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Between fragmenting and multiplying: scale-shift processes in Serbian and Croatian antiwar activisms

Bojan Bilić*[†]

School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University College London, UK

This paper follows the almost contemporaneous emergence of the two primary antiwar initiatives in Belgrade and Zagreb to explore how they acted as hotbeds from which permanent human rights organizations appeared in the newly created nation-states. Drawing mostly upon in-depth interviews with antiwar activists from Serbia and Croatia, I argue that the dominant patterns of protest expansion were different in the two countries. While cooperation and tensions existed within both antiwar groups, the Antiwar Campaign of Croatia acted as a broker, leading toward the multiplication of civic initiatives; on the other hand, the Belgrade Center for Antiwar Action was characterized by ideological, professional, and personal divisions, which caused a rapid fragmentation of antiwar undertakings. This paper outlines the main reasons for such expansion patterns (scale-shift processes) and discusses them in the light of recent theoretical advances in political contention studies.

Keywords: Antiwar Campaign of Croatia; Center for Antiwar Action; Croatia; Serbia; scale shift

Scale-shift processes within the Serbian and Croatian antiwar enterprises represent a particularly under-theorized aspect of (post-)Yugoslav antiwar engagement. These are mechanisms through which the breadth of contention increased in these ex-Yugoslav republics. This paper follows the nearly contemporaneous emergence of the two primary antiwar initiatives (in the social-movement lexicon: *initiators*) which appeared in Belgrade and Zagreb at the very beginning of the wars of Yugoslav succession, namely the Center for Antiwar Action (*Centar za antiratnu akciju*) and the Antiwar Campaign of Croatia (*Antiratna kampanja Hrvatske*).[1] I offer a suggestive account of how these two initiatives – which soon after their appearance lost the federal frame in which they had intended to operate – acted as hotbeds from which many episodic instances of contentious politics as well as more permanent human rights organizations (*spin-offs*) were created in their newly founded nation-states. This paper identifies and starts to socially root a set of processes responsible for the expansion of the politically oriented civic scenes in these two countries, which – while giving an impression of similarity – had appreciably different developmental pathways.

An exploration of scale-shift processes – interactions within, fragmentation and multiplication of nascent collective enterprises – accentuates the relational nature of contention's numerous facets. It also transcends the orientation of single actors severed from their broader political and cultural environment which at certain points characterized the classic social movement agenda. Studying social movement expansion mechanisms takes into account Melucci's argument (1992) that movement unity is not an empirical given but a

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*Emails: bojan.bilic.09@ucl.ac.uk, BilicB@ceu.hu
†Current address: Institute for Advanced Study, Central European University, Budapest.

commonsensical observation which calls for meticulous sociological investigation. Accounts of collective undertakings which we, as observers of social phenomena, tend to transform into actions done by homogeneous performers representing an ideological stance in a given period of time, are but snapshots of continually unfolding processes of negotiation, polarization, or cooperation, informing and learning from each other. Thus, collective action should be "conceived as a field of meanings and orientations which are constructed through social relationships within resources and limits" (Melucci 1992, 247).

Positioning scale-shift processes in a comparative perspective is relevant for several reasons. First, unearthing antiwar enterprises diversifies the Yugoslav political scene toward the end of the 1980s and in the early 1990s. Such an approach points to the presence of antinationalist and mostly centripetally oriented/(con)federal alternatives that tend to get lost in the widespread simplistic accounts of Yugoslavia's break-up. While not diluting the importance of the (pervasive) nationalism argument, the focus on antiwar initiatives supplements the authoritative, but sometimes monofocal, nationalism studies. It contributes to an empirical corpus which should enable (post-)Yugoslav antiwar civic engagement – long sidelined in Yugoslav studies – to assume its proper place in the interpretations of Yugoslavia's disintegration.

Positioning the antiwar enterprises which unfolded in Serbia and Croatia throughout the 1990s in a comparative design is justified by the fact that the relationship between Belgrade and Zagreb represented the central axis of Yugoslav political life. These two countries constitute an "epistemological pair" through which distorted nationalist sentiments are mutually encouraged. As Gagnon (2004, xix) points out:

> Serbia and Croatia ... represent cases of what western observers characterize as extremist nationalism leading to violence, and they are often held up as the paradigmatic examples of ethnic conflict.

Documenting and theorizing antiwar efforts in both countries – and especially their capitals – can subvert what tends to be presented as a popular consensus around the national cause. Developmental trajectories of the earliest civic initiatives are crucial for understanding the subsequent processes through which the nationally bounded NGO spheres in the post-Yugoslav countries were formed as well as for better appreciating the power arrangements among them.

