

Theorizing Post-Revolutionary Social Resilience

How does a society reproduce its latent structures of power, hierarchy, and status under the weight of the revolutionary, transformative, and, indeed, totalizing impulse of a visionary, utopian state? What underpins these “below the waterline” processes of resilience?¹ Moreover, how and why does it matter for political outcomes today, long after the demise of the successive orders that have sought in vain to trample over the innate logic of society? In his classic polemic on the historical method, Carlo Ginzburg eulogizes the power of the subtle trace, the clue, the hidden, and the concealed as key to the unmasking of the fundamental, the significant, and the essential.² Clues, he surmises, are seldom found in what is most visible, most public, and most conspicuous but rather are discreetly scattered where one is least prone to look for them. Yet the grand, the monumental, and the visible sphere of the totalizing revolutionary regime has constituted the overwhelming preoccupation of the scholar of communism. Public policy – the rules and regulations of the state, and not the institutions or the inner rationalities of society – has shaped the way we regard politics in communist and post-communist regimes.³ Scholars analyzing communist systems during the Cold War had, of course, no choice but to work with publicly available policy documents, statistics, and other official data concerning state building, institutionalization, and political socialization. These official records and accounts privileged the leviathan over the silent, societal, drivers of resilience.⁴

¹ “Power is like an iceberg; . . . most of it lies below the waterline,” Pierson, “Power,” 124.

² See the essay “Clues: Roots of an Evidential Paradigm” in Ginzburg, *Clues*, 87–113.

³ A statist focus has dominated theorizing into development and state building in a variety of settings, prompting scholars to call for grounding analysis “in more macro- and/or more microscopic analyses of human context and behavior.” Boone, *Political Topographies*, 12. A related issue is the “decontextual revolution” in the social sciences. Pierson, *Politics in Time*, 167.

⁴ Such was the power of these narratives that leading Western sociologists identified the Communist Party as the Soviet Union’s most prescient “differentiator” based on membership or nonmembership. Tilly, *Durable Inequality*, 12. Western observers who interacted with the

The preoccupation with state institutions and the political elite – party apparatchiks, the nomenklatura, and other state functionaries,⁵ the political sphere – endowed these actors with an exaggerated aura of agency and importance. Ideological narratives about the inauguration of a new society became internalized in academic discourse on the communist project.⁶ These assumptions have continued to cast a shadow over analytical inquiry into post-communist countries. Societies with a legacy of Leninism have been regarded as receptacles, whether enthusiastic or passive, naïve or skeptical, of socialization in schools, the Komsomol, or other official societies and clubs;⁷ and the elites, in relation to where they had been positioned in the various agencies of the state or party apparatus.⁸ So deeply ingrained has been the revolutionary state-building paradigm as a starting point for analyzing the contemporary polity, economy, and society that efforts to transcend it have been few and far between, remaining scattered on the margins of the mainstream debates on post-communist transformations.⁹ Even as new paradigms emerged to analyze Leninist legacies and their present-day imprint on society, and as hitherto hidden data became available, the discreet adaptations of the many to the social order of the futuristic regime – indeed, the role that these many have played in foisting their own institutions, practices, and values onto the state – have often remained concealed behind the shocking and the traumatic, behind the stories of the terror, dislocations, and deportations.¹⁰ Mundane, parochial, and quotidian, these adaptations have frequently escaped the lens of the present-day historian, the sociologist, and the political scientist, driven as he or she is by the indignity to expose the state's totalism, the terror, and the inflicted trauma inscribed on the biography of the distinguished scholar, the grand aristocrat, or the metropolitan patrician *intelligent*.¹¹

Soviet intelligentsia were exposed to heterodox views and were aware of social continuities. The problem was how to use this information, since it could be dismissed as “unrepresentative” or “anecdotal”; one had also to be careful about exposing the identity of the interlocutor. I am grateful to Archie Brown for suggesting this qualification, pers. comm., November 30, 2020.

⁵ Prominent examples are Djilas, *New Class*; Rigby, *Political Elites*; Voslensky, *Nomenklatura*; Hough and Fainsod, *How the Soviet Union Is Governed*.

⁶ For instance, E. H. Carr came to write about the Soviet project in the vein of “a great achievement” despite early reservations in the context of Stalinist repressions. Davies, “Carr’s Changing Views,” 102.

⁷ See studies ascribing agency to Soviet citizens but focusing on everyday Soviet realities rather than broader societal influences transcending communism. Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever*.

⁸ E.g., Hanley et al., “Russia-Old Wine in a New Bottle?”; Kryshnanovskaya and White, “From Soviet Nomenklatura”; Gelman et al., *Making and Breaking*; Libman and Obydenkova, “CPSU Legacies.”

⁹ See Tchuikina, *Dvoryanskaya pamyat'*; and Lankina et al., “Appropriation and Subversion.”

¹⁰ Consider the titles of the following influential books: Conquest, *Great Terror*; Applebaum, *Gulag*; Snyder, *Bloodlands*.

¹¹ See, for instance, Smith, *Former People*; Zubok, *Idea of Russia*.

Yet the possibilities of society's hidden logics of persistence and resilience have become increasingly hard to overlook as new data, archival revelations, and the advanced statistical toolkit of the social scientist have pushed against the artificial straitjacket of the revolutionary paradigm.¹² The new scholarship has raised awareness of the agency of the Gulag inmate, the professional, and the housewife to defy, obstruct, and sabotage the state's policy imperatives and the Moloch of its repressive apparatus.¹³ Moreover, we now know¹⁴ that somehow the past, pre-communist, patterns of development,¹⁵ of industry,¹⁶ and of *industriousness*,¹⁷ and of civic values and voting,¹⁸ transcended the ostensibly totalizing grip of the communist state.¹⁹

These new accounts – based on long-concealed “top secret” archival materials and the possibilities accorded to scholars by the advances in data accumulation and methods of social scientific analysis – beg for a new, overarching, revisionist take on the political implications of the legacies of social resilience in countries undergoing profound state-led attempts to overturn the social structure of the past. My book dissects but one, albeit highly consequential, facet of these legacies: the reproduction of social stratification behind the thin veneer of egalitarianism, with concomitant implications for the legacy of a group variously bracketed as the bourgeoisie or middle class – and prominently featuring in theorizing on democratic origins and resilience.²⁰ Dissecting how and with what consequences the relatively privileged, propertied, educated, and aspirational groups – the bourgeoisie-cum-middle class of the old regime – manage to reproduce their

¹² Both concepts capture adaptation: persistence alludes to the reproduction of the social structure despite the Revolution, and resilience to the modifying tactics, strategies, and behaviors that may include an element of change but are motivated by socially conservative impulses. I am grateful to Marcus Kreuzer for suggesting this clarification, pers. comm., November 15, 2020.

¹³ Examples are Alexopoulos, *Stalin's Outcasts*; Fitzpatrick, “Two Faces”; Shearer, “Soviet Gulag”; Hardy, *Gulag after Stalin*.

¹⁴ Gaddis's book title nicely captures the revisionism that emerged after the archives were opened to scholars with the end of communism in Europe. Gaddis, *We Now Know*. On the historical turn in the social sciences, see Capoccia and Ziblatt, “Historical Turn”; Wawro and Katznelson, “Designing”; Lankina et al., “Appropriation and Subversion”; Simpser et al., “Dead but Not Gone”; Kotkin and Beissinger, “Historical Legacies.”

¹⁵ Lankina et al., “Appropriation and Subversion”; Acemoglu et al., “Social Structure.”

¹⁶ Tomila Lankina and Alexander Libman, “The Jekyll and Hyde of Soviet Policies: Endogenous Modernization, the Gulag and Post-Communist Support for Democracy.” Paper presented at the Annual Meeting and Exhibition of the American Political Science Association, San Francisco, August 31 to September 3, 2017 (unpublished).

¹⁷ This term encapsulates the social-cultural underpinnings of the Industrial Revolution. de Vries, *Industrious Revolution*.

¹⁸ I refer to interwar democratic statehood in communist states. For a discussion, see Pop-Eleches, “Historical Legacies.”

¹⁹ As late as 1959, leading Sovietologists continued to describe the Soviet Union as a “totalitarian dictatorship.” See Inkeles and Bauer, *Soviet Citizen*, 124.

²⁰ The “bourgeoisie” label does not exclude the wealthiest groups or those occupying leading positions in the professions or industry. See Rosenfeld, *Autocratic Middle Class*, 61.

positional, intergenerational advantage vis-à-vis the less privileged working masses – indeed, their “bourgeois” values even under a most brutal leveling regime – speaks to debates and issues far beyond the communist experience in Europe, since it goes to the root of ongoing polemics concerning the drivers and democratic implications of inequalities in the globalized knowledge economies of the present.²¹ In the sections that follow, I provide a summary of the argument about the origins and resilience of social configurations in imperial, Soviet, and post-Soviet Russia; discuss the theoretical underpinnings of the analytical framework; outline a research design; and explain how this account differs from earlier studies on the implications of the communist experience for post-communist social structures and democratic trajectories.

THE ARGUMENT

This book explains post-communist Russia’s social stratification and relatedly its democratic fortunes with reference to the social structure predating communism. I locate the genesis of the bourgeoisie-cum-middle class, conventionally regarded as broadly supportive of democratic institutions, in the estate system of imperial Russia, which distinguished between the nobility, the clergy, the urban estates of merchants and the *meshchane*,²² and the peasantry. The estate – its juridical, material, and symbolic aspects – simultaneously facilitated the gelling of a highly educated, institutionally incorporated autonomous bourgeoisie and professional stratum and engendered social and interregional inequalities that persisted through the communist period and will plague subsequent democratic consolidation. Employing post-communist electoral and public opinion data, and analyzing them in conjunction with historical census records, I demonstrate that the pre-communist social structure has shaped Russia’s stark subnational developmental and democratic disparities as well as the overall national outcomes in democratic quality.

The statistical toolkit enables me to establish that the population share of one estate in particular – the urban *meshchane* – strongly covaries with a range of communist and post-communist period developmental outcomes, in education, in the extent of the saturation of the regional workforce with prestigious “bourgeois” professions, and in entrepreneurship – configurations considered

²¹ On materialist angles, see Piketty, *Capital*. Others contend, “the interests of a class most directly refer to standing and rank, to status and security, that is, they are primarily not economic but social.” Polanyi, *Great Transformation*, 160.

²² The term originates in the Polish *miasto*, city, and *mieszczane* from city residents, also found in other Slavic languages – *myastechko* as city, settlement in Belorussian, and *misto* as city, town, in Ukrainian – usually referring to smaller settlements. Hence, the derogatory Russian word *mestechkovyy* – one exhibiting limited and parochial interests, a symbol of “provincialism” and “narrow-mindedness.” The notion of *mestechkovost’* became inscribed in portrayals of *meshchanstvo*. Kobozeva, “Gorod i meshchane,” 49–50.

conducive to the building and institutionalization of a democratic political system. The nebulous, fluid, and highly mobile nature of this estate makes the sole reliance on imperial census data conceptually problematic,²³ as would attempts to rigidly delineate the fluid and fuzzy permutations of imperial-cum-Soviet-cum-post-Soviet bourgeoisie turned *Soviet* intelligentsia turned post-Soviet middle class. The challenge is compounded if we take on the task of going beyond an analysis of the *reproduction* of a broad status category and explore heterogeneity in Soviet-era *mobility* among and within the various segments constituting it.²⁴

The *meshchanin* or *meshchanka* of the 1897 census – the sole available comprehensive record that we have covering the empire’s entire territory – often moved between merchant and *meshchane* estate status; their material stature would often be on a par with the clergyman or noble of modest means. Equally, a *meshchanin* may have been a peasant previously but one who abandoned the rural dwelling and pursuits of the past, acquiring solid footing as an urban artisan, a clerk, or a teacher and marrying into the strata of a higher social estate and rank.²⁵ Religion and ethnicity would not be irrelevant for understanding the makeup of, and social heterogeneity within, this estate, as it absorbed many urban middling residents of “foreign” status and the upwardly mobile communities of Germans and Jews. Uniting these “mixed-title” men and women (*raznochintsy*) would, increasingly, be their education and occupational standing;²⁶ and the *meshchane* not only faithfully capture the splendid adaptation of the mysterious middling estate but also hint at the trajectories of the more privileged strata discreetly reinventing themselves as Soviet Russia’s *new* intelligentsia. For the many reincarnating merchants and *meshchane* in Russia’s provincial town, there would be the surviving aristocrat or two making a life as a university professor, a librarian, or an illustrator,²⁷ leaving a profound imprint on the cultural fabric of society. As Norbert Elias and John L. Scotson once observed, the preoccupation of the statistical method with high numbers often obscures the prestige, the gravitas, and the influence of a few influentials, out of proportion to their numerical weight in a community.²⁸

This book situates imperial Russia’s fluid estate structure – a *premodern* relic – within the autonomous professional, educational, and civic institutions of a *modern* society. I consider the Great Reforms of the 1860s – the abolition of

²³ On the over-time case-transformation dimension of the ontology of cases, see Abbott, *Time Matters*, 142.

