more surprisingly, Belarus, the number of Russians has declined since the 1989 Soviet census. The 2001 Ukrainian census registered a 5 percent decline in the number of Russians (a drop of 3 million in absolute numbers) and a similar increase in Ukrainians from 72 to 77 percent, compared with the 1989

Soviet census (Kuzio, 2003a). The number of Russians registered in the 1999 Belarus census has also declined in comparison with the Soviet 1989 census. This trend of Russian re-identification is likely to continue (Kolsto, 1996, p. 620).

The fluidity of Russian identity and re-identification in the post-Soviet era is, paradoxically enough, also a product of assimilationist (russification) pressures in the former USSR, whereas in postwar Yugoslavia such pressures were not as evident. From the mid-1930s, the Soviet nationality policy sought to create a "homo sovieticus" from the diverse Soviet peoples, with its core based on the three eastern Slavic peoples speaking Russian. A large proportion of the gain in the Russian population in the 20th century came from assimilated non-Russians. In the 1926 Soviet census, 3.1 million Ukrainians lived in the Kuban region of the North Caucasus. By the 1959 census, this number had declined to only 170,000. The same was true of the 1.63 million Ukrainians in the Voronezh-Kursk "oblasts" bordering Ukraine, whose number had declined to 260,000 during the same period. In the Kuban region, residents -- although now defined as "Russians" -- see themselves as "Rus'ky" or "khokhly" (a derogatory term for Ukrainians) and continue to speak a local Ukrainian dialect.

In Yugoslavia, there was no attempt to create a Yugoslav nation. Yet the 1981 census produced 5.4 percent (1.2 million) "Yugoslavs" (Pavlowitch, 2002, p. 179), whose number grew to 4.5 million a decade later (Perica, 2002, p. 103). Unlike the Soviet census, which only permitted ethnic entries, Yugoslav population counts allowed a "Yugoslav" category to be recorded. The Yugoslav category was aimed at those with mixed marriages and the ethnically mixed republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, but was no reflection of a policy aimed at forging a new Yugoslav nation. Until the 1980s, the officially defined main enemies in Yugoslavia were Serbian nationalism, hegemony, and revanchism (Perica, 2002, pp. 43, 103). Yugoslav nationality policies consisted of "brotherhood and unity," a Tito cult, the myth of the common antifascist struggle in World War II, victory over Soviet hegemony, nonalignment, a third-way Yugoslav model, and the state and League of Communists as the only factors preventing ethnic carnage. These elements of the Yugoslav "civil religion" were important in developing the Yugoslav cult of "brotherhood and unity" (Perica, 2002, p. 103), at least while Tito was alive, until 1980.

Serb And Russian Enclaves

In 1990, the Serbs who inhabited the Krajina region of Croatia staged an uprising (Perica, 2002, p. 153). A similar uprising took place among the Russian-speaking Slavs who dominated the Transdniester region of

eastern Moldova. In both Krajina and the Transdnier, the military backers belonged to the remnants of the Yugoslav (JNA) and Soviet armed forces left behind or deliberately left in place. Ratko Mladic, the commander of the Bosnian Serb army, came from the JNA and the Yugoslav Partisan tradition. The Bosnian Serb armed forces (VRS) were created by former JNA personnel, and therefore their ethos, like that of Mladic, was hostile to the anticommunist Cetnik tradition favored by some loyal (SRS) and opposition (SPO) Serbian nationalists. The Partisan and JNA traditions of the VRS clashed with the growing Cetnik myths and traditions favored by Bosnian Serb leaders after they were dumped by Milosevic in 1993-94.

The peace plans proposed in Yugoslavia after 1994 were supported by only two parties, Vuk Draskovic's SPO and Milosevic's Socialists. The Radicals (SRS) and democratic opposition parties (DSS, DS) opposed the plans. Assassinated Serb Premier Zoran Djindjic, then head of the DS, and former Yugoslav President Vojislav Kostunica, then head of the DSS, called for all Serbs to be included within the FRY. The Serbian Orthodox Church backed up these calls and denounced the peace plans. For most political parties, it was perfectly natural to support a policy whereby all Serbs would live in one state (Thomas, 1999, p. 429).

Nevertheless, Serbian nationalism subsided by the mid 1990s. The Kosovo (Kosova) conflict from 1997-98 failed to arouse the nationalist passions found a decade earlier on the 600th anniversary of the Kosovo battle that led to the subjugation of Serbia by the Ottoman Empire. The Serbian nationalist countermobilization against Kosovar Albanian nationalism was less enthusiastic and passionate (Thomas, 1999, p. 409) than that in the early 1990s.