By treating the Center for Antiwar Action and the Antiwar Campaign of Croatia as "early risers" (Tarrow 1998), I do not mean to suggest that either of them appeared in a political vacuum or that they were the sole representatives of the antiwar voice in their respective republics. In recent East European sociological scholarship there is a tendency to simplify Yugoslav political life which also witnessed dissenting voices and was more liberal in comparison with the countries under the stronger Soviet influence. Yugoslavia was not a conflict-free society in which citizens' political agency was discovered with the arrival of foreign foundations. New (political) organizations erupted onto the public scene in the early 1990s, testifying to a lot of political conflictuality which had been brewing beneath the legislative surface. Toward the end of the 1980s, destabilized and economically weakened Yugoslavia witnessed nascent federation-wide extra-institutional attempts to pacify the situation and evade an armed conflict whose imminence and cruelty could have been discerned. These collective undertakings, such as for example the Association for the Yugoslav Democratic Initiative, the Reformatory Party (*Reformska stranka*, led by the last Yugoslav prime minister, Ante Marković), or the European Movement in Yugoslavia (*Evropski pokret u Jugoslaviji*), constitute important precursors of antiwar engagement. A significant political change which leads to an expansion of political

opportunities (like the introduction of political pluralism or the threat of war) reactivates dormant social networks and gives them public prominence (Tarrow 1998). Yugoslav antiwar initiatives were often related to feminist (Blagojević 1998; Bonfiglioli 2008; Boži-nović 1996) and environmentalist (Oštrić 1992) groups, as well as to the 1968 student protest (Kanzleiter 2009). My analysis will offer a suggestive account of how antiwar undertakings can be put into the context of these long-term patterns of Yugoslav civic organizing.

Although the number of studies on (post-)Yugoslav antiwar activism has recently grown (Bilić 2011; Dvornik 2009; Fridman 2011; Janković and Mokrović 2011; Jansen 2005; Pešić 1992; Stubbs 2001; Šušak 1996), this scholarship is still lacking a better articulated theoretical perspective. In those instances in which empirical work has been done, it either does not have a sufficiently wide geographical scope for appreciating the phenomenon in the entirety of its perpetuating forces, cooperations, resistances, and tensions or it establishes hardly any theoretical connections with the rich conceptual legacy of contemporary political sociology. In the rare cases in which the social movement approach has been invoked, it is either not shown to be relevant to civic engagement in the highly contentious (post-)Yugoslav political milieu or it is not applied to the sphere of antiwar activism (Dević 1997; Tomić and Atanacković 2009).

Analysis

Croatia

The Antiwar Campaign of Croatia was founded in Zagreb in July 1991. Its charter, which was signed throughout Yugoslavia, postulated that the activists were determined to promote communication and peaceful conflict resolution regardless of divergent ideological stances. The most proximate predecessor of the Campaign was a small activist organization named Svarun, which defined itself as a working group for environmental, pacifist, feminist and spiritual initiatives and was founded in Zagreb in 1986. Although fragile and organizationally embryonic, Svarun represented a point of convergence for a younger (post-1968) generation of Zagreb political activists. The group was primarily active in the sphere of environmentalist consciousness-raising and in the antinuclear protests which, toward the end of the 1980s, took place throughout Yugoslavia. One of Svarun's most important initiatives was the dissemination of the idea that conscientious objection is a human right. The Antiwar Campaign continued the efforts to protect and promote human rights and freedoms, reject violence, and support civic initiatives, communication, and solidarity.[2]

Though the Campaign is no longer active, it gave birth to numerous initiatives which today operate throughout Croatia. From its founding, the Campaign coordinated organizationally different forms of antiwar engagement across the newly formed country. It is for this reason that the organization was initially named the Council of the Antiwar Campaign. One of the founders of this activist group reports that:

> The Antiwar Campaign was an incubator which during its worst stage had around 20 people, but over the years it grew into a network of more than 20 organizations.... The Center for Women Victims of War, Zamir, Suncokret, the Center for Peace Studies and many others ... they exist today with their own identity and autonomy.... Along with its task related to the promotion of antiviolence, communication, and conflict resolution, the Campaign was very much concerned about creating a space in which new organizations would appear.... We knew that it was important to decentralize, so we were sending money and support to Istra, Knin, Slavonija ... but it all started from a single initiative. (Interview with the author, Zagreb, June 2010)

The operation of the Campaign waxed and waned in terms of activist support through-out the conflict and at one point it "had around 20 people." Nevertheless, from very early on, the activists articulated their objective not only to promote communication and peace-ful conflict resolution, but also to start building a decentralized infrastructure which would enable and strengthen civic engagement across the country. In that regard, establishing contact with the Osijek-based Center for Peace, Non-Violence and Human Rights – a grassroots initiative established in 1992 in a place under the direct attack of the Yugoslav People's Army – was crucial for both organizations. On the one hand, the Campaign logis-tically strengthened the operation of a small activist group exposed to strong pressures. On the other, the Osijek Center legitimized antiwar and human rights–oriented activities taking place in the Croatian capital. As Katarina Kruhonja, the co-founder of the Osijek Center, reports (quoted in Janković and Mokrović 2011, 35):

> For us in Osijek, who started gathering to undertake peace initiatives, the discovery that there was the Antiwar Campaign was exactly what we needed. We did not know each other from before ... the Campaign Charter articulated exactly what to us at that time appeared vitally important.