²⁴ I thank Vladimir Gel’man for suggesting I discuss heterogeneity in social mobility trajectories. An important challenge is studying “objects moving through time and being qualitatively transformed.” Kreuzer, *Grammar of Time*, in press.

²⁵ On estate fluidity, see Mironov, *Sotsial’naya istoriya*, 1.

²⁶ See Wirtschafter, *Social Identity*, esp. 62–99.

²⁷ See accounts in Smith, *Former People*; Channon, “Tsarist Landowners”; Golitsyn, *Zapiski*.

²⁸ Elias and Scotson, *Established and Outsiders*, 11.

serfdom but also other progressive initiatives in education, local governance, and economic modernization – as an important moment that structured the social configurations post-1917. These reforms combined the significant uprooting of the economic foundations of the landed gentry's wealth with the preservation of an archaic estates-based order that continued to privilege some over others while also facilitating the material advancement of the propertied and upwardly mobile free urban estates. Furthermore, the reforms only scratched the surface of the highly unequal system of educational access, as I shall explain, which was an important feature of the estates-based society. The gentry, deprived of key sources of income derived from the land, seized opportunities to procure a modern education and a salaried professional station in life, as did the merchant and the high-status *meshchanin* whose children competed for a place at classic gymnasia and technical schools. If we take the above-discussed perspective on the reforms, their consequences for the social structure would be far-reaching. Although, by the early twentieth century, rural Russia had experienced precipitous modernization, a chasm continued to cleave it from urban society. The latter resembled the towns and cities in the developed Western world much more so than the former, the pastoral small farm idyll of England or North America.²⁹ By the end of the nineteenth century, the modernity unleashed by the Great Reforms transformed urban Russia. Not only did it represent a hive of tightly knit institutions of urban governance, commerce, industry, the professions, and education, but these retained their autonomy or quasi-self-governing stature vis-à-vis the state. Yet the estate structure shaped, and became embedded in, these institutions, which not only aided but also constrained social mobility. As late as 1917, a web of juridical and symbolic privileges and barriers continued to lubricate the status of the estates at the top of the social pyramid, particularly nobles; the mobility of the up-and-coming merchant class based on guild criteria; and access to urban property, the trades, and services favoring the *meshchane*, while constraining those of other groups.³⁰ Rather than being atomized, the institutional arenas of this society of estates featured strong network ties,³¹ again aiding social fluidity but also delineating its possibilities in important ways.

The empire's estate structure is central to understanding the origins, institutional underpinnings, and makeup of the nascent bourgeoisie and professional classes. When the Bolsheviks took power, in developed peripheral towns, not to mention the core metropolitan centers, they did not merely encounter a "bourgeoisie" as an abstract class category but as an institutional

²⁹ See essays in Clowes et al., *Between Tsar and People*. This chasm has been characterized as a cultural conflict between the "people" (*narod*) and the "educated minority." Mironov, *Rossiyskaya imperiya*, 2:844.

³⁰ On estates, see Mironov, *Rossiyskaya imperiya*, 1:340–443.

³¹ See Kaplan, *Historians*; Frieden, *Russian Physicians*.

fact more characteristic of C. Wright Mills's modern organizational society than one of the halcyon days of the country gentleman, the small farmer, and the family business entrepreneur.³² Axing the imperial police or ministries and the regional branches associated with the core sites of imperial rule would alter, but not shatter, other institutional-bureaucratic arenas and cognate ties. The bourgeois who was incorporated into modern professional, civic, and advocacy institutions enjoyed both the tangible bureaucratic and the symbolic foundations of social distinction. Indeed, they also retained a modicum of autonomy from the state. These institutional artifacts of the modernization of the estates-layered imperial society, I argue, constitute the main drivers of within- and interregional variations in communist and post-communist social, economic, and political development.

Although the inheritors of tsarist Russia's mantle of the relatively privileged strata constitute the focus of my study, their adaptations could be meaningfully explored if contextualized in the overall social structure of imperial and post-revolutionary Russia. Does not the social label of choice – be it the middle, the bourgeoisie, the intelligentsia, the professional, and the like – simultaneously circumscribe what the category *is* and what *it is not*, in relation to others? “We cannot have love without lovers, nor deference without squires and labourers,” observes E. P. Thompson in his dynamic and context-sensitive analysis of the making of the working class in England.³³ This perspective is far removed from the narratives about the Soviet Union's well-known Orwellian inequalities. These overwhelmingly focused on the spectacular ascent of the peasant and factory worker – the Khrushchevs, the Brezhnevs, the Gorbachevs of Soviet society – to the pinnacles of power through the party, managerial, and trade union routes.³⁴ Instead, my ordinary, silent, unsung custodians of the bygone, unequal, social order are the liminal, the descendant, the inheritor of what Harley Balzer quite poignantly referred to as the “missing middle.”³⁵ Balzer was, of course, referring to the understudiedness of this stratum of the educated, propertied, proto-professional, and entrepreneurial groups, in my analysis captured by the statistic of the *meshchane* but also straddling other “educated” estates.³⁶ These categories are understood here in an intergenerational sense as a *status group*. In the communist period, they came to be referred to as Soviet *intelligentsia*, loosely defined with reference to the occupation of a nonmanual job. In post-communist

³² Mills, *White Collar*. ³³ Thompson, *Making of the English Working Class*, 8.

³⁴ See Voslensky, *Nomenklatura*; Rigby, *Political Elites*; Rigby, *Communist Party Membership*; Timasheff, *Great Retreat*; Djilas, *New Class*; Fitzpatrick, *Education*; Fainsod, *How Russia Is Ruled*; Hough and Fainsod, *How the Soviet Union Is Governed*.

³⁵ Balzer, *Russia's Missing Middle Class*. See also Wirtschafter, *Social Identity*.

³⁶ Encompassing entrepreneurs, professionals, individuals engaged in artistic pursuits, and those deriving income from rent. For stylistic convenience, I refer to them also as the *estates-derived* or *estatist* stratum – capturing the origin among “educated estates” but also alluding to an *estatist* dimension of group construction and maintenance in a Weberian sense of shared values, lifestyle, and status.

Russia, I argue, their descendants constitute the bulk of the *new* bourgeoisie-cum-professional middle classes.³⁷

Social Persistence and Resilience across Distinct Political Orders and Regimes

Extant theorizing offers some signposts for us to construct an account of historical continuities but falls far short of explaining them in the context of profound revolutionary transformation. My main concern is to understand the *social-institutional* underpinnings of persistence and resilience in stratification across distinct political orders and regimes, and the implications of these patterns for long-term political outcomes. The temporal frame of the analysis straddles the pivotal moments of, and developments leading up to, the 1860s Great Reforms, the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, and the end of communism in 1991. Conventionally, these epochs have been analyzed within the paradigm of critical junctures. Eminent works in historical sociology conceptualize critical junctures as institutionally and politically fluid moments during which policy choices are highly contingent but, depending on the specific decisions adopted, could have enduring and often self-replicating effects, conceptualized as *legacies*.³⁸ This heuristic is not entirely without merit for our analysis and hence is theoretically embedded in the temporal framework adapted here: radical policy solutions for change – in intention, if not execution – are undeniably consequential for society, the economy, and political development. Yet a careful examination of these “junctures” reveals the many continuities – and nondecisions – straddling them and the broader social agency accounting for both the choices made and the successful obstructions of policies promulgated.³⁹

One key *nondecision* during the Great Reforms was a failure to create and implement the rudiments of a universal public education system that would have helped to socially elevate the hitherto unfree and otherwise underprivileged strata on the bottom rungs of imperial society;⁴⁰ another was

³⁷ The word “intelligentsia” in Soviet Russia “was often used interchangeably (and inconsistently) with *sluzhashchie* (officials, office workers), though ‘intelligentsia’ tended to refer to writers, teachers, doctors, lawyers, statisticians, and technicians, whereas *sluzhashchie* tended to be applied to clerical workers.” Lankina et al., “Appropriation and Subversion,” 254. The discussion draws on Rigby, *Political Elites*, 28, 31. On Soviet definitions, see also Zubok, *Zhivago’s Children*, 4–5; and Churchward, *Soviet Intelligentsia*, 3–4.

³⁸ Capoccia and Kelemen, “Study of Critical Junctures”; and Collier and Munck, “Critical Junctures.”

³⁹ For a critique and discussion of combining path-dependence and “punctuated equilibrium” models and sensitivity to contingency and adaptation of extant institutions, see Thelen, “How Institutions Evolve,” 212–13. Critical juncture theorizing does not preclude *antecedent conditions* shaping implementation or choices made during fluid periods of reform, but the focus is on high-level political dynamics. See Dunning, “Contingency and Determinism”; Collier and Collier, *Shaping the Political Arena*.

⁴⁰ On educational access, see Lyubzhin, *Istoriya russkoy shkoly*, 2. The landed gentry’s obstruction of universal schooling – not least due to fears of losing skilled peasants to the urban

the failure to reform the estates-based Petrine Table of Ranks in civil service.⁴¹ The latter reflected the hierarchy of the estates while also incentivizing the acquisition of a superb education as a way of advancing on the highly structured scale of pay, progression, and pension perks embracing both government service and large swathes of occupations from teaching to medicine.⁴² The Great Reforms thus combined features that helped further unleash the forces of a merit-based society with those of an antediluvian order where estate ascription continued to matter for one's station in life. Together, the reforms and the non-reforms created incentives and structural opportunities for further colonization of knowledge- and skills-intensive bureaucracies and modern professions by the habitually free – and educated – estates.

The privileged citizens of the estate order were in the best position to seize opportunities in education because of either a habitual emphasis on learning, in the case of the aristocracy and clergy, or the incentives, financial resources, and value proclivities that enabled it and were also characteristic of the urban merchant and *meshchane* estates. Moreover, within what I loosely refer to as the educated estates category, gradations in formal status to a considerable extent shaped one's station as a bourgeois. They influenced, say, whether he or she occupied the pinnacle of professional esteem in the elite occupations or joined the army of the modestly paid “semi-intelligentsia” as a nurse, teaching assistant, or *feldsher*,⁴³ the latter category, however, still vastly more privileged than the overwhelming mass of serf subjects in the largely illiterate society.⁴⁴ The embourgeoisement of Russia's imperial order would be thus grafted onto the institutional palette of estates. Put simply, an important legacy of the 1860s was the substitution of one type of inequality – serfdom- and estates-originating – for another, the human capital-derived one. The latter pattern anticipates characteristics of the knowledge-privileging demos of the present era.

Consider now the “juncture” of 1917. Here, compromise upon compromise diluted the many pivotal decisions that have preoccupied the scholar of the great revolutionary break.⁴⁵ Soviet historiography highlights the Bolsheviks' conscious and tactical choice to work with “old” specialists as it became clear

workforce – has been documented in various contexts. Iversen and Soskice, *Democracy and Prosperity*, 70.

⁴¹ The “layering” aspect of policy making, whereby “proponents of change work around institutions that have powerful vested interests,” has also been highlighted. Tarrow, “The World Changed Today!,” 10. In Russia, the nobility incurred losses due to land reform while retaining their advantage in other policy domains.

⁴² Mironov, *Rossiyskaya imperiya*, 2:433–39.

⁴³ Russian transliteration is *fel'dsher* – medical assistant or paramedic – from the German *Feldscher*. Emmons and Vucinich, *Zemstvo*, xi.

⁴⁴ On *feldshers* as “semi-intelligentsia,” see Ramer, “Professionalism and Politics,” 118; and on teachers as “low status” intelligentsia, Seregny, “Professional Activism,” 169.

⁴⁵ As recently as 2015, scholars have argued: “Communism not only leveled incomes in the region but, perhaps more importantly, destroyed the basis of status societies virtually everywhere it ruled.” Kopstein and Bernhard, “Post-Communism,” 382.

that the goals of swift industrialization and modernization were unattainable when deploying proletarian cadre alone.⁴⁶ Mervyn Matthews traces the origins of the entrenched system of inequalities in Soviet society to the early 1920s. Lenin, his credentials of being a “fervent egalitarian” notwithstanding,⁴⁷ endorsed the first raft of concessions to the old bourgeoisie to maintain the Bolsheviks’ tenuous grip on power. Stalin went on to codify, institutionalize, and enhance the privileges of the white-collar professional elite. Khrushchev only haphazardly and unsuccessfully attempted to undo Stalin’s class compromises before Brezhnev restored them with a vengeance.⁴⁸

The volumes of studies in the critical juncture vein that “forensicize” the policy-elite dynamics behind these compromises have relegated to the shadows the social construction of decisions eschewed or abandoned, the concessions made, and the ideology discreetly shelved. Such “eventful analyses”⁴⁹ – “*l’histoire événementielle*”⁵⁰ – that reduce the historical process to elite decisions, high politics, and national policy tend to background, if not outright ignore, the complexity of the realm of the social that does not neatly converge with overarching political superstructures. As recent critiques have noted, critical juncture perspectives assume the singularity of the historical process; regard change as intrinsic to pivotal decisions of key players; and take as given a relatively clean structural break between epochs that then freezes, as it were, continuity in structures, institutions, and practices unleashed by the pivotal event.⁵¹ Crucially, some caveats notwithstanding, these heuristics largely neglect the complex layering of interconnected processes that follow distinct and often conflicting *temporal logics*. Situating assumptions about change within important political and policy junctures ascribes causal primacy to the immediate time pegged to them while neglecting aspects of the historical process that exhibit very different characteristics in temporal scope, reach, and density of association with the present.⁵² Here, “calendric”⁵³ devices become a descriptive substitute, a justification for, and source of reification of an epoch. Even when not bracketed under the “critical” break rubric, this assumption is implicit in foundational works on 1917 and its consequences. The revolutionary event in these accounts is the starting point and 1991 the end

⁴⁶ Inkeles, “Social Stratification”; Bailes, *Technology*. ⁴⁷ Matthews, *Privilege*, 20.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 20. ⁴⁹ Kreuzer, *Grammar of Time*, in press.