In regions of the former USSR other than Moldova, the Russian minorities failed to mobilize. Yet post-Soviet constitutions all re-defined Russians as a "national minority," a trend to which Russian minorities were hostile. In Ukraine, the absence of Russian mobilization is striking, considering the pessimistic predictions made by Western governments, intelligence agencies, and media in the first half of the 1990s. A combined U.S. National Intelligence Council report leaked to the media in January 1994 predicted Ukraine's disintegration and civil war along Yugoslav lines (Kuzio, 1994).

In 1991, the Crimea, the only region in Ukraine with a Russian majority, was upgraded to an autonomous republic from its "oblast" status -- one that had existed since 1945, when Tatars had been

ethnically cleansed the year before. In 1992, the Crimean Supreme Soviet declared "independence" from Ukraine. Although this created a crisis in relations between the Crimea and Ukraine, Kyiv did not follow Moldova's or Georgia's example and send troops to subdue the separatists. This was to Kyiv's credit, as the military suppression of the Transdnister and Abkhazia failed.

The 1992 declaration of Crimean independence was less secessionist in character than first met the eye; rather than secessionism, it was more of an attempt to obtain more local powers from Kyiv. The former local communist nomenklatura united in centrist "parties of power" did not support the Crimea's secession. Neither did the largest party in the Crimea, the Crimean branch of the Communist Party of Ukraine (KPU), which has always seen the Crimea as part of a Ukraine.

Russian nationalists who did back Crimean independence took power from centrists in 1994 but were marginalized by the following year. Their internal squabbles, incompetence in dealing with Crimea's acute socioeconomic problems, lack of support from the KPU and centrists and by an external power (Russia) were all factors that led to their demise.

The adoption of the Ukrainian and Crimean constitutions in 1996 and 1998, respectively, has resolved the "Crimean question." The Ukrainian Constitution forbids regional political parties, and Crimean parties had to register as all-Ukrainian ones or become local branches of other Ukrainian parties. The successor to Meshkov's Russian Bloc, the Soiuz (Union) party, failed miserably in the 1998 Ukrainian parliamentary elections, garnering only 0.7 percent. Two pro-Russian parties also did badly in the 2002 elections, polling a combined total of only 1.12 percent; and in the Crimea, the Russia Bloc placed fifth, two places lower than Viktor Yushchenko's Our Ukraine.

Religion

The Serbian Orthodox Church has always regarded itself as the defender of the Serbian nation and has traditionally defined itself as the kernel of Serbian identity. In interwar Yugoslavia, the Serbian Orthodox Church had close ties to the Serbian fascist Zbor movement. In the 1990s, the Serbian Orthodox Church supported attempts to bring all Serbs within one state, ignored Serb violence against non-Serbs, and backed nationalist parties.

The Russian Orthodox Church is a very different church, as it has never defined itself in exclusively ethnic Russian terms. The Russian Orthodox Church was the state church in the tsarist empire, its

jurisdiction covering all three eastern Slavic peoples and other Orthodox peoples.

Where the Serbian and Russian Orthodox churches have similar views is on their neighbors -- Macedonians or Ukrainians and Belarusians, respectively. The Serbian Orthodox Church sees Macedonians as "South Serbs," while Ukrainians and Belarusians are "Little" and "White Russians" to the Russian Orthodox Church. The Serbian Orthodox Church still refuses to accept the autocephaly of the Macedonian Orthodox Church, created in 1967 with the support of the communist authorities. After the disintegration of the USSR, the Russian Orthodox Church continued to view the entire former USSR as its canonical territory and refused to grant autocephaly to any Orthodox church. In Ukraine and Estonia the conflict over autocephaly was particularly vicious, but only in the latter did the state successfully intervene in support of Estonian Orthodox autocephaly. In Ukraine, the Ukrainian (i.e., Russian) Orthodox Church remains the dominant Orthodox church and has the backing of the KPU and some oligarchic centrist parties. It is opposed by the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Kyiv Patriarchate, which tends to be supported by national democrats.

In Russia and Belarus, the Russian Orthodox Church is the state church. This is a position that the ROC, like most Orthodox churches, favors. In Belarus, the regime of President Alyaksandr Lukashenka sees "Russian Orthodoxy" as an important element of a new eastern Slavic- Soviet revivalist ideology that can underpin the Belarusian state as it strives for union with Russia.

In Moldova, the Moldovan (i.e., Russian) Orthodox Church is in conflict with the newly registered Bessarabian Metropolitan Church, which perceives itself as a regional branch of the Romanian Orthodox Church. The Moldovan Orthodox Church is the republican exarchate of the Russian Orthodox Church. The clash in Moldova is therefore between Romanian nationalists who back the Bessarabian Metropolitan Church and the communists who, like communists in Ukraine and Belarus, support the Moldovan Orthodox Church.