Moreover, the function of the Campaign to improve the organizational capacities of the emerging civic initiatives across the country is more explicitly addressed by another activist:

> There are many projects stemming from the Antiwar Campaign ... they are now independent, they have their own offices and they are registered. [The Antiwar Campaign] office is here to enable financial assistance, space, logistics, networking with other groups on the NGO scene, contacts, we are here to support them. (Šipak 2001, 184)

This activist claims that the Campaign produced many initiatives which have in the meantime managed to secure their organizational independence. The extract demonstrates that the Campaign was acting as a successful broker which established links among antiwar groups, offering financial assistance and providing a broader framework in which antiwar activities could be undertaken.

The mentioned idea of using "their own space" features prominently in the interview with another activist, who reports that:

> An organization would leave the Campaign when it became strong enough and when it needed more space ... because there were too many of us and the Campaign only had around 50 square meters at its disposal ... so simply physically ... when there were too many of us, when we could establish our own structure, then we left ... and we have all acted like a network ... until the present day.... Of course, there were some tensions ... but it was like the reproduction of an amoeba, simple division ... when it is big enough, then it starts to divide. (Interview with the author, Zagreb, June 2010)

The civic-oriented organizations within the Campaign multiplied as the result of phys-ical and structural constraints. The Campaign served as a platform for knowledge acqui-sition before a group of activists became organizationally capable of working on its own. My respondent acknowledged that there were tensions among the participants in the ear-liest Campaign initiatives and that sometimes there were too many of them in a small space on which the Campaign could count. That is why structural overgrowth was, according to her, one of the most important expansion mechanisms. Even after their formal separation from the Campaign, spin-off groups and organizations "have all acted like a network ... until the present day."

This multiplication[3] potential of the Antiwar Campaign is particularly evident in com-parison with another human rights–oriented organization which has been active in Croatia, namely the Croatian Helsinki Committee. The Committee was founded in

March 1993 by a group of intellectuals, lawyers, and public figures gathered around Ivan Zvonimir Čičak.[4] Čičak was a participant in the nationalistic movement known as the Croatian Spring (*Hrvatsko proljeće*) which at the beginning of the 1970s demanded more rights and autonomy for Croatia and the Croatian language. This movement, although encountering strong resistance from the Yugoslav regime, gave prominence to a new generation of Croatian politicians (Franjo Tuđman, Dražen Budiša, Ivan Zvonimir Čičak), while at the same time forcing Croatian Communist Party officials to resign (Savka Dabčević-Kučar, Miko Tripalo). During the 1990s, the Croatian Helsinki Committee was active in preventing evictions (*deložacije*), arguing for the rule of law, and documenting war crimes committed on Croatia's territory. Given their generational and ideological differences as well as divergent activist traditions, the Campaign and the Committee did not cooperate during the war in spite of their essentially similar objectives. In contrast to the rhizoid Campaign, the Committee has remained a rather insular organization which has not encouraged expansion of the civic scene. As one Campaign activist reports:

> The Campaign showed itself to be much more fertile in comparison with the Helsinki Committee.... During the ten years of its active existence, the Campaign really acted as an incubator of civic initiatives, many of which still operate today.... The Committee was since the very beginning a conceptually closed project and a branch of the Helsinki Watch, whereas ours was an authentic grass-roots initiative which gave birth to so many organizations precisely due to its openness and the possibility it offered to people to show up, suggest things, contribute ideas, employ the existing logistics and create something new from all of that. (Interview with the author, Zagreb, June 2010)

The above two expansion mechanisms – decentralization/brokerage and structural overgrowth – should not, however, homogenize the participants in the earliest Antiwar Campaign initiatives. The actions of the organization and the accompanying expansion processes did not unfold in a smooth fashion. Although the group was small at the beginning of its operation, it did have numerous points of contention. As one of the activists reminisces:

> Some of the activists [within the Antiwar Campaign of Croatia] considered it most important to offer help to the victims of war ... some others were motivated by political resistance ... a group of them saw their engagement as an opportunity to establish forms of alternative culture ... others wanted to counter the problem of internal militarization through human rights engagement.... People who started to be evicted from their flats came to the Campaign.... But the most important dilemma was what it at all meant to be an antiwar activist.... It is much more important to oppose the state if it is actually undertaking an aggression rather than if you are in a state which is a victim of aggression. (Interview with the author, Zagreb, January 2010)

Along with a plethora of motivations for engagement in antiwar enterprises, the earliest activists on the Croatian territory had to face "the most important dilemma" of how antiwar activism could be conceptualized and practiced in a country which was militarily attacked. In contrast to what we will see below, among the Croatian activists there was a perception that their country was "a victim of aggression" waged by the Serbian regime, which had the powerful military apparatus of the Yugoslav People's Army under its control. As a result of this dilemma, a lot of energy was spent on articulating sophisticated differentiations between the right to defense and the need to prevent a widespread militarization of the Croatian society. These interpretative cleavages are important for the dynamics of the earliest antiwar organizing, but – in contrast to the case of Serbia – they are not particularly significant for scale-shift processes in Croatia. The activists who left the organization claiming that it was not sufficiently "patriotic" were rare, and they generally did not engage in establishing politically oriented civic groups relevant to this discussion.