⁵⁰ François Semiard’s phrase, cited to distinguish “the instant and the *longue durée*,” in Braudel, *On History*, 27.

⁵¹ For some of the critiques highlighting institutional resilience “even in the face of huge historic breaks” like revolutions, see Thelen, “How Institutions Evolve,” 209.

⁵² In framing the discussion, I draw on Kreuzer, “Varieties of Time”; and Zerubavel, *Hidden Rhythms*. On the dangers of reifying concepts and overdetermined analysis, see also Kreuzer, “Structure of Description,” 127.

⁵³ Kreuzer, “Varieties of Time,” 8.

point.⁵⁴ The naïve view of Soviet institutional origins is one essentially pegged to these pivotal policies and confirmatory of what may be termed the Bolshevik “founding myths” – the Soviet university, the Soviet school system, the Soviet scientific achievements, the Soviet space project, and so forth. Because everything becomes “Soviet” and dated as bound to 1917, so too do our cognitive assumptions about the nature of the institution, achievement, or milestone in question.

This book, by contrast, has a far broader historical horizon, and it is here that the institutional-social genealogies that I reconstruct – in medicine, education, and industry – come to the aid. We know from the various institutionalist strands in sociology that institutions are often contingent in origin, but hard to reverse once established, and are inertial, adaptable, and subject to increasing returns.⁵⁵ Yet the facet of institutions accentuated here is that specific configurations have a self-reproducing and self-amplifying dynamic not just because of embedded resources but also because of the much longer-term process of social investment. Institutions are embedders of the social both in an immediate sense of reflecting societal structures and in the lengthier scope of temporal horizons invested into them as symbolic stages in life and career progression. We may, for example, consider the tiered educational edifices of imperial Russia as important institutions both in the informal sense of structuring and channeling social gradations and in an organizational sense of established routines, *modi operandi*, and professional and social gatekeeping. The adolescent born in 1910 would not cease to aspire to a place in a gymnasium just because the Bolsheviks have proclaimed it as a bourgeois school; his or her parent, teachers, and social peers would fight to preserve it too.

The alternative *longue durée* and path-dependency perspectives that I opt for loosen up the temporally rigid demarcatory assumptions of critical juncture theory – foregrounding not backgrounding the past even when, superficially, change at the level of political superstructures appears to be deep and profound. They are far more sensitive to the layering of “multiple concurrent processes,”⁵⁶ transcending visible structural breaks that “lock,” as it were, assumptions about change within rigid periodization frames, and potentially highly consequential for the polity, economy, and society thereafter. While the *longue durée* heuristic attunes us to the towering role of the distant past – including the self-explanatory natural foundations of long-term sociodemographic and economic

⁵⁴ Such period slicing is also found in statistical analyses of outcomes of Soviet policies, resulting in scholars ascribing causal significance to them. On the pitfalls of the approach in quantitative analyses and on the fallacy of periodization pegged to “great events” in history, see Isaac and Griffin, “Ahistoricism,” 885, 877.

⁵⁵ Howlett and Goetz, “Introduction,” 483.

⁵⁶ I am indebted to Marcus Kreuzer for helping me frame this discussion. Personal email correspondence and comments on chapter, November 15, 2020. The *longue durée* perspective is associated with the work of Fernand Braudel. See essay in Braudel, *On History*, 25–54.

trends – in shaping the present, path-dependency helps us make sense of the mechanisms that account for the reproduction of patterns that *do* warrant careful explanation, since they may counterintuitively straddle the apparent, highly visible, structural breaks and turning points in epochs. Both the *longue durée* and path-dependency angles are alert to the heterogeneity of the temporal aspect of change and lethargy in long-established patterns – in Sebastian Conrad’s apt characterization, “the synchronicity, of the non-synchronous.”⁵⁷ Much as the *longue durée* highlights the slow unfolding but often highly resilient socioeconomic dynamics, path-dependency incorporates the multiple temporal logics accounting for *why* apparent structural change may not immediately shatter long-established values, practices, and institutions. Here, the temporal dimension of events itself becomes part of the causal structure.⁵⁸

Path-dependency is best encapsulated in Arthur Stinchcombe’s heuristic of “causal loops,” whereby “an *effect* created by causes at some previous period *becomes a cause of that same effect* in succeeding periods.”⁵⁹ The metaphorical prime mover effects creating the “cause” we are most concerned with are the heterogenous structural conditions of various territories over centuries that shape patterns of settlement, land use, frontier colonization, and migration. My main preoccupation, however, is with the effects of these historically protracted *longue durée* processes often of a natural, spontaneous, slow-moving kind, on the more agential, purposeful, policy-institutional dimension of the estate – both a product of state policy and a bottom-up social impulse – which in turn shaped, structured, and even calcified heterogeneity in social possibilities, rights, freedoms, and obligations. This is the “cause” occupying center stage in this book’s analysis, effecting the “loops” reverberating across the epochal events of some two centuries considered here. Stinchcombe’s framework is also attuned to the cognitive dimension of path-dependencies in institutions – these acquire a self-replicating character not only because, say, bureaucracies, or other formal and informal institutions, once established are hard to reverse but because whole generations grow up with cognitive mindsets pegged as it were to these institutions. Here, institutional resilience is attributed in an agential sense to segments of society that may be as yet outside of organizational sites reflecting wider institutional configurations but have a vested interest in perpetuating them because whole careers, life progression, and aspirations are cognitively mapped onto them. Institutional stability, maturity, and duration, of course, matter, since institutionalization creates the kinds of certainties that individuals crave as do parents for their children. Hence, Stinchcombe asserts that such “institutional self-replicating forces” are most powerful in “modern societies” considering the structured,

⁵⁷ Conrad, *What Is Global History?*, 141.

⁵⁸ For a discussion of time concepts, see Kreuzer, *Grammar of Time*, in press.

⁵⁹ Stinchcombe, *Constructing Social Theories*, 103 (emphasis in original). An institution is defined as “a structure in which powerful people are committed to some value or interest.” *Ibid.*, 107.

resource-intensive modes of training and socialization into “elite” status. They are also the consequence of greater levels of competition for a position at the top of the social pyramid because “fewer channels are blocked off on ascriptive grounds.”⁶⁰ Indeed, “in societies with familial or tribal religions, poorly developed educational systems, and little mass media, we would . . . expect institutional structures to be much more fragile, much more affected by wars, revolutions, and redistributions of power.”⁶¹

Theorizing Class and Status

Anchoring the discussion on social class and status serves two broad objectives in the analytical framework outlined here.⁶² The first is more carefully discerning the *how* dimension of the reproduction of social stratification that straddles a revolutionary juncture. The second is to understand the broader *effects* of social resilience as it impinges on the political proclivities of citizens. Unpacking the *how* of social reproduction goes to the root of debates about what constitutes classes and social groups. I briefly discuss these polemics and

⁶⁰ Ibid., 115. ⁶¹ Ibid., 113.

⁶² I am sympathetic to definitions of the middle class or bourgeoisie couched in occupational terms, but with caveats, given the historically broad scope of my analysis. In occupational terms, these strata are often delineated with reference to nonmanual occupations, including private sector work and self-employment, and the arts, as distinct from manual and routine jobs of so-called blue-collar factory, retail, or agricultural workforce that usually do not require advanced secondary and tertiary education. (See the excellent discussion of the terms in Rosenfeld, *Autocratic Middle Class*, 60–61.) I also bracket imperial small business owners, petty rentiers, and artisans under this rubric, since my analysis is sensitive both to the difference between these strata and, say, unfree peasants and to greater facility of the transformation of the nascent bourgeoisie into the urban professional middle class in the communist decades. I share the concerns that the “traditional” and “old” middle classes of artisans, merchants, petty traders, or small shopkeepers have been unfairly dismissed as not middle class in a modern sense unlike professionals; they are associated with “premodern” or “underdeveloped” economies and are expected to be relegated to the dustbin of history as countries modernize. Davis, *Discipline*, 31. Davis, in my view, rightly ascribes to small producers and entrepreneurs, rural and urban, “a disciplinary ethos which assumes a certain degree of austerity, self-regulation, and self-imposed personal restraint marshalled in the service of an individual producer’s output or productivity.” Ibid., 11. On the other hand, I also concur with critique of elite competition accounts focusing on land reforms during Europe’s democratization as less appropriate for late developing industrial contexts where a focus on the state-dependent middle class as an important actor is warranted. Rosenfeld, *Autocratic Middle Class*, 18–19. I hesitate to rigidly delineate the elite and the petty bourgeoisie alike in the sense of income, property, or top position in a hierarchy, since my study encompasses three regime types and epochs with profound repercussions for the material and formal-professional situation of individuals. The life course angle on social reproduction of the imperial bourgeoisie helps chart how the bulk of elite, middling, and lower proto-middle class segments of imperial society moved into Soviet middle class white-collar occupations. In other words, their cultural, human, and professional capital remained a constant marker that precluded descent into lifelong manual occupations – even if spells of factory or farm work were widespread during class witch hunts.

their relevance for the historical evidence presented here before addressing the question of the implications of social resilience from the perspective of broader democratic theorizing.

Analysts of social structures distinguish materialist accounts of class from those that underscore the nontangible, symbolic, ideational dimension of cleavages among groups.⁶³ Classic materialist accounts have postulated social divisions as a function of the unequal distribution of material assets and, in the Marxist class schemata favored by Soviet ideologues, as rooted in dependency relationships between those who own the means of production and others whose labor they exploit.⁶⁴ In Lenin's formulation, "classes are groups of people, one of which can appropriate the labor of another owing to the different place they occupy in a definite system of social economy."⁶⁵ Beginning with Max Weber,⁶⁶ and in a tradition most extensively theorized

⁶³ Thus, Rosenfeld distinguishes between theories that focus on social relations of status and power from those highlighting ownership of capital or projecting normative assumptions about classes as carriers of specific values, or as a "unified class actor." *Autocratic Middle Class*, 58.

⁶⁴ For a discussion, and on differences with non-Marxist perspectives, see Wright, *Understanding Class*; on Weber, see esp. 21–56.

⁶⁵ Cited in Teckenberg, "Social Structure," 28.

⁶⁶ Weber, "Class, Status and Party"; *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, 1:78–88. My perspective is Weberian in the significance I attach to both the material and the *Ehre/Lebensführung*, "*amorpher Art*" characteristics of the middle class; in my emphasis on values engendered in both feudal and industrial-capitalist economies; and on bureaucratic incorporation of modern societies. *Ibid.*, 82, 83. I concur with the hunch that "Weber has won whatever Weber-Marx debate there ever was." Glassman et al., *For Democracy*, ix. Marx "was wrong to write off the small-business middle class, and the middle classes in general, in terms of their impact on industrial-capitalist societies." *Ibid.*, 89. Marx considered "wage-labourers, capitalists and landowners" as "the three great classes of modern society based on the capitalist mode of production" Marx, *Capital*, 3:1025. The ending of volume 3, compiled by Friedrich Engels based on Marx's notes, suggests that "doctors and government officials would also form two classes, as they belong to two distinct social groups, the revenue of each group's members flowing from its own source." There is also mention of the "fragmentation of interests" based on the division of labor within the three key classes, anticipating a fuller discussion of professionals and their position in the class triptych. "At this point," however, a note from "F. E." reads, "the manuscript breaks off." *Ibid.*, 1026. The race for mechanized production forms an important element in Marx's analysis of capitalism. See, for instance, *ibid.*, 553–64. However, the logical outgrowth of technological development as necessitating and engendering a large knowledge group of professionals is not incorporated into his class configurations. The question remains as to whether producers of machines are, in Marxist classification, the "exploiter" or the "exploited," the "ruling" or the "oppressed." Marx and Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, 5. Another source of conceptual muddle is that the French "bourgeoisie" is used synonymously with capitalists; it is "the class of modern capitalists, owners of the means of social production and employers of wage-labor." *Ibid.*, 9n1. This is erroneous, for, as Vivek Chibber discusses, the "bourgeoisie" that ostensibly played a leading role in the "bourgeois" French Revolution was a far more "nebulous" term, encompassing "industrialists, merchants, shopkeepers, urban professionals. In fact, the typical bourgeois in eighteenth century France belong to the last category, simply because of its growing importance in political economy." Chibber, *Postcolonial Theory*, 70. It is only in Marxist analyses, which discounted the professional middle class, many self-employed, and those who

by the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu,⁶⁷ all the way to the present-day polemics into the social underpinnings of inequality,⁶⁸ scholars have sought to inject nuance into or otherwise deflate materialist claims on social stratification. Weber famously juxtaposed *status groups* (*Stände*)⁶⁹ with *classes*. Class in Weber's analysis is defined in materialist terms:

We may speak of a "class" when 1) a number of people have in common a specific causal component of their life chances, in so far as 2) this component is represented exclusively by economic interests in the possession of goods and opportunities for income, and 3) is represented under the conditions of the commodity or labor markets.⁷⁰

Classes are contrasted with *status groups*, "amorphous communities" characterized by a "status situation" (*ständische Lage*),⁷¹ distinct from a "class situation."⁷² Status transcends narrowly material aspects of group formation and maintenance, since it pertains to cultural preferences, tastes, and aspirations, or, in Weber's formulation, *Lebensführung*.⁷³ These intangible elements of group construction are distinct from features like property ownership, labor exploitation, or the extraction of rent.