The Russian Orthodox Church continues to look to the entire former USSR as its canonical territory, rather than define itself as an exclusive ethnic Russian Orthodox Church. This reluctance by the Russian Orthodox Church to define itself as a purely Russian church reflects the diffusion between Russian and tsarist-Soviet imperial identities referred to earlier. The Russian Orthodox Church is closely linked to Russian nationalist groups, which favor the restoration of autocracy,

the Russian empire, and restrictions on other confessions. It is anti-Semitic and believes in a worldwide Judeo-Masonic conspiracy. The Russian Orthodox Church is strongly supportive of its status as a state church and is inherently hostile to the West and Western values and influence (Verkhovsky, 2002).

This "Russian fundamentalism" has grown in the 1990s and represents the ideological base of the Russian Orthodox Church. In some respects, it is similar to that of the Serbian Orthodox Church in its anti-Westernism and anti-Semitism (Anzulovic, 1999, p. 120). But in several major respects they are different. First, the Serbian Orthodox Church only claims to speak on behalf of Serbia, Montenegro, and Macedonia (although in the latter case this is not possible, as a Macedonian Orthodox Church is recognized by Constantinople). The Serbian Orthodox Church has not, unlike the Russian Orthodox Church, sought to claim canonical jurisdiction over the whole of the former Yugoslavia. This is easier in the case of the Russian Orthodox Church because of the CIS. Second, the Serbian Orthodox Church is far more closely tied to Serbian ethnic identity. The destruction of the Serbian Orthodox Church during World War II, when it lost one-fifth of its clergy (Ramet, 1996), boosted this identification. The Serbian Orthodox Church saw the Croats as a threat because of the violence committed by the Nazi puppet Ustasa state against Serbs.

As Ramet (1996, p. 181) points out, "The Serbian Church views itself as identical with the Serbian nation since it considers that religion is the foundation of nationality." Ninety percent of those who define themselves as Serbs also claim to be Orthodox (Nations in Transit, 2002, p. 434), even though only 48 percent of women and 37 percent of men said they were religious in a 1994 survey (Ramet, 1996, p. 280). Under the Muslim Ottoman Empire, the Serbian Orthodox Church was the main forger of Serbian identity (Anzulovic, 1999, p. 79). The Serbian Orthodox Church was a staunch defender of placing all Serbs within one state, a policy that has not been supported by the Russian Orthodox Church toward Russians.

In the Russian Federation, the degree of correlation between Orthodoxy and Russian identity is exaggerated. Only 50 percent of individuals in the Russian Federation adhere to any religion, compared with 63-66 percent in Ukraine. In the Russian Federation, as few as 3.6 percent of people attend weekly church services, compared with 14 percent in Ukraine. Although the population of Ukraine is one-third the size of that of the Russian Federation, the "density of 'religious infrastructure'" is four times higher (Krindatch, 2003). During the

Soviet era, two-thirds of Russian Orthodox parishes were in Ukraine. In the post-Soviet era, Ukraine has twice as many parishes as the Russian Federation, a country with a population three times the size of that of Ukraine (Kuzio, 2000). Third, the Russian Orthodox Church became the state church of the USSR in 1943, when the patriarchate was revived. Although there was also an anticommunist Russian Orthodox Church abroad, the Russian Orthodox Church inside the USSR willingly collaborated with the Soviet state, which co-opted it.

In contrast, the Serbian Orthodox Church was never co-opted by the communist authorities. "As a nationalist institution...the Serbian Church was, de facto, in opposition, even if in loyal opposition" (Ramet, 1996, p. 180). By the 1960s and 1970s, the Serbian Orthodox Church was the lone Serbian nationalist organization in Yugoslavia. In June 1989, the Serbian Orthodox Church released "A Proposal of Serbian National Program," which called for it to be allowed to build more churches, defend old shrines and churches, teach national history in previously taboo subjects (Kosovo, the Ustasa genocide against Serbs, Serbians during World War II), and promote Serbian values and religion in schools. Milosevic readily agreed to these steps.

In Western Ukraine, the Russian Orthodox Church cooperated with the Soviet secret police (NKVD) to destroy the Ukrainian Uniate (Greek-Catholic) Church in 1946, and, in gratitude, the Soviet state allowed it to take over Uniate Church properties. In contrast, in Yugoslavia the communist authorities encouraged the Macedonians to create an autocephalous Orthodox Church in 1967 so as to weaken the Serbian Orthodox Church. The corollary in the USSR would have been for the state to support Ukrainian Orthodox autocephaly from the Russian Orthodox Church.