Serbia

The Belgrade-based Center for Antiwar Action was founded on 2 December 1991 by a group of Belgrade intellectuals.[5] The Center appeared in a political context in which there already were other civic initiatives (European Movement in Yugoslavia, Association for the Yugoslav Democratic Initiative, Women's Party, Women's Parliament, Helsinki Committee in Yugoslavia, and Forum for Ethnic Relations), but it was the first officially registered antiwar initiative in Serbia.[6] The Center provided legal assistance to draft dodgers and conscientious objectors, organized antiwar demonstrations and peace concerts, monitored instances of ethnic hatred, pressed charges against those violating humanitarian norms and international conventions, and collected information on the media that were misinforming the public about the war. Stojan Cerović, a well-known journalist of the weekly *Vreme*, was elected the first president of the Center. In one of their earliest public statements, in *Republika*, the founders of the Center wrote that:

> The Center stems from the conviction that there is no greater evil than the armed conflict which is happening because the three national leaders – Tuđman, Milošević, and Kučan – are refusing to agree on a peaceful resolution of the Yugoslav crisis. Why would we pay the highest possible price – human lives, war damages, poverty, and distance from Europe and the civilized world – because of their stubbornness and incompetence? To such people and such authorities we do not owe an obligation to respect their "laws" and their rules of the game. We are not indebted to them, apart from the pervasive evil and shame. Their national projects are wrong because they drew us into this dirty war. We represent those to whom this war does not belong, all of those who know that nation-states should not be made in the Balkans even at the expense of great suffering. (August 25–26, 1991)

Given the ideological confusion that accompanied the process of Yugoslavia's disintegration, especially in Serbia, which at that time did not have a military conflict on its own territory, the most important cleavage within the earliest antiwar engagement in the Serbian political context pertains to the causal interpretations of this complex phenomenon. In the following extract, a prominent member of the Belgrade Center reminisces:

> I was one of the founders of the Center and that group was very diverse ... there were differences among us on all fundamental issues ... issues such as who was responsible for the disintegration of Yugoslavia or, later on, what the raping in Bosnia actually was all about.... Many of these people subsequently evolved and corrected their stances.... The Center mostly gathered activists who were living in Belgrade and the majority of them were pro-Yugoslav ... but what was problematic was the fact that many of them did not want to deal with the causes ... we allegedly had to be neutral ... as if Tuđman, Milošević and Izetbegović were equally responsible for what was going on. (Interview with the author, Belgrade, June 2010)

The Center represented an amalgam of people who were mostly based in Belgrade and who could not agree on the nature of Yugoslavia's demise. Given the diversity of ideological options, the Center had to come up with a policy of political neutrality to enable its operation in spite of the fact that the majority of activists were oriented toward the preservation of the Yugoslav state. The attempts of some Center members to attribute the same "portion" of guilt to all the representatives of the republic political elites clashed with the views of other activists unwilling to relativize the primary responsibility of the Serbian regime for the Yugoslav conflicts. Fragmentation was inevitable in an atmosphere in which planning, organizing, and carrying out collective actions proved impossible. As a result of the increasing tensions among the earliest group of activists, this informant separated from the Center and established her own human rights organization in 1993.

Moreover, it has already been mentioned that Yugoslav feminism constitutes one of the principal "precursors" of antiwar engagement across the country. Whereas the

Antiwar Campaign actually brought together several threads of women's civic activism in Croatia,[7] a group of women activists in Serbia, dissatisfied with the way gender issues were treated within the Center for Antiwar Action, decided to separate from it and establish their own organization. Accounting for this move, they argued:

> The painful realization that the peace movement would to some extent also follow a patriarchal model caused a serious dilemma for feminist-pacifists. We wanted our presence to be visible, not to be seen as something "natural," as part of a woman's role. We wanted it to be clearly understood that what we were doing was our political choice, a radical criticism of the patriarchal, militarist regime and a non-violent act of resistance to policies that destroy cities, kill people, and annihilate human relations. (Zajović et al. 1993, 101)

The objective of the Belgrade antiwar feminists was to articulate their stance as a conscious *political choice* and an intentional radical criticism of the patriarchal order which they saw at the root of belligerent nationalisms. The Center did not turn out to be the right framework for such a political agenda. As one activist remembers:

> My engagement at the Center for Antiwar Action was a logical continuation of my antimilitarist attitude. Mostly women were working at the Center, so it looked to me that peace activism had to do with only one sex, as if it were a part of our traditional women's role: caring for others, consolation, hiding, support giving. That was an invisible, hidden, unacknowledged women's work. As a feminist I know that it was a continuation of our housework. It was something that had a therapeutic effect, but it did not have a transformative character. (Zajović et al. 2007, 16-17)

Upon leaving the Center, these activists established an anti-patriarchal, anti-nationalist and anti-clerical organization called Women in Black. They were inspired by an earlier group called Women in Black founded in Israel in 1988. The Belgrade-based Women in Black had their first silent vigil already on 9 October 1991 and continued to protest regularly throughout the war as well as once the General Framework Agreement was signed. They represent the only group stemming from the earliest antiwar collective enterprises which has preserved its activist charge and still organizes street protests and performances, mostly marking anniversaries of the Srebrenica massacre as well as inviting the Serbian public to come to terms with the criminal past.