Weber's *status groups* found resonance among Western and Soviet sociologists writing in the more permissive period following Premier Nikita

did not neatly fit into their class schemata, that bourgeoisie became synonymous with "capitalists."

⁶⁷ Bourdieu and Passeron, *Reproduction in Education*; Bourdieu and Passeron, *Inheritors*; Bourdieu, *Distinction*.

⁶⁸ Clark, *The Son Also Rises*; Putnam, *Our Kids*.

⁶⁹ Weber, *Economy and Society*, 1:305. Weber equates "Klassenlage" to "Marktlage." Ibid., 79. Teckenberg, discussing Soviet social stratification, indicates that "estates" is a more appropriate translation of Weber's *Stände* than the term employed in translations of Weber in American scholarship as "status groups." Teckenberg, "Social Structure," 9. I use "status groups" with reference to social position in post-feudal societies whether derived from formal estate ascription or not, to avoid confusion with the formal category of the estate in imperial Russia. Weber's term *ständische Lage*, by contrast, captures nontangible, "ambiguous" aspects of social position, including in modern societies. Weber, *Economy and Society*, 1:306. The context in which Weber uses the term is important: Weber also refers to estates (*Stände*) as a legal arrangement under feudalism and to *Ständestaat*, translated as "polity of estates," as an arrangement for granting privileges as part of state and alliance building and social control and, with some qualifiers, as an intermediate stage between feudal patrimonialism and development of bureaucracies. Ibid., 1087. In such a context, *Stände* perfectly captures *sosloviya* as indeed the medieval concept of the estate. On usage, translation, and meaning of the estate and *sosloviye*, see also Smith, *For the Common Good*, 5–6.

⁷⁰ This formulation comes from a distillation of Weber's concepts in a compilation of works on social stratification. Weber, "Class, Status and Party," 21. I consider this an accurate translation from the original German passages. See *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, 1:78. Elsewhere I also refer to the more recent edition of Weber's compilation of works published as the two-volume *Economy and Society*.

⁷¹ Teckenberg translates it as "social status." Teckenberg, "Social Structure," 9. I believe a more accurate translation is "status situation" or "status position."

⁷² Weber, "Class, Status and Party," 21. ⁷³ Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, 1:83.

Khrushchev's de-Stalinization campaign known as the Thaw. These works have done much to problematize – indeed, to discredit – Marxist hubris on class and inequality in Russian society. Wolfgang Teckenberg writes that the nonmaterial, cognitive orientations and preferences of *status groups* often trumped material aspects of Soviet *classes* in shaping social identities. Individuals on the same income scale – and theoretically not subjected to the exploitative owner–laborer relationship that is characteristic of capitalist societies but coming from different social-professional groups – tended to exhibit divergent friendship patterns, cultural pursuits, and parental preferences concerning children's education.⁷⁴ Teckenberg highlights another useful Weberian angle on classes versus status groups in distinguishing between material wealth and consumption preferences. Both, of course, not infrequently converge: “Property as such is not always recognized as a status qualification, but in the long run it is, and with extraordinary regularity,” writes Weber.⁷⁵ Yet, while “‘classes’ are stratified according to their relations to the production and acquisition of goods; . . . ‘status groups’ are stratified according to the principles of their *consumption* of goods as represented by special ‘styles of life.’”⁷⁶

In a proto-knowledge economy, one that prizes recognized and regulated professional credentials, specialized skills, and education, formal architectures and infrastructures of proficiency become part of the intergenerational cognitive “stylization” maps. Yet we also know from Bourdieu's theorizing that these cognitive proclivities are not distributed evenly across groups in society.⁷⁷ They are reproduced among the like-minded within a stable social “field,” encompassing individuals with homologous educational, leisure, and professional pursuits and aspirations, and discursively and symbolically practiced through speech, modes of comport, and cultural markers. The signifiers of belonging are simultaneously exclusionary toward others outside of the field or those representing lower social gradations within it and new entrants.⁷⁸

⁷⁴ Teckenberg, “Social Structure.” Others have described Soviet and post-Soviet Russia as “estate-corporatist society” (*soslovno-korporativnoye obshchestvo*) because citizen rights vary, as when some are disadvantaged due to the *propiska* system of residential registration or because of “incorporation” into professional networks facilitating social advancement. Yastrebov, “Kharakter stratifikatsii,” 20; see also Vishnevskiy, *Serp i rubl'*, 101–4. Post-communist countries with an “estate-like” social structure (*soslovnoye*) arguably “stagnate” more in intergenerational mobility than Western countries with more developed market economies. Yastrebov, “Kharakter stratifikatsii,” 29. See also Kordonskiy, *Soslovnaya struktura*.

⁷⁵ Weber, “Class, Status and Party,” 24.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 27 (emphasis in original). In German: “nach den Prinzipien ihres Güterkonsums in Gestalt spezifischer Arten von ‘Lebensführung’” (emphasis in original). *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, 1:86–87.

⁷⁷ See also Elias, *Civilizing Process*; Veblen, *Theory of the Leisure Class*.

⁷⁸ This is a distillation of concepts found throughout Bourdieu's work. For a summary and critique, see Grenfell, *Pierre Bourdieu*.

In imperial Russia, the *Ständestaat* created not just the material but also the ideational preconditions for the colonization of expertise institutions by the educated estates. Over time, property and capital became tangential to the broader contours of the emerging professional strata, since their qualities as a status group – and the orientations mapping life progression onto the infrastructures of knowledge – helped consolidate their relational position vis-à-vis others.⁷⁹ The embeddedness in expertise-intensive institutional infrastructures that is characteristic of modern states facilitates adaptation across regime types, since the status group, and the various substrata that comprise it, possesses prized knowledge and skills and, indeed, the bureaucratic-organizational resources to resist change.

Yet skills, narrowly defined, and broader knowledge, be it cultural, transactional, market, or other, engender individual autonomy beyond the bureaucratic-institutional structures of modernity. Institutional resources provide the status group with clout vis-à-vis the state's bureaucratic and political machinery; but individual perspicacity also enables fluency, fluidity, and occupational hedging, engendering, to use the Hungarian sociologist Iván Szelényi's apt distinction, *autonomy* even when the individual or the group is lacking *authority*. Alternatively, to use the heuristics proposed in another study, Bolshevik social "appropriation" may, of course, lead to some career-motivated party membership and activism, thereby leading to "subversion" of the autonomous potential of some educated members of the old middle class, but others in this group may well avoid the cadre or managerial route, instead joining professions or taking part in pursuits that are relatively free from the oppressions of ideological dogma. In fact, the skills of some would be so highly valued by the regime that it would follow only lax party membership criteria for particular high-demand specialties.⁸⁰ Autonomous possibilities would also be available to the strata blessed with socialization in both the knowledge infrastructures of a modern society and the experience of private entrepreneurship and the business acumen intrinsic to the materially defined bourgeoisie as purveyors of property and capital.

My emphasis on the *cognitive* and *institutional* incorporation of feudalism-originating free estates into modern knowledge organizations departs from accounts focusing on class that are couched in exploiter/exploited terms. The broader time reach enables us to perceive how inequitably distributed human capital derived from a feudal order emerges as the *constant* privileging marker that transcends the *variability* of distinct regimes' governing politics, property ownership, and social relations. If anything, the status resilience of the educated statist group precisely derives from *fluidity* in occupational navigation in

⁷⁹ As Weber writes, "Auch ein 'Berufsstand' ist 'Stand', d. h. prätendiert mit Erfolg soziale 'Ehre' normalerweise erst kraft der, eventuell durch den Beruf bedingten, spezifischen 'Lebensführung.'" Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, 1:87.

⁸⁰ Szelényi, *Socialist Entrepreneurs*, 75; Lankina et al., "Appropriation and Subversion."

modern knowledge-privileging societies – as when the merchant invests heavily into superb engineering education for his or her son, or the artisan and *rentier* into a future academic career at a public university. Much as with the concept of “generation,” not amenable to neat partition,⁸¹ so too do we face difficulties in carving out the professional from the entrepreneur. These observations and the questions they raise are not as self-evident as they seem, since the long shadow of the Marxist chimera has continued to influence the most recent polemics on social distinction and division in society. Thus, Thomas Piketty, in his landmark *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*,⁸² drawing on the work of his compatriot Pierre Bourdieu, provides a very cursory discussion of cultural-human capital as relevant to the broader structures of inequality in Western societies. Unfortunately, Bourdieu’s insights, relegated to one page, are interpreted in purely materialist terms, since the author alludes to “public money” as pivotal in the distribution of, and correctives to, nontangible capital of various sorts in society.⁸³ That an esteem for skills, knowledge, and cultural endowment transcends leveling regimes may well also be obscured as analysts focus on the temporally proximate structures of polity and policy without unpacking the fine dynamics of social reproduction in a historically sensitive way. Piketty’s work has, for instance, been lauded for the analytical framework that spans at least two centuries – and for his deft analysis of the ostensibly leveling phase associated with the communist project in Europe, warranting subtle calls for peaceable and amicable forms of economic redistribution. Yet evidence from the historically universalist analysis of Pitirim Sorokin – not referenced in *Capital* – reveals the failures of grand social equity schemes and the *cyclical*, *fluctuating*, and *trendless* nature of inequalities:

Communism is only an additional example in a long series of similar experiments performed on small and large scale, sometimes peacefully . . . sometimes violently . . . If many forms of stratification were destroyed for a moment, they regularly reappeared again in the old or in a modified form, often being built by the hands of the levelers themselves.⁸⁴

This book dissects some of the bases for these undercurrents – the *lived-in* and *practiced*, daily and *calendrically affirmed* social hierarchies – pegged

⁸¹ On this, see Zerubavel, *Time Maps*, 60. ⁸² Piketty, *Capital*.

⁸³ “It would be naïve, however, to think that free higher education would resolve all problems,” comments Piketty: “In 1964, Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron analyzed, in *Les héritiers*, more subtle mechanisms of social and cultural selection, which often do the same work as financial selection. In practice, *the French system of ‘grandes écoles’ leads to spending more public money on students from more advantaged social backgrounds, while less money is spent on university students who come from more modest backgrounds.* Again, the contrast between the official discourse of ‘republican meritocracy’ and the reality (in which social spending amplifies inequalities of social origin) is extreme.” *Ibid.*, 486 (emphasis added).

⁸⁴ Sorokin, *Social Mobility*, 16.

to the aspirations for institutional embedding in a school, career, and profession – and transcending any losses or inflictions of the material “base” of social relations.

The Middle Class and Democracy

Sensitivity to the historical underpinnings of the estates-derived bourgeoisie and their reincarnation as white-collar professionals in Soviet Russia allows us to discern elements of heterogeneity within a stratum conventionally bracketed under one generic middle-class umbrella. Soviet Russia took the credit for engendering a *new* middle class from among the hitherto underprivileged worker and peasant masses, one that shared the designation of an intermediate social layer or *prosloyka* of white-collar employees and intelligentsia with the remnants of the *old* bourgeoisie. The copresence of such distinct substrata within one national setting is nontrivial for democratic theorizing. According to a venerable tradition in political science, modernization processes engender an enlightened, educated, and autonomous demos; and, as the size of this group grows, so does, arguably, a constituency favoring political openness, moderation, and the rule of law.⁸⁵ These assumptions have been subjected to scrutiny when applied to “deviant” states that have “modernized” but have failed to live up to expectations of support for a democratic political system among the middle classes.⁸⁶ In his seminal work on democracy, Robert Dahl took issue with teleological premises about the political consequences of development that sanitize the national context.⁸⁷ Drawing on the work of the University of Chicago economist Bert Hoselitz,⁸⁸ Dahl distinguished between a middle class engendered “autonomously” as part of a process of gradual capitalist development and one fabricated speedily consequential to state-led modernization.⁸⁹

Concerns about a weak democratic commitment, if not authoritarian complicity, of the state-dependent middle class in countries sharing a legacy of rapid state-led modernization have been echoed in recent empirical scholarship

⁸⁵ Lipset, “Some Social Requisites.” See also Huntington, *Third Wave*, esp. 59–72. For critiques, see O’Donnell, *Modernization*; Slater, *Ordering Power*. For a devastating account of modernization theory as a failed Cold War intellectual project, see Gilman, *Mandarins*.