In Yugoslavia, the Serbian Orthodox Church never became the state church. Prior to 1984, it was attacked for chauvinism and Greater Serbian nationalism. Such attacks on the Russian Orthodox Church only occurred in the 1920s, when Russian nationalism was not favored in the USSR. As Ramet (1996, p. 171) points out, "Serbian nationalism, which has always been close to the heart of the Serbian Church, was seen by the communists not merely as an arch enemy of the new Yugoslavia but even as an enemy of the Serbian people itself."

Only after Milosevic's rise to power after 1987 did the Serbian Orthodox Church move closer to the Serbian leadership. The Serbian Orthodox Church supported the commemoration of the 600th

anniversary of the Kosovo battle in June 1989, which was attended by Milosevic. The following year, the first meeting took place between Milosevic and the Patriarch of the Serbian Orthodox Church. The Serbian Orthodox Church never protested the violent activities of Serbian paramilitaries in Bosnia and Croatia (Ramet, 1996, p. 280) and saw Milosevic as the long awaited liberator of Serbs (Perica, 2002, pp. 143-144). It lauded Milosevic, backed nationalist parties in the Serbian diaspora, compared Croatian President Franjo Tudjman to Ustasa leader Ante Pavelic (thereby vilifying Croats as intrinsically anti-Serb), and argued that Albanians were driven by Islamic fundamentalism (which was untrue). In April 1991, prominent members of the Serbian clergy openly called for revenge on today's Croats for Ustasa World War II crimes. Such outbursts on Ukrainians and Belarusians by the Russian Orthodox Church never took place.

Conclusion

This comparative study of Serb and Russian nationalism has reached six conclusions. First, the USSR and Yugoslavia undertook different nationalities policies. Yugoslav nationality policies long perceived Serbian nationalism as a threat, whereas in the USSR it was only in the 1920s that Russian nationalism was similarly condemned. Yugoslav nationality policies and hostility to Serbian nationalism therefore contributed to Serbian grievances, which came into the open after Tito's death in 1980. Russian nationalism was co-opted by the Soviet state from the-mid 1930s.

Second, a nation-state existed in Serbia prior to Yugoslavia, unlike in Russia. Serbia also had a long history of violently opposing foreign domination, whereas Russia had nearly always been an empire.

Third, Serbian and Russian nationalism are very different. Serbian nationalism is ethically based, whereas the Russian variety is statist, drawing on a tradition of imperial and great-power statehood. Serbian nationalism had struggled to create a nation-state from the Ottoman Empire. Russian nationalism had never sought to establish a nation-state, preferring instead multinational states or commonwealths.

Fourth, Serbian identity was not subsumed totally within a Yugoslav identity. Serbia possessed its own republican institutions, including an Academy of Sciences that drew up the famous 1986 Memorandum that had become Milosevic's ideological platform by 1989. The Russian SFSR never possessed its own institutions until 1990, only one year before the USSR disintegrated and Boris Yeltsin was elected Russian SFSR president. Only then did "Russia" begin to distance itself from the USSR. The lack of a Russian Communist Party until 1990 meant

that great-power nationalism, Stalinism, and conservative communism, which had dominated the Soviet Communist Party until Mikhail Gorbachev became first secretary in 1985, could not find an institutional entrenchment for itself from which it could mobilize opposition to Gorbachev, Russian democrats, and non-Russian national democrats.

Fifth, the diaspora was seen as part of the Serbian nation and its fate was a central factor in mobilizing Serbian nationalism. Yugoslavia was understood as a way to maintain all Serbs within the same state. With Yugoslavia gone, a wide range of Serbian political parties clamored for border changes and a de facto "Greater Serbia" that would incorporate Serbian minorities.

The same was never true of Russian minorities for Russia. The only instance of Russian violent mobilization in Moldova was Soviet -- not ethnic Russian nationalist. Russian official policies and political parties never called for a "Greater Russia" but instead favored either a revived USSR or a Russian-dominated and led CIS.

Sixth, the Serbian Orthodox Church was never co-opted by the Yugoslav communists, unlike its Russian counterpart. The Serbian Orthodox Church is a church that sees as one of its roles the protection of Serbian identity and culture. The Russian Orthodox Church is not a purely Russian Church, but sees its canonical territory as the entire former USSR. Its identity is imperial, Soviet, and pan-eastern Slavic, not ethnic Russian.

Paradoxically, a weak Russian ethnic identity facilitated the peaceful disintegration of the USSR. At the same time, this has made the post-Soviet Russian Federation less committed to nation building, while a weak national identity continues to undermine the growth of civil society. In contrast, Serbian ethnic nationalism was a prime factor in unleashing ethnic conflict and a violent disintegration of Yugoslavia. Nevertheless, a robust Serbian identity has also helped to produce a far more vibrant civil society in Serbia than that found in the Russian Federation.

(The author is a resident fellow at the Centre for Russian and East European Studies and adjunct professor at the Department of Political Science, University of Toronto).

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