Another key figure of the Center claims that the principal points of contention among the activists were not of an interpretative or ideological but of a professional nature. Going back to the time when the Center was established, he says:

> We entered the war period without a single NGO and the first one which appeared exactly on the platform of resistance to the war was the Center. We all stem from that Center.... When some differences appeared among us, there were no structures or traditions which would encourage us to agree on something, like political parties do in the Parliament ... there was not a lot of animosity, there was rather *a natural division of labor ... different organizations started doing different things*.... There were no abrupt break-ups, although there were quite some tensions. (Interview with the author, Belgrade, June 2010)

This activist points out that the Center for Antiwar Action was the first antiwar non-governmental organization on the Serbian political landscape and was – until that moment – unfamiliar with such a form of political organizing. Although he admits that there were "tensions" among the activists, the relatively rapid fragmentation of the Center should be perceived as "a natural division of labor" rather than a matter of incompatible ideological predilections. This interpretation not only obscures ideological strains and political stances, but also points to the fact that the Center attracted an older generation of political activists who already brought to the organization appreciable amounts of social and symbolic capital. They started articulating the activist scene as a space partitioned along the lines of professional expertise, in which "different organizations do different

things" and, thus, supposedly cooperate rather than compete. This trend contrasts with the patterns of activist organizing in Croatia, for example, where the activist core was younger and therefore saw activism as a site of symbolic capital production. Drawing upon his reputation as a legal scholar, this activist established his own NGO devoted to the advancement of the theory and practice of human rights in Serbia and in the region.

Finally, along with interpretative, ideological, and professional differentiations within the Center, my empirical corpus captures the relevance of leadership, personality, and personal tensions among the activists. One early participant in the activities of the Center argues that:

> One has to understand that NGOs are led by strong personalities, and strong personalities are not always easy to deal with . . . there is a lot of jealousy, a lot of intellectual individualism.. . . These are people for whom it is hard to succumb to discipline and many of them had to endure great risks.. . . When there is a small group of people which is constantly threatened and attacked, they start biting each other . . . this was happening on the individual level, and then something good started to unfold . . . more and more NGOs appeared outside Belgrade, especially with the influx of money from foreign foundations. (Interview with the author, Belgrade, June 2010)

This excerpt shows that the activist core of the Belgrade Center consisted of "strong personalities" which had difficulties with less hierarchical activist structures. The earliest protagonists were "constantly threatened and attacked" and "had to endure great risks" in an inimical political and social climate. The need to survive in such circumstances, characterized by scarce financial resources, often turned antiwar and human rights initiatives against each other. This illustrates the broader patterns of both institutional and extra-institutional Serbian political life and culture, which seem to favor leader figures and hierarchical structures at the expense of horizontal political organizing. This has often perpetuated the shortcomings of the "leader discourse" which was supposed to be an object of the activist critique. As one activist argued (Aleksov 2001):

> Eventually, the Milošević regime collapsed because of the breakdown of its own structures, the united effort of the opposition, and the international pressure. For us nonviolent social activists, the change in regimes opened many new avenues for social engagement. But it also brought new challenges and raised old doubts. The main focus of our discontent, Milošević, disappeared, leaving behind the less visible, but almost unaltered, structures and mindsets that kept him in power for so many years. The question arises, how much did we change the existing patterns and relationships in society? Were we able to use the power we found in ourselves and in our groups to empower others and to influence decisions about important issues in public policy – and even more importantly, in our everyday lives? Or did we exhaust our new-found power on ourselves?

In this sense, the various antiwar organizations operating in Belgrade toward the beginning of the 1990s should not necessarily be perceived as a "richness" of the Serbian civic scene. They actually reflect deeper ideological and personal cleavages regarding the transformative potential and the purpose of antiwar activism. Šušak (1996) claims that the range of antiwar performances that were jointly organized by various Belgrade activist groups belies their poor communication. She shows that the activists were themselves responsible for weakening their own efficiency by duplicating groups and initiatives. The most vivid example regards the so-called Citizens' Action for Peace (GAMA), an activist organization led by Miladin Životić, a philosopher. This organization existed alongside the Center for Antiwar Action, though their goal was the same. They even organized their presentations at the same time during the Belgrade Antiwar Marathon, a series of antiwar meetings held every week at the Duško Radović Theatre in Belgrade.