⁸⁶ See Przeworski et al., *Democracy*; and Foa, “Modernization and Authoritarianism.” See also studies of Western white-collar strata supporting authoritarianism. Speier, *German White-Collar Workers*. On alienation, homogenization, and pressures to conform among white-collar employees, see Kracauer, *Die Angestellten*.

⁸⁷ Dahl, *Polyarchy*.

⁸⁸ An ideal type of “autonomous” development is arguably where “all decisions affecting economic growth are made by individuals other than those holding political power.” This is contrasted with hypothetical settings where “all economic growth . . . would be strictly induced, that is, provided for and planned by a central authority.” Hoselitz, *Sociological Aspects*, 97, 98.

⁸⁹ Dahl, *Polyarchy*, 73, citing Hoselitz, *Sociological Aspects*, 74 and 97ff.

on present-day autocracies and developing democracies.⁹⁰ Several sets of causal mechanisms have been proposed to account for these patterns. Whether in China, India, or Russia,⁹¹ the democratic ambivalences of a state-fabricated middle class have been linked to widespread state employment and dependencies; loyalty toward incumbent regimes because of the indebtedness of traditionally underprivileged groups to the state for their social elevation; and, in post-communist contexts in particular, fears, dependencies, and pressures among employees of large communist-era industries that make them vulnerable to workplace mobilization during elections.⁹²

My analysis advances these debates further insofar as it takes the emphasis away from contingencies pegged to individual orientations within an immediate political context, highlighting instead the temporally far broader processes of social construction. Occupational status is connected to structural possibilities for individual and group autonomy within a diverse employment landscape. The human capital and other value attributes that make such autonomy possible are not easily reducible to state policies of social uplift pursued in a compressed time span. Moreover, assumptions concerning their leveling consequences are questionable in settings with a long legacy of institutionalized social gradations – in Russia, for instance, embodied in the caste-like institution of the estate. Armed with the Dahl–Hoselitz conceptual toolkit, we may appropriately regard societies living through communism from the point of view of the layering of both state-directed, “induced,” or “hegemonic” processes as well as the more spontaneous, gradual, and “autonomous” ones in the construction of social groups. The autonomous inputs would include both familial channels and a broader exposure to a capitalist plural, modern, urban society associated with a prior politically distinct and temporally distant order.

Such a perspective would also help us to adjudicate between leading strands in communist-era sociological debates between the so-called *modernizers* versus those in the *Homo sovieticus* camps.⁹³ While the former argued that

⁹⁰ Rosenfeld, *Autocratic Middle Class*; Chen, *Middle Class*, esp. 7–20. See also Bell, “After the Tsunami”; and essays in Johnson, *Middle Classes*. Relatedly, following Weber, Kohli juxtaposes the “protracted” development of “state traditions” in Europe with the rapid importation of state institutions in the global periphery, often via colonial rule, to where neither a public “ethos” among the elite nor an “effective public arena” had been strongly in evidence. Kohli, *State-Directed Development*, 395–96. Others highlight how states may dampen or activate social identity, conflict, and political demands. See Evans et al., *Bringing the State Back In*, 253–55.

⁹¹ On Russia, see Rosenfeld, “Reevaluating”; and on employment with state bureaucracies in parts of Asia shaping political preferences, see Bell, “After the Tsunami.”

⁹² Frye et al., “Political Machines”; Hale, *Patronal Politics*; Lankina and Libman, “Soviet Legacies”; McMann, *Economic Autonomy*; Stokes, “Political Clientelism.” On “contingent” support for democracy among both labor and capital due to state dependence and patronage in late developer contexts, see also Bellin, “Contingent Democrats”; and Chen, *Middle Class*, 6.

⁹³ Term popularized in Zinov’ev, *Gomo sovetikus*. Available from RoyalLib.com: https://royallib.com/book/zinovev_aleksandr/gomo_sovetikus.html (accessed April 7, 2020). See also Sinyavsky, *Soviet Civilization*.

even communist modernization could, over time, nurture a democratic citizen, the latter tended to bring to the fore the indoctrinating aspects of Leninist politics fabricating a brainwashed citizenry.⁹⁴ More recently, Grigore Pop-Eleches and Joshua Tucker have systematically analyzed the continued relevance of this aspect of communist societies in understanding differences in public attitudes as compared to contexts that have not experienced communism.⁹⁵ Whether through indoctrination in schools, in the professions, or in routinized ideology-impregnated practices of community engagement, citizens in communist societies have arguably internalized values, participatory attitudes, and *modi operandi* that constitute a hindrance to democratic consolidation. Another strand of theorizing, the “Soviet subjectivity” school of thought,⁹⁶ while highlighting citizen agency in navigating, constructing, and interrogating identity in a communist polis, has also privileged the public realm as the core around which these subjectivities – the “self” and “subjecthood” made ostensibly productive by the Soviet experience⁹⁷ – are constructed and debated. Scholars link these subjectivities explicitly or implicitly to the apathy, cynicism, or, alternatively, agency of the Soviet and post-Soviet citizen.⁹⁸

The middle ground proposed here takes the emphasis away from the implications of inputs intrinsic to the communist experience and instead highlights the parallel channels of genesis of the middle class, embracing both the more autonomous processes of socialization preceding the communist period and those intrinsic to state-led hegemonic modernization.⁹⁹

⁹⁴ For a summary of these debates, see Gerber, “Market,” 479–80; Parkin, “System Contradiction”; and, concerning intellectual occupations, Lipset and Dobson, “Intellectual as Critic.” On generational value differences, notably concerning private enterprise, see Dobson, “Communism’s Legacy”; and Silver, “Political Beliefs,” 232–35.

⁹⁵ Pop-Eleches and Tucker, *Communism’s Shadow*. See also Pop-Eleches, “Communist Development.”

⁹⁶ Hellbeck, *Revolution*; Hellbeck, “Working.” For a critique of this approach in cultural history and anthropology, see Fitzpatrick, *Tear Off the Masks!*, 8–9, esp. 8n10. Like Fitzpatrick, I harbor unease about “totalizing theory” – be it Marxist or Foucauldian – and, given that Foucault appears to have displaced Marx as the fashionable thinker of our times (at least in the UK), I eschew deferential references to Foucault. *Ibid.*, 8.

⁹⁷ Hellbeck, discussed in Fitzpatrick, *Tear Off the Masks!*, 8.

⁹⁸ Hellbeck, *Revolution*; Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever*.

⁹⁹ On communist legacies, see Pop-Eleches and Tucker, *Communism’s Shadow*; Kotkin and Beissinger, “Historical Legacies”; Kopstein, “Review Article”; LaPorte and Lussier, “What Is the Leninist Legacy?”; Wittenberg, “What Is a Historical Legacy?” University of California at Berkeley, March 25, 2012, 9 (unpublished manuscript); and Danielle N. Lussier and Jody M. LaPorte, “Critical Juncture(s) of Communism and Post-Communism: Identifying and Evaluating Path Dependent Processes in the Post-Soviet Space.” Paper presented at The American Political Science Annual Meeting, August 31 to September 3, 2017, San Francisco. Earlier classic works on communist/Leninist legacies are Jowitt, *New World Disorder*; Elster et al., *Institutional Design*; Hanson, “Leninist Legacy”; Ekiert and Hanson, “Time, Space, and Institutional Change.”

The question then becomes not whether *communist* regimes helped engender a modern – democratic – citizen, thereby sowing the seeds of their own destruction, or indeed the extent to which they trampled on society’s potential for democracy, but whether and how the legacies of the autonomous *pre-communist* demos were able to survive through the decades of hegemonic societal remolding.

MECHANISMS OF REPRODUCTION

I now more precisely articulate hypothesized mechanisms linking the tsarist social structure – specifically, the bourgeoisie – to variations in democratic quality among Russia’s regions and over-time national-level fluctuations in political regime type. Succinctly, I define the bourgeois legacy as a set of social endowments that are reproduced, maintained, and survive across time and distinct regimes. Marrying the institutional aspect of the legacy with the cognitional dimension is essential to my framework because institutions alone would fail to engender the bourgeois legacy. I regard professional, bureaucratic, and civic institutions as embedders of a highly unequal and stratified society. Institutions and intra-institutional hierarchies, even if we approach them broadly as practices, values, or rules of entry and exclusion, mirror as well as channel social stratification.¹⁰⁰ Conversely, I do not imagine the bourgeois legacy to manifest itself solely in a value-cognitional sense, outside of the institutions so described. The argument is that cognitions are rooted in tangible and metaphorical institutional architectures that provide goalposts, signposts, roadblocks, and openings; and, of course, they furnish resources and a possibility for the reproduction of values within organizational spaces.

In my account, the bourgeois legacy does not straightforwardly lead individuals to explicitly articulate demands for, struggle for, or protest for democracy.¹⁰¹ My dual conception of a bourgeois legacy begs for a different causal logic. I regard institutions and institutional pluralism in roughly similar terms as Weber did when he discussed the genesis of European city-states and trading towns as incipient shoots of the participatory autonomy of communes of burghers. The town burghers may actively seek to shelter their communities, rights, and privileges from the encroachment of others, notably via the “monopolization of the economic opportunities offered by the city.”¹⁰² These exclusive enclaves, however, also engendered a passionate sense of entitlement to autonomous governance. The professions, museums, universities, and other

¹⁰⁰ On occupations traditionally colonized by low-status groups like the military rank-and-file, see, for instance, Davis, *Discipline*, 203.

¹⁰¹ The book is careful to avoid a naïve view of social processes identifying particular social groups with progressive, democratic, or other sentiments and causes. On the pitfalls of the approach regarding the working class in Nazi Germany, see Eley, “On Your Marx,” 502–3.

¹⁰² Weber, *Economy and Society*, 2:1252. See also 1328–29.

such institutions discussed in this book – even when tactically adapted and modified to fit Bolshevik ideological imperatives – are precisely regarded from this perspective. The second prong of my dual, institutional-cognitive perspective, that of values, also warrants elaboration. Far from regarding the fallen aristocrat, merchant, or *meshchanka* as a cohesive group with well-articulated democratic preferences, I regard their values from the point of view of the privileged statist society's cognitive embeddedness in the institutions of modernity, which of course drives a striving to embrace these arenas in an intergenerational sense. Such cognitive maps incentivize not only superb education perpetuated within families – a reasonable predictor of democratic preferences in a variety of contexts – but also possibilities for careers in sites that permit autonomous thought, sensibility, and action even under the most inquisitorial and totalizing regimes. In post-communist countries, such human endowments in turn enable hedging between the market and public sector or self-employment possibilities.

In articulating a causal story linking the bourgeoisie to democracy through seven decades of communism, I identify four interconnected pathways. The first two routes of *education* and *professional incorporation* operate at the juncture of state policy and social structure. I argue that the state reinforced the social status of the pre-communist bourgeoisie by dint of leveraging their human capital and professional skills, the developmental *software*. It also did so by appropriating the developmental *hardware* in the form of professional sites originating within imperial Russia and embedding these individuals into the Soviet polity and institutions. The third channel, which I label *social closure*, we could more appropriately anchor within society in a Bourdieusian sense. It pertains to values that familial, cultural, and community milieus nurture outside of state policy – these may or may not be reinforced through state directives and practice. Finally, I incorporate the various elements of time, already alluded to and echoed in the first three mechanisms, more explicitly into the causal structure of the explanatory framework.

Education

Following a voluminous body of evidence spurred on by the modernization paradigm,¹⁰³ I regard education, broadly defined, as a starting point for unpacking the legacies of social structure and their present-day social-political implications. I link the spatially heterogeneous patterns of education and professional training to the imperial distribution of estates. The Bolsheviks used extant human capital because it facilitated industrialization and human development. Civil strife, economic collapse, famine, epidemics, and disease engender a *dis-leveler* effect whereby post-revolutionary shocks to regime legitimacy incentivize even further the reliance on – and social elevation

¹⁰³ Lerner, *Passing of Traditional Society*; Lipset, “Some Social Requisites.”

of – the dietitian, the veterinarian, the medic, and the civil engineer.¹⁰⁴ The implication of the tactical decision to embrace the “bourgeois specialist” is the reproduction of spatial heterogeneity in human capital in Russia’s regions. Put simply, territories with a larger pre-revolutionary share of the educated estates are likely to exhibit higher rates of literacy, schooling, and university attendance. Anticipating the results of the statistical analysis, we can confidently say that this is an appropriate starting point for the theory proposed here.