Discussion

This paper draws upon in-depth interviews to begin exploring the processes responsible for increasing the breadth of Serbian and Croatian antiwar activism throughout the 1990s. Such a complex phenomenon remains an under-researched topic in East European social science scholarship and this article attempts to put it higher on the regional research agenda.

Episodes of resistance usually start below the threshold of the state surveillance apparatus before they *shift* to those expressive forms which are openly transgressive. The (post-)Yugoslav antiwar cycle was embedded in a volatile political climate created by, among other events, the introduction of political pluralism and the first multi-party elections which started taking place in Yugoslavia in the early 1990s. Mapping the processes through which scale shift occurs – both within and between the very first antiwar collective enterprises – entails an attempt to root them in their social, political, and cultural environments and concurrently appreciate the asymmetrical power positions within the conflicts which delimited the sphere of activism's possibility and legitimacy. Studying scale shift in a comparative perspective is relevant because it points to the presence of anti-nationalist and centripetally oriented alternatives on the Yugoslav political scene toward the end of the twentieth century. Developmental trajectories of the antiwar initiatives are fundamental for understanding the formation of the nationally bounded (human rights–oriented) NGO spheres in the post-Yugoslav countries.

Moreover, the ways in which social movements expand have been discussed in recent sociological theory. Thus, within their ambitious "dynamics of contention" research paradigm,[8] McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly (2004) focus their attention on a set of operations that alter the magnitude of coordinated contentious actions. They use the term *diffusion* to refer to one of the most important movement expansion mechanisms, which is "virtually coterminous with protest cycles" (64). Diffusion represents a developmental pathway of a contentious enterprise in which there is a transfer of information along the already existing channels of communication. On the other hand, the term *brokerage* denotes a scale-shift mechanism through which previously segmented actors are brought together.

The empirical corpus analyzed here shows that the diffusion and brokerage, present in both countries, concatenated differently and, therefore, produced appreciably divergent scale-shift patterns. The Antiwar Campaign from very early on acted as a successful *broker*, supporting and encouraging antiwar and human rights protection initiatives across Croatia. *Brokerage* was the primary scale-shift mechanism in this case, and it led to a rapid *multiplication* of civic initiatives. In contrast to this, Serbian antiwar activism was generally characterized by divisions occurring along ideological, professional, and personal cleavages. These dominant *diffusion* mechanisms resulted in continuous *fragmentation* of Serbian civic enterprises. No organization could establish firmer links among the scattered contentious actions to support their growth and development.

My findings are in accordance with McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly's assertion that although both diffusion and brokerage can be present in the same instances of contention, they have significantly different scale-shift effects. If diffusion predominates as the triggering mechanism, as in the case in Serbian antiwar activism, contention spreading can be powerful and rapid, but it stays narrow in its geographical breadth, which, in the long run, weakens the original activist cause. This is because diffusion trajectories stay within the already existing local, institutional or group boundaries, linking people who constituted a (loose) network of actors even before the initiation of the protest cycle. Thus, they also produce prominent "leader" figures, which characterize the Serbian civic scene (Nataša Kandić, Sonja Liht, Vesna Pešić, Sonja Biserko, etc.). Brokerage, on the other hand, cuts across familiar social lines

and intertwines various forms of collective enterprises and the accompanying interpretative frameworks into a common action. It favors horizontal political organizing and stimulates civic engagement; as a consequence, its geographical scope is broader.

The differences in the analyzed scale-shift patterns can be accounted for by a set of inter-related reasons (Table 1). The activists at the Center for Antiwar Action were generally older, and they drew upon the dissident tradition which had developed in the federal capital from the 1950s onwards (Dragović-Soso 2002). During their courageous political engagement in a one-party state, they accrued an appreciable amount of social and symbolic capital, which assured them frequently marginal but still politically relevant social positions. The Belgrade–Zagreb tension in relation to the 1968 student insurgency was a critical point of generational bifurcation which would become particularly relevant in the early 1990s. Many Belgrade antiwar activists (see Kanzleiter 2009; Kuljić 2009; Malavrazić 2008; Popov 1989) had a 1968 background, which was colored by the effort to legitimize Yugoslav socialist ideology through leftist critique.

A similar logic would apply to the intra-Croatian civic dynamics caused by the 1971 nationalistic protests known as the Croatian Spring. Those who took part in this event later gathered around the Croatian Helsinki Committee, which, although defending human rights throughout the wars of Yugoslav succession, was not ideologically or generationally proximate to the Antiwar Campaign. The Antiwar Campaign activists were, on average, younger than their Belgrade-based or Croatian Spring–related counterparts. They were a post-1968 generation, growing up in a climate of already loosening political pressures and oriented toward a different set of post-material and post-national values. In that regard, Campaign members were inspired by new social movements, environmental concerns, and the Slovenian alternative scene (the coordinator of the Campaign, Vesna Teršelič, is herself of Slovene origin; see Mastnak 1992). Given their steady interest in horizontal political organizing, the earliest participants in the Croatian politically oriented civic initiatives analyzed here have, in principle, remained distant from the centers of political power, in contrast to many Serbian activists who have, in the wake of October 5th, assumed professional posts close to the Serbian government (Vetta 2009).

Whatever the inter- and intra-group differences, initiator movements such as the two reviewed here produce a certain kind of a temporary *meta-platform* allowing for co-

Table 1. Principal 'ideal type' differences between the earliest forms of antiwar engagement in Serbia and Croatia.

	Serbia	Croatia
Structure	More hierarchy	More horizontality
Distance from formal politics	Closer	Further away
Yugoslav orientation	More pro-Yugoslav	More anti-/a-nationalist
Causes of Yugoslavia's dissolution	More interpretative divisions	More interpretative unity
Dominant scale-shift pattern	Diffusion	Brokerage
	Fragmentation	Multiplication
Activist tradition	1968 dissident tradition	New social movements
Age	Older activists	Younger activists
Location	Federal capital	Republican capital (closer to the Slovenian alternative scene)
Reputation	Already existent social and symbolic capital	Social and symbolic capital production

existence, convergence, and tensions among multiple particular identities, some of which can develop or become increasingly salient as politically focused collective enterprises unfold. A plethora of such more specific and dynamic identity articulations would never have come together had it not been for a collectively shared perception that *multiplicity as a political value* was endangered and could not be freely expressed. Along with "traditionally marginal" groups (feminists, environmentalists, anarchists, homosexuals), the antiwar movements in both Serbia and Croatia included many representatives of national minorities who felt threatened by the insistence on one-dimensional national articulations and could not identify with the ethnically oriented authoritarian regimes in either country.

Although a broadly articulated collective identity embodying a set of fundamental political values is an undercurrent which differentiates a social movement from other social actors, this should not imply that movement members are ideologically homogeneous. A temporary collective platform appears as the lowest common denominator as an outcome of a dynamic process of tension balancing among divergent intra-movement orientations. In this regard, McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly mostly focus on those scale-shift aspects which pertain to the same or similar forms of claims and contention episodes. They posit that both diffusion and brokerage operate through *attribution of similarity*, a mechanism which they define as "the mutual identification of actors in different sites as being sufficiently similar to justify common action" (2004, 334). This mechanism is based on the straightforward premise that solely receiving information about contention is not in itself enough to stimulate further action. What is needed is a certain idea of shared grievances, a minimal level of identification between the sender and the receiver of the information. Attribution of similarity proceeds more smoothly if "early risers" make an effort to frame their claims and identities in a way which can encompass a variety of actors.

However, as politically focused collective enterprises unfold in volatile social climates in which alternative groups undertake serious risks, some ideological threads and reality interpretations can become increasingly incompatible. The case of the earliest antiwar activists in Serbia indicates that McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly might have overemphasized the importance of the perception of similarity among collective actors. By concentrating mostly on those instances of contention which did in fact manage to mobilize substantive portions of the aggrieved populations across the world, the authors surmised that both diffusion and brokerage would pass through the stage of similarity attribution, in which contenders become aware of a sufficient level of ideological resemblance stimulating mutual identification and justifying as well as facilitating collective action.

The collected empirical material analyzed here shows that the attribution of similarity was indeed present among the Croatian antiwar activists as they gathered around a collectively shared perception of the aggressive character of the wars of Yugoslav succession (both pertaining to Serbia's involvement in the war in Croatia and Croatia's involvement in the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina). However, one must hypothesize an equally relevant mechanism of *attribution of dissimilarity* when trying to account for multiplication and fragmentation among the Serbian activist groups. Attribution of dissimilarity arises from the impossibility of actors' framing their ideological and professional claims and identities in a way which would supersede internal tensions. When interpretative divisions reach such a point, actors start believing that their objectives cannot be realized within the existing structures and that their engagement can be meaningfully continued only through new organizational forms (spin-offs).

This paper has engaged solely with what one could call *primary scale shift*. By primary scale shift I understand multiplication and fragmentation which occur within the very first civic enterprises in a contention cycle. These mechanisms give birth to the "second

generation" of initiatives and organizations. However, diffusion and brokerage do not finish along these initial division lines. Rather, they continue as the newly founded organizations wax and wane under the influence of political circumstances and socio-economic situations. It would there be relevant to examine the mechanisms of activist regrouping (secondary scale shift) and polarization in the immediate postwar period, which has been characterized by appreciably lower financial influxes from abroad as well as severely increased pressures toward professionalization. The dynamic of antiwar organizing within Serbia was challenged by the 1999 NATO bombing campaign, the first instance in the whole decade when war actually took place on the Serbian territory and the state officially acknowledged it. This event challenged activists' legitimacy and introduced new fissure lines within the Serbian civic sphere.