As noted, simply reasserting covariation between education and democracy is problematic. Recent evidence about education and professional training in autocracies has been linked via various pathways – either through ideological indoctrination in schools or via the mechanism of fabricating loyalty and professionally dependent constituencies – to authoritarian values and support rather than democracy. Classic accounts of the Soviet project precisely highlight spectacular achievements in evening out educational access and providing opportunities to those from modest backgrounds and to the illiterate rural residents and semiliterate factory workforce in particular, strata that would then enter the urban white-collar labor force.¹⁰⁵ Generational change would also inevitably interfere with assumptions about straightforward links between the quality and extent of imperial-era, as compared to Soviet-period, education of the strata who may be first-generation literates or secondary school attendees. Analyzing the estate makeup of a territory and its employment structure in late imperial Russia and education as measured by literacy would be one way to explore variations between “autonomously” nurtured bourgeoisie and one engendered consequential to the policies of an authoritarian state. We would expect that territories exhibiting better educational outcomes and professional development would possess not only the infrastructures of modern education that the Bolsheviks appropriated and expanded but also greater availability of a skills base among the educated estates to deliver schooling and professional training. Demand for education, which I hypothesize remained habitual and inertial among imperial Russia’s bourgeoisie and proto-bourgeois strata, would also be higher in such territories.

Professional Incorporation and Autonomy

If we were to simply employ literacy or educational attainment statistics – individual-level attributes of citizens residing in districts – our analysis would be insensitive to the broader social contexts in which individuals had been embedded at the time of the Bolshevik Revolution; to nuances of their socialization; and to collective value transmission. Because, as I shall demonstrate, appropriation of the human capital of *individuals* to serve the

¹⁰⁴ I am paraphrasing the title of the book by Scheidel, *Great Leveler*.

¹⁰⁵ Fitzpatrick, *Education*.

Bolsheviks' developmental agenda is inseparable from the story of the appropriation of professional *institutions*, my second hypothesized channel of persistence is bureaucratic-social autonomy nurturing islands of social distinction and oppositional orientations vis-à-vis the state.

One pattern that emerges from even a cursory examination of the estate makeup of imperial Russia's professional institutions is that the various estates do not exhibit patterns of random and chance distribution. The Soviet state-appropriated professionals thus maintained a certain *estate* profile, something that nurtured the corporate aspect of professional embeddedness, value, and identity construction. The assimilation of the historically privileged groups' social distinctions into modern institutions of the professions, learning, and quasi-civic enterprise – often with the aid of substantial familial investment – facilitates resilience in social structure, not least because modernizing regimes appropriate such institutions as part of the agenda of hasty state-led development. Moreover, even in a communist context, over time, there would be possibilities to self-select into what Sorokin describes as “deliberative,” as distinct from “executive” employment sites, those like academia, research, or the arts where intra-professional gradation is not as “clear cut” nor so “centralized as in purely executive bodies.”¹⁰⁶

In what ways would this pattern of incorporation matter for understanding the social underpinnings of democratic support during and after communism? In addressing this question, I draw attention to professional and civic autonomous action in evidence under the old regime and carried over into the institutions of Bolshevik Russia. This is particularly relevant in the case of cultural institutions where the *haute* bourgeoisie comprised of nobles, educated scions of clergymen, and merchant philanthropists found refuge as the witch hunts against “former people” raged.¹⁰⁷ The autonomous action represents an extension of the legacies of the estate corporation and of impulses nurtured against the background of the enlightened society's evasions and resistance to the encroachments of the tsarist state. Yet autonomous impulses would extend to other arenas that we associate with the large Soviet public sector, notably in education, medicine, and engineering.¹⁰⁸ The appropriation of the empire's professional institutions would be consequential not only for enabling individuals with a particular social-estate profile in their impulse for social distinction but also for endowing them with a modicum of autonomy vis-à-vis the state.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁶ Sorokin, *Social Mobility*, 116.

¹⁰⁷ Tchuikina, *Dvoryanskaya pamyat'*; Smith, *Former People*.

¹⁰⁸ On struggles for professional autonomy in imperial Russia, see Balzer, *Russia's Missing Middle Class*.

¹⁰⁹ Discussions of the social structure mapping onto white-collar professions and intra-professional gradations and hierarchies within them and consequences for relationships with political power feature in classic works on twentieth-century dictatorial regimes. Consider the distinction between the “old” bourgeoisie, the *Bildungsbürgertum*, and the “new” white-collar

Social Closure

The third and related channel of social persistence and resilience is social closure. Unlike the other two channels, which operate at the juncture of state policy and society, social reproduction via this route may well operate *despite* state policies not *because of them*. The Bolshevik state may have been eager to even out educational inequalities and obliterate the bourgeoisie, yet I identify values transmitted via the familial and pre-revolutionary social networks as an essential ingredient in the intergenerational reproduction of the social structure. Following Stinchcombe, and drawing on the theorizing of Bourdieu, we would expect to observe a form of inertia in the aspirational dimension of social status, since, even against a radical revolutionary upheaval, the individual would remain embedded within a multigenerational, familial, and social environment or “field” that would have socialized within oneself the expectation of an education, a profession, a cultural status befitting one’s station in society. With respect to the urban bourgeoisie, nobility, and clergy, we would expect to observe the reproduction of habitual impulses in learning that could be contrasted with the aspirations of lower status groups targeted as beneficiaries of Bolshevik policies of social uplift. Social closure would also operate at the level of selectivity in social interaction. Again, we would expect socialization to exhibit continuities with past patterns of ties and bonds exhibiting estatist characteristics.

Finally, I expect social closure to operate at the level of values, practices, and networks that could only have originated and functioned *outside* of state policy and sanction. Some – like engagements reflecting familiarity with market production, trade, and finance, as would be the case with merchants who before the Revolution owned mills, bakeries, and farms – in my analytical framework constitute direct channels of maintenance of bourgeois skills and values. Other aspects of values extraneous to Bolshevik policy would be indirectly related to the germination of autonomous social impulses vis-à-vis the state. In the latter category are embeddedness in, and connectedness to,

workers in research charting the rise of support for the far right in interwar Germany. Speier, *German White-Collar Workers*; Kracauer, *Mass Ornament*, esp. 122–27. See also *Die Angestellten*; and Jarausch, “German Professions.” The German *Bildungsbürgertum* is similar to the concept of Russia’s intelligentsia. Originating in late eighteenth-century Central Europe, it encompassed gymnasium- and university-trained “cultivated middle classes,” including civil servants, free professionals, and some entrepreneurs, who “derived their unity from formal neohumanist training and informal student subculture, which established a distinguished style (classical citations), form of communication (literary journals), and manner of sociability (student corporations).” The concept arguably emerged “as a retrospective critical category” in the 1920s. *Ibid.*, 17. Another group, Prussian *Junkers*, were a semi-feudal caste-like group, possessing “politico-intellectual supremacy” within “directive-organizational” political society and the officer class and a “strong consciousness of being an independent social group” until at least 1918. Gramsci, *Selections*, 19. On the social structure embedded in schools in Italy and elsewhere, see also *ibid.*, 40–43; and on that topic, Bourdieu et al., *Reproduction in Education*.

outside sources of information transmitted via correspondence with émigré relatives abroad, remittances, and, via these channels, access to resources facilitating adaptation and shadow market exchange under socialism.

Time: Historical and Clock Aspects

The above-discussed three mechanisms of social persistence are attuned to the complementarities, disjunctures, and clashes between the slow- and long-maturing social and the fast-paced and radical political realms. The various dimensions of time in the analytical framework warrant some further conceptual elaboration. This section dwells at some length on the questions of how and why careful attention to the temporal structure of the causal processes helps further unpack the paradoxical logics of social persistence despite the revolutionary juncture and post-revolutionary societal remolding that spanned seven decades.

Scholars working in the comparative sociology and comparative historical analysis traditions distinguish between the *physical* aspects of *clock time*, as captured in dates, tempo, pace, and duration of policies and events, and the “thick”¹¹⁰ aspects of *historical time*. As Marcus Kreuzer explains, calendric sequences like hours in a day or weeks are units of time that are not historical: “they are recurring and not tied to a specific context whose comparison across time helps us understand change through time and hence historical time.”¹¹¹ In the narratives on communism, the physical aspects of clock time have taken primacy in that the project’s “duration” neatly overlaps with the calendric milestones of 1917–91, taking precedence over historical time. Yet sensitivity to both the clock and the historical dimensions of time – to variation in the contrasting but co-constituting, “time scales” or *Zeitschichten*, “layers of time” – both those fleeting and the tectonic¹¹² – warrants simultaneous expansion of our epochal horizons but also calls for the shrinkage, as it were, of notions of physical time – in our case, the duration of communism as a project itself. Let me explain.

Consider a revolutionary situation where the legitimacy of the new power holder hinges on effective delivery of basic public services.¹¹³ Picture the civil strife, the famine, the epidemics, the disease that accompany events of gargantuan historical proportion like the Bolshevik Revolution and that may even be intrinsic to them. These are *fast-paced* happenings incentivizing a fallback on expertise, knowledge, and education, engendered in the long

¹¹⁰ Kreuzer, “Varieties of Time,” 13, online copy. On these aspects of temporality, see Grzymala-Busse, “Time Will Tell?” 1268.

¹¹¹ Kreuzer, “Varieties of Time,” 4. ¹¹² Conrad, *What Is Global History?*, 142, 147.

¹¹³ Weber poignantly writes: “Even in the case of revolution by force or of occupation by an enemy, the bureaucratic machinery will normally continue to function just as it has for the previous legal government.” Weber, *Economy and Society*, 1:224.

historical process of social construction – aspects of “thick” historical time that foil attempts to map human lives, values, and agency neatly onto the revolutionary epoch. Institutional longevity may consequently effect regress, reversals, compromises, or a status quo fallback in policy *in the now*, nurturing, via a causal loop, social-institutional resilience at times of profound change during which we would least expect inertia. In the immediate post-revolutionary period, millions of people not only perished in the Civil War but succumbed to raging epidemics and famine. Typhus furnishes one example. While, in 1913, the country registered 7.3 cases of typhus per 10,000 people, in 1918, the figure rose to 21.9 and to 265.3 in 1919, reaching an “all-time high” of 393.9 per 10,000 people in 1920.¹¹⁴ “Typhus,” Lenin declared shortly after the revolution, ‘among a population [already] weakened by hunger without bread, soap, fuel, may become such a scourge as not to give us an opportunity to undertake socialist construction ... *Either the louse defeats socialism or socialism defeats the louse.*’¹¹⁵

Long-established institutions, whether in medicine, education, or the veterinary sciences – encapsulating the edifices, skills, and horizons in training and experience – acquire urgent resilience in such troubled junctures precisely because no time could be wasted on creating new, properly “communist” institutions, lest millions more people die of starvation or disease and survivors take to the pitchfork to dislodge the opportunists who have seized power. This angle, morbidly prescient in the world of COVID-19, is distinct from perspectives on crisis points as propitious to institutional change.¹¹⁶ My assumption concerning the *great dis-leveler*¹¹⁷ effect of fast-based revolutionary whirlwinds precisely derives from sensitivity to the immediate urgency of knowledge as against the temporally far more protracted, stable, and slow intergenerational processes of institutional construction and of intra-institutional social and cognitive embedding. Calamity, in such times of crisis, finds strange bedfellows with stability! The duration, pace, trajectories, and cycles of these overlaying occurrences – key temporal concepts in comparative historical analysis¹¹⁸ – would of course vary across historical contexts subjected to communism; and the consequences for social resilience would be different too. The confluence of processes with a fast-paced tempo and social currency acquired via slow, protracted, long-maturing, long-horizon – transgenerational – nurturing of expertise creates immense possibilities for the calcification of the social structure, warranting a fresh angle on how we regard

¹¹⁴ Field, *Doctor and Patient*, 15. ¹¹⁵ Cited in *ibid.*, 15 (emphasis added).

¹¹⁶ Howlett and Goetz, “Introduction,” 485. ¹¹⁷ Here, I paraphrase Scheidel, *Great Leveler*.

¹¹⁸ Aminzade, “Historical Sociology,” 458. Pace has been defined as a “number of events in a given amount of time,” duration as “the amount of time elapsed for a given event or sequence of events. By contrast, cycles and trajectories have a more qualitative nature in that cycles refer to repetitive events marked by ascending/descending sequences, and trajectories invokes cumulativeness and directionality.” *Ibid.*, 459.

the social consequences of “social revolutions,” and solutions to inequality, in the present.

The professionalization of Russia’s estates-derived bourgeoisie, I conjecture, engendered concomitant “life course” progressionary milestones – subjective aspects of the perception of times past, present, and future¹¹⁹ – the school, the university, the coveted service title, the modern occupation, often organically coexisting with private entrepreneurship, trade, a business. These social identities would be operating at the level of far more expansive temporal frameworks than those enchainned to 1917 and Bolshevik policy. Indeed, they would have long become “social facts” in their engrained perception of naturalness and inevitability.¹²⁰ A nuanced appreciation of these fluid orientations – of the people “left out”¹²¹ of the macro-historical, Marxian-march-of-history assumptions, or of the political grandee-, events-centered, “eventual”¹²² analyses of the social scientist – would thereby help us relativize the comparatively privileged estates’ perception of loss when the Bolsheviks confiscated their properties and other possessions. Numerous accounts have prioritized this material shattering in assuming away the old bourgeoisie. Yet scores of documentary records, whether memoirs, letters, or other private papers, reveal that, in fact, overwhelmingly, the sense of disorientation, desperation, and anger is attached to restrictions on the pursuit of habitual trajectories of a nonmaterial essence – the place in the gymnasium for the clever aristocratic boy; the university offer withdrawn from the adolescent merchant girl; the professional possibilities in *service* for the *meshchanin-rentier* circumscribed; the scientific work in a laboratory for the clergyman-veterinarian cut short.¹²³ To return to comparative historical sociology concepts, in terms of *historical time*, the orientations of the generic bourgeoisie would span the horizons of multiple generations prior to and following 1917; and the *clock time* that has meaning would be, say, the urgency of the beginning of the new school year, and hence the need to enact, to preserve, and to adjust as best as possible the arenas of pedagogic–professional–scientific interaction from before.

Despite the apocalyptic perturbations that occurred in the decade that followed the abdication of Tsar Nicholas II and the Bolshevik coup, we may then consider 1928 as a more appropriate starting point for analyzing socially meaningful communist legacies than 1917 and 1986 – the year that Mikhail Gorbachev commenced his far-reaching reforms and autonomous society emerged from the shadows – as the more appropriate end point. Soviet communism in its most socially shattering forms would have lasted not

¹¹⁹ On this, see *ibid.*, 461.

¹²⁰ On the inertial and socially coercive, aspect of “temporal regularities,” routines, and schedules, see Zerubavel, *Hidden Rhythms*, 43; he draws on Durkheim.

¹²¹ Conrad, *What Is Global History?*, 157. ¹²² Kreuzer, *Grammar of Time*, in press.

¹²³ To avoid repetition, I cite and discuss these throughout the book.

seventy but fifty-eight years, barely two generations according to this view, and, even so, with many of the caveats that I dissect throughout the book as to what “communism” really meant if we reconsider its purportedly uprooting, modifying, and corrective impacts. Such an adjustment in periodization could be defended on the grounds that social calibration processes in the 1917–28 period, while punctuated with repression, civil war, and “war communism” shocks, were less consequential for the structure of society than those that followed. The Leninist regime inflicted far more draconian projects on the Russian people post-1928, even if “dress rehearsals” for those same policies occurred earlier on a smaller scale. Churches, synagogues, and mosques were destroyed or closed; “bourgeois” university faculties and schools were suspended; professionals were purged; private enterprise was choked and entrepreneurs repressed, exiled, or pushed into the shadows; collectivization was forced upon the peasantry; the Gulag was institutionalized, consolidated, and metastasized across the vast stretches of the Soviet empire; and, eventually, entire peoples were decimated. Reversals, regress, and a relaxation of course followed key “milestones” and policies after 1928. Yet demarcating the 1917–28 period as only vaguely communist would analytically sensitize us both to the radical changes that did occur post-1928 and to the many qualifiers we could add to their effects even after that point, precisely because the “bourgeoisie” would have had a decade under the new regime to solidify old ties; train children and grandchildren in properly tsarist institutions; acquire, retain, or consolidate anchors in a respectable profession; and, crucially, the patriarch and the matriarch, while still alive, would have had a decade to pursue an injunctive agenda vis-à-vis the values of the younger generation.

The analytical framework also warrants linking time to space. Not only does the pace of change vary depending on where you are in the spatial matrix – the metropolitan center or the provinces far removed¹²⁴ – but the tempo¹²⁵ of happenings in one location shapes strategies of individual and network survival based on perceived havens with a far slower rate of change. Many an aristocrat or merchant spent years, if not decades, sitting out, as it were, the vagaries of class policy in a provincial museum or library only to then reinvent themselves as the cultural aristocracy in the metropolitan Soviet Union. Conventionally periodized slices of time pegged to the New Economic Policy (NEP) or the Great Purge would not capture their predicament.

¹²⁴ The sociologist Pitirim Sorokin captured well this contrasting sense of time when briefly departing Petrograd for the provincial town of Veliki Ustyug following the February Revolution of 1917. “What a relief to leave the capital with its constantly moving crowds, its disorder, dirt, and hysteria, and to be again in the tranquil places I love! . . . How perfect is the calm of it all! How pure and still the air, as if no revolution exists!” Sorokin, *A Long Journey*, 119.

¹²⁵ Or frequency of sub-events in a larger event. Grzymala-Busse, “Time Will Tell?” 1282. Actors during fast-paced change arguably are more likely to rely on “off the shelf” templates and on personal networks. *Ibid.*, 1282.

Spatial separation also enables survival in a temporally broad sense of career progression – for who would recognize in the leading Soviet newspaper editor in Moscow the scion of a provincial merchant family running an empire of bathhouses in imperial Samara?¹²⁶ Where could we place such a not-so-hapless descendant of the purveyor of capitalist enterprise turned literatus in the Marxist scheme of things, impoverished as it is of sensitivity to the complexity of time and space and generations in the construction of social identities, professional stations, and behaviors? Space–time matrices in my analysis are also inclusive of fast-paced transnational diasporic–émigré linkages that Soviet policy facilitated as it encouraged remittances as a cash cow for the currency-starved Soviet state. At the same time, the space–time conundrum has the unfortunate role of the conceptual “blinker” in my analysis, since many a scholar would assume away social resilience precisely because of the *time-compressed* and *spatially expansive* human dislocation intrinsic to the Gulag, the exiles, the deportations, and the grand projects to industrialize the frontier. Yet, as will become clear, social ties were energetically reconfiguring and self-correcting *in spite of* and even at times *because of* dislocation, mirroring pre-revolutionary associations among individuals.

RESEARCH DESIGN

To empirically tease out the patterns and mechanisms of the reproduction of the social structure across distinct regimes and orders, I combine large-n statistical analysis of Russia’s entire universe of administrative units with an in-depth causal process analysis of one subnational case. I also perform social network analysis to explore the estate, professional, and social ties that structured late imperial society and their alteration, severance, and reproduction after the Revolution. Finally, survey microdata help to chart covariation between self-reported estate ancestry and professional adaptation. Each empirical chapter combines systematic large-n data analysis with an in-depth reading of archival, memoir, and interview-sourced materials to dissect the micro-dynamics and processes of social adaptation. The detailed social ethnography of one region helps to more fully tease out patterns of social-structural continuities revealed in large-n analysis and enables a fine-grained examination of heterogeneity and subtle intragroup hierarchies within the would-be *Soviet intelligentsia*. The added illustrative materials from literary and cinematographic classics documenting the tapestries of values and destinies of various social groups drive home the normalcy of uncovered patterns, possibly surmised otherwise as atypical or uncharacteristic of Russia as a whole. I consider the ontology of, the various aspects of the “making of,” the Russian bourgeoisie as an essential analytical step

¹²⁶ Reference to Aleksandr Chakovskij, editor-in-chief of *Literaturnaya gazeta*. For ancestry, see *Yevreyskiy mir Samary* (“Jewish world of Samara”): sites.google.com/site/samaraemir/muzej-naa-ekspozicia/kupcy-i-predprinimateli/m-a-cakovskij (accessed September 21, 2020).

in the deductive process of theory testing, because if we do not get the question right – the origin, nature, and sources of distinction of the bourgeoisie – we would repeat the errors found on the pages of earlier studies, of discursively and analytically reproducing either Leninist categories of class or generic preconceptions about the post-Soviet middle class. Additionally, comparative analysis of other communist countries' late feudal societies and the sequencing of landmark pre-communist social reforms corroborates findings about social structure and political regime variations derived from the Russian case.

Large-n Statistical Analysis

District- and region-level statistical analysis helps tease out the significance of estate constellations as drivers of general variations in socioeconomic development and democratic quality over and above Soviet modernization policies.¹²⁷ The regional data, which are supplemented with individual survey data and within-region social network analysis, also allow us to distinguish between the surviving legacies of an “organically” nurtured bourgeoisie/middle class and one “incubated”¹²⁸ more recently under a “hegemonic” modernizing order. The units of analysis cover the full developmental-social-political spectrum of territories, from wealthy industrial giants with oppositional voting patterns to economic laggards predictably delivering a pro-Kremlin vote.¹²⁹ The spatial and historical underpinnings of development also vary. Unlike the earlier work of economic historians who have deployed data for European Russia only, my universe of observations encompasses the entire gamut of regions as diverse as the Black Earth lands in European Russia, with their historically high density of serfdom, agrarian dominance within the economy, and socioeconomic underdevelopment; the Siberian and Far Eastern frontier regions, with a very different set of historical legacies of development, Soviet and pre-Soviet; and the Middle Volga and North Caucasus territories that combine elements of the frontier with economic characteristics of European Russia. These various territories also featured distinct constellations of estates. Anticipating the results, I find that the imperial-era social structure is a significant predictor of variations in regional occupational patterns and democratic quality over and above communist modernization legacies. The “general linear reality”¹³⁰ exposed in my large-n analysis would nevertheless stop short of uncovering the “interactionist”¹³¹ complexity driving the paradoxical reproduction of the social structure underpinning a bourgeois social order in a revolutionary polity that saw

¹²⁷ Analyzing all territories helps alleviate selection bias: the observations are not limited to those with extreme values on the dependent variable. King et al., *Designing Social Inquiry*; Collier et al., “Claiming Too Much.”

¹²⁸ To use the apt characterization in Rosenfeld, “Reevaluating,” 637.

¹²⁹ On “democratic deficit” in rural areas, see McMann and Petrov, “Survey of Democracy”; McMann, *Economic Autonomy*; Gel'man and Ross, *The Politics*; but see Lankina and Libman, “Soviet Legacies.”

¹³⁰ Abbott, *Time Matters*, 37–63. ¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 154.

its *raison d'être* as obliterating that very social order.¹³² I therefore select one region for an in-depth exploration of the complex mechanisms behind the statistical results.

Single-Case Selection

My “single case within one national context” framework departs from empirical strategies pursued in classic works in historical sociology concerned with radical revolutionary transformations. Studies in the “critical juncture” tradition have often worked with several country cases. This research and, more broadly, landmark books in comparative historical sociology have tended to explicitly rely on secondary historical sources.¹³³ The strategy of mining published historical monographs is, of course, the only feasible one considering the methodological device of comparison of multiple countries across long time stretches. This approach is not appropriate for advancing the research goals I set for myself in this study. To begin with, I find problematic the assertion that goes something like “historians have already done all the groundwork for us social scientists.” Conceptually, this is fraught, considering that historians may ask certain questions while ignoring others. Ideological biases may well creep into the kinds of questions posed and the ways they are answered. Moreover, the availability of sources may simply relegate an important question into the realm of the non-question. Consider the example of social structure – the topic closest to the heart of this book. No single work of history has, as far as I am aware, systematically analyzed the adaptation, destinies, or reproduction of the “bourgeois” estates of merchants and *meshchane* in Soviet Russia.¹³⁴ By contrast, we have substantial historical scholarship on the social mobility of the proletariat, which was actually barely emergent in 1917 but accorded high prominence in Marxist visions of

¹³² One strategy would have been to pursue a controlled case comparison of a small number of cases (regions) carefully selected based on a set of criteria of outcome differences and similarities, while allowing for the control of variations on the key independent variable of interest. A recent excellent book using this approach is Finkel, *Ordinary Jews*.

¹³³ See the discussion of sources in Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions*, xiv. See also Collier and Collier, *Shaping the Political Arena*; Kalyvas, *Rise of Christian Democracy*; Slater, *Ordering Power*.

¹³⁴ Even leading scholars of Soviet Russia, who acknowledged the role of pre-revolutionary legacies, relegated the urban estates to oblivion. In the questionnaire administered to Soviet refugees as part of The Harvard Project on the Soviet Social System (THPSSS), possible answers to the pre-revolutionary social group of parents include the nobility, the intelligentsia, landowners, officialdom, merchants, craftsmen (artisans), workers, the peasantry, the middle class, the clergy, and the military. It is unclear whether “middle class” refers to *meshchane* or another group; the authors do not specify this. There is no discussion of merchant ancestry in the survey results, which refer to groups in class, status (upper-lower), and occupational terms. Inkeles and Bauer, *Soviet Citizen*, 413.