Although this account has focused upon intra-national and intra-movement scale-shift processes, the (post-)Yugoslav antiwar engagement has been, for 20 years now, characterized by the tension between the necessity of being based upon a regional model (on the one hand) and the impossibility of putting such a model into practice (on the other). Stretched between the often-disapproving public and the resisting state, the activists across the region have spent a lot of energy on trying to coordinate their personal ambitions, internal power struggles, and personality idiosyncrasies. The divergent activist traditions I have analyzed in this paper could account for a lot of the dynamics within the Coalition for REKOM – a rather loose network of activist organizations and individuals aiming to encourage the post-Yugoslav states to found a regional (intergovernmental) commission which would determine the facts about all the war crimes and other serious human rights violations committed during the wars of Yugoslav succession. Although it appeared at the end of the antiwar protest cycle, the Coalition's main actors were active from the very beginning of the Yugoslav armed conflicts, and – not surprisingly – they replicated the same organizational patterns I have outlined above. Thus, before the Coalition – generously founded by the European Union – completed its mission, some member-organizations started leaving the initiative. This was done, most notably, by one of the three "career" organizations, the Research and Documentation Center from Sarajevo (Tokača 2009), and then by the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia, supposedly on ideological and methodological grounds (Biserko and Bećirević 2009). However, tensions actually arose due to power asymmetries in funding distribution and controversial leadership styles (see for example Durmanović 2010). As one Belgrade activist argued:

> There are strong clans controlling certain human rights spheres . . . there are projects which are untouchable, about which the media will never write critically . . . and it is only in the corridors that we whisper about mobbing, dictatorial behavior, offending people, unprofessional treatment, and blacklists of "enemy" organizations which are handed over to the donors. (Popović 2011)

In this regard, social theory shows that the *initiators* of a cycle tend to remain the actors with the highest amount of political leverage throughout its duration, although they need not maintain the same organizational form. McAdam (1995) argued that the initiators' dominance can be detrimental to the opportunities of spin-off movements and organizations appearing later in the cycle. "Early risers" tend to accumulate more experience, command public attention, mobilize more people for their cause, and generate various forms of social, symbolic, and financial capital which afford them more legitimacy in putting political pressure on both the state and the wider community. This might, in turn, further dynamize the civic scene, because new initiatives can be articulated in opposition to the already established enterprises which, as we have seen above, start monopolizing scarce financial resources.

Notes

1. The empirical corpus analyzed in this paper consists of in-depth interviews with Serbian and Croatian antiwar activists and abundant documentary material (newspapers, periodicals, and various NGO publications). The interview sample included 60 informants, who were recruited mostly in Belgrade and Zagreb but also in provincial areas in both Serbia and Croatia (Pančevo, Bačka Palanka, Zrenjanin, Osijek, etc.) by the snowball method – an approach for locating information-rich informants whose number increases as they themselves suggest additional participants. Interview data collection was conducted in Serbo-Croatian on the basis of an interview guide in December 2009 and January and July 2010 by means of digitally recorded semi-structured interviews lasting between 40 minutes and 3 hours.
2. There were at least three other sources of antiwar contention (oriented toward the protection of human rights) in early-1990s Croatia. The first was the Croatian Helsinki Committee (*Hrvatski helsinški odbor*). The second was the Civic Committee for Human Rights (*Građanski odbor za ljudska prava*), which was founded in 1992 by a group of activists gathered around Zoran Pusić. Also, the Movement for Peace and Non-Violence (*Pokret za mir i nenasilje*) was active in Rijeka; it organized a petition against war which was signed by 15,000 citizens.
3. A schematic representation of what I here call *multiplication*, including the names of all organizations and initiatives stemming from or related to the Campaign, is given by Janković and Mokrović (2011, 132–133).
4. Čičak took part in the establishment of the first Yugoslav Helsinki Committee (1986) along with a group of other Yugoslav lawyers/activists.
5. The founders of the Center for Antiwar Action were Vesna Pešić, Zorica Trifunović, Sonja Liht, Nebojša Popov, Dejan Janča, Tanja Petovar, Nedeljka Radosavljević, Sonja Biserko, and Stojan Cerović.
6. The Center has in the meantime lost its activist charge; it still operates today as a small NGO, the Center for Peace and Democracy Development (*Centar za mir i razvoj demokratije*).
7. As one woman activist from Croatia says: "I came to activism through feminism and my women friends ... so when the war started they all joined the Antiwar Campaign ... we joined the Campaign as an already formed group working at the SOS help line for women and children victims of violence" (interview with the author, Zagreb, June 2010). Oberschall (1973, 125) showed that "mobilization does not occur through recruitment of large numbers of isolated and solitary individuals. It occurs as a result of recruiting blocs of people who are already highly organized and participants." He called this recruitment pattern *bloc recruitment*.
8. Dissatisfied with the existing paradigms for explaining contentious politics, three well-known contemporary social movement scholars, McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly, proposed a new research agenda in their book *Dynamics of Contention* (2004). This theoretical enterprise is intended to redefine a whole field of study by recognizing similarities across different forms of claim making in geographically and historically distant instances of contention. The authors begin from the premise that traditional divisions of the social sciences in isolated threads with their own vocabularies – such as social movements, political science, area studies of war, nationalism or revolutions – obscure a range of affinities among these seemingly divergent phenomena.

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