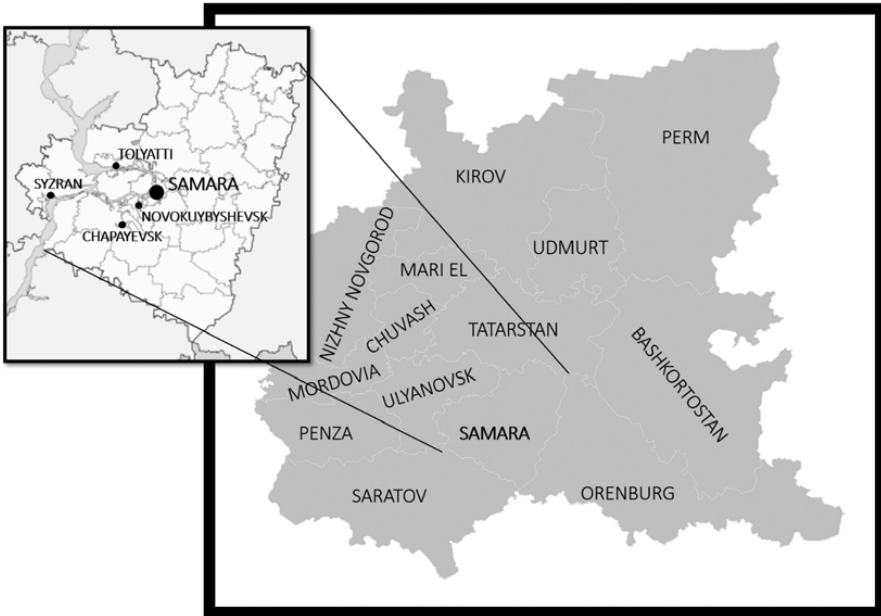


FIGURE 1.1 Map of Samara

the march of history.¹³⁵ Simply relying on secondary sources to unpack the estates-related trajectory of inequality and the resulting variations among social groups and within the middle class would not get us very far, as this is not a question that Western, let alone, Soviet historians have concerned themselves with very much. Why might that be the case?

Two sets of works suffice to illustrate the ways that the epoch in which historical tomes are produced may crucially shape both the questions asked and the answers proposed. One is the quasi-hagiographic excursion into Soviet achievements written by Sydney and Beatrice Webb in the 1930s and 1940s.¹³⁶ The other, far more nuanced, set of works is by the historian Sheila Fitzpatrick. The Webbs were, of course, working at a time when many left-wing intellectuals embraced the promise of communism before illusions were shattered in the wake of Stalin's show trials and knowledge about the human cost of collectivization and the purges became widespread.¹³⁷ Fitzpatrick belonged to a different generation of social historians who wrote Soviet history in the wake of the anti-establishment social upheavals in the West in the late 1960s and 1970s. Against this zeitgeist, the Soviet state's apparently

¹³⁵ Fitzpatrick, *Education*; Fitzpatrick, "Cultural Revolution."

¹³⁶ Webb and Webb, *Soviet Communism*.

¹³⁷ Although many observers even at the time were aware of the show trials and recognized them for what they are. See the discussion of the Webbs in Brown, *Rise and Fall*, 121.

spectacular inroads into social mobility would represent a far more interesting and relevant question than would the possibility of the reproduction of the bourgeoisie that Stalin proclaimed extinct by the mid-1930s but which may logically constitute a legitimate subject of scholarly inquiry in the period after communism collapsed, when scholars began to grapple with questions of the pro-democracy and pro-market orientations of the post-communist citizen. Yet, from the 1990s onward, for many historians – and writers of popular historical jeremiads – the more interesting questions became Stalinist destruction, terror, and uprooting, not continuities and adaptations.¹³⁸ Here, again, we observe the phenomenon of the non-question sorely problematizing reliance on secondary historical sources.¹³⁹ My chosen empirical strategy is therefore to sacrifice the potential for generating systematic comparative insights from qualitative analysis of several cases and instead reap the benefit of immersing myself into the hitherto underutilized papers from provincial archives and other eclectic troves of materials.¹⁴⁰ Sourcing the archive and validating findings employing new data allow me to form my own impressions about pivotal policy decisions and social antidotes to them. Historians have charged that “quantitative results are trivial, since they prove only what has been known already.”¹⁴¹ This book will hopefully escape that criticism because of the blend of original history and data analysis.

The region of Samara constitutes, in my study, the “pathway” case,¹⁴² which helps test and tease out mechanisms otherwise prone to concerns of spurious correlation between variables like “estates” and “democracy” not only removed in time but straddling three regime types – tsarist monarchy, communism, and post-Soviet failed democracy. Samara typifies Russia’s other historically cosmopolitan, trading, and enterprising regions, though it, of course, also exhibits characteristics peculiar to the historical contingencies of the place. Protestants and Catholics, Jews, Germans, and Poles have been as historically constitutive of the social fabric of this region as the Eastern Orthodox, Muslims, ethnic Russians, Ukrainians, Mordovians, and Tatars. Merchants and *meshchane* enjoyed social prominence in the fast-developing towns. A frontier

¹³⁸ See, for instance, Snyder, *Bloodlands*; Conquest, *Great Terror*; Applebaum, *Gulag*.

¹³⁹ On the *new social history* “propelled by radical democratic or Marxist concerns,” see Jarausch and Hardy, *Quantitative Methods*, 6. I share the concern with “mute masses” but analyze both the *petite* and *grande bourgeoisie* – notably the understudied, indeed largely forgotten, provincial bourgeoisie – hardly subject of interest, or sympathy, among the Marxism-inspired historians and social scientists analyzing the Soviet project.

¹⁴⁰ On the merits of provincial archives, off limits to Western historians during communism, and which often contain revelations pertaining to nuances of center-regional relations, contingency, and local agency, see Sunderland, *Taming*, 231.

¹⁴¹ Jarausch and Hardy, *Quantitative Methods*, 3.

¹⁴² Key conditions for selection are that the case is not an extreme outlier and there is strong covariance between the scores on the key variables of interest. Gerring, “Case Selection,” 664–68. In the Online Appendix 4 (OA4), I corroborate that Samara is not an outlier. On merits of within-case analysis, see Collier et al., “Claiming Too Much,” 95–97.

territory and one with some steppe soils less fertile than in the Black Earth lands, for centuries it served as a haven for peasant escapees, vagabonds, bandits, and rebels.¹⁴³ Serfdom never took root as much here as in the Black Earth Central Russian *gubernii*. A significant proportion of peasants were under state or Crown authority, their burdens, writes Orlando Figes, “not as onerous as those of the serfs,” a “distinction [that] continued to be true after the Emancipation.”¹⁴⁴ Moreover, while not a stellar haven for highbrow education, Samara’s overall literacy and education levels were comparatively high. Samara City’s location on the Volga facilitated impressive development as Russia industrialized. The river had historically been a natural artery for commercial trade between the Northern industrial and the Southern grain-producing regions as well as the mineral-rich Urals. By the time of the Bolshevik coup, Samara had been connected to virtually all the new railway lines linking the vast swathes of empire from Central Asia to the Caucasus and Siberia and constructed during the nineteenth century’s railway boom.¹⁴⁵ The native merchant and foreign capital-driven industrial expansion also led to the flourishing of sophisticated pastimes, civic activism, and philanthropy.¹⁴⁶ During the Civil War, in 1918, Samara briefly became the seat of the anti-Bolshevik Constituent Assembly (*Komitet chlenov userossiyskogo Uchreditel’nogo sobraniya*, KOMUCH) aided by the mutinous Czech Legion.¹⁴⁷

Simultaneously, Samara typifies, indeed exemplifies, the Bolsheviks’ grandstanding industrialization efforts. If we discern societal resilience even in territories with intense state-driven developmentalism, we may safely debunk received wisdoms about the consequences of revolutionary “social modernization” in areas with less intense forms of restructuring. Aside from Moscow and St. Petersburg, Samara is the only other city that served as Russia’s political center when, during World War II, Stalin turned it into a temporary national capital and ordered the relocation there of industries and workforce. A secret underground bunker was built for Stalin in Samara, and foreign embassies were quickly evacuated to the city in the early months of the war. A large penal settlement just outside of the city emerged – the Bezymyanlag camp, part of the “archipelago” of Soviet forced labor. Postwar Samara continued to attract large-scale labor migration, notably of workers and engineers who serviced the sophisticated energy, weapons production, and aerospace industries. The region is home to Tolyatti, a city mythologized as built “from scratch” and named after the Italian Communist Party leader Palmiro Togliatti. Tolyatti underwent population growth on an unprecedented scale owing to migration from other territories in the 1960s and 1970s to man the Volga Automobile Plant and other industries. An overwhelmingly rural region before the Revolution, Samara’s countryside also underwent profound change as agriculture was collectivized, and the formerly “backward” territories populated by seminomadic groups were brought into

¹⁴³ See Hartley, *Volga*, esp. 67–85. ¹⁴⁴ Figes, *Peasant Russia*, 23.

¹⁴⁵ Along with Saratov. *Ibid.*, 21. ¹⁴⁶ Aleksushin, “K tipologii.” ¹⁴⁷ Kalyagin, “Komitet.”

the fold of Soviet modernity. Societal resilience in a region experiencing economic and social change of this magnitude would constitute an important test of the argument advanced in this book.

Sources

The bulk of historical data came from the 1897 imperial population census – the most comprehensive source of demographic, occupational, and other statistics for the empire; I discuss the census further in the supplementary appendices (Appendix B). I assembled additional data on imperial elections to the State Duma (national representative assembly) and on post-communist elections; on repressions; and on aspects of historical settlement of the frontier. Matching districts with their historical antecedents – something that, as far as I am aware, others have not done for the entire territory of present-day Russia – alone took me more than a year,¹⁴⁸ not least because of having to triangulate historical data for accuracy for each of Russia's present-day 2,000-odd districts. For social network analysis exploring patterns of organizational and social interaction, I created a dataset out of an imperial directory of white-collar professionals in Samara City on the eve of the Revolution, comprising more than 4,000 entries. A large author-commissioned survey from Levada, Russia's top polling agency, helps ascertain not only awareness of ancestral estates but also covariation between self-reported ancestry and occupational positioning in the Soviet labor market.¹⁴⁹

A wide range of primary sources are jointly deployed to supplement the cross-regional and within-region statistical data. Hundreds of pages of hitherto underutilized documents from Samara's state archives constitute the main source of information on institutions normally associated with Soviet developmental achievements. These materials, discussed further in Appendix A, shed light on the imperial foundations of professional bodies, educational institutions, medical clinics, regional universities, and the network ties that link individuals working there. They also allow us to dissect how these institutions morphed into *Soviet* bodies. Archival records on denunciations and repressions and data illuminating the choices to site a Gulag camp are deployed to shed further light on the appropriation of the tsarist infrastructure and skills base to advance Soviet industrial development. The Bolsheviks abandon the obsessive tracing of citizens' social origins in the 1930s, just as they proclaim the dawn of a classless society. Where archival sources turn silent about citizens'

¹⁴⁸ Supplementary Appendices are provided at the end of the book. Additional data tests and research are in the Online Appendices (OA). Replication codes for all tests are in OA5.

¹⁴⁹ Designed with Katerina Tertychnaya and Alexander Libman. Research summarized in "Social Structure and Attitudes towards Protest: Survey Evidence from Russia." Paper presented at the American Political Science Association Annual National Convention and Exhibition, San Francisco, September 10–13, 2020.

pre-revolutionary social positions, the recollections of the grandmother, the elderly memoirist, or the family archivist pick up and help us weave together the threads of time, illuminating the transmission of social status through the communist decades. Three family archives have aided this part of the analysis: the Constantine Neklutin archive, deposited with the Cammie G. Henry Research Center at Northwestern State University of Louisiana, chronicling the family of a merchant clan; the Zoya Kobozeva archive, which sheds light on the adaptation of the *meshchane* and free peasants in Samara; and the Sergey Golubkov family collection summarized in his published memoirs and illuminating the adaptation of several branches of the extended family of Polish nobles, upwardly mobile peasants, and *meshchane* (see the illustrative genealogies in Appendix E). More than a hundred genealogical essays by Samara's present-day high school and university students, which they wrote as part of a regional historical competition, corroborate intergenerational social continuities in time and space. In turn, some forty-five interviews conducted with materially well-off, high status, and otherwise successful middle-class professionals, the gilded bourgeoisie of present-day Samara, tell us how the descendants of imperial Russia's "missing middle" fared in the context of the tribulations of post-communism (questionnaire reproduced in Appendix D). Their recollections are set against narratives of the rural and blue-collar respondent. The individual accounts are cross-checked against the voices of the Soviet informant, the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs (NKVD) official, and the regional planner that speak to us from declassified archival sources.

CONCLUSION AND CHAPTER STRUCTURE

This chapter has charted out a theoretical framework guiding the empirical journey in the rest of the book. Drawing on eclectic and interdisciplinary literatures, I have identified where I am indebted to extant studies and where my work represents a departure from purported apodictic accounts of the revolutionary social experience. I have also noted where the book parts with the recent literature that has benefited from scholars' access to a far wider range of sources and methodological tools than those available to the previous generations of writers on communism. I do not negate the socioeconomic changes and value shifts associated with the communist project, but the chapters that follow explore the ways in which Bolshevik policies interacted with, molded, and were shaped by imperial society. Anticipating critiques of an overstatement of the argument about social continuities, I highlight that my objective is to affect a shift in paradigmatic assumptions but without throwing the baby that is the communist impact out of the causal chain bathwater. Rather than entirely negating the significance of post-revolutionary change, the book unpacks the subtle ways in which communism did not matter as much as we thought it did.¹⁵⁰ This in turn should offer food for thought to enthusiasts of

¹⁵⁰ I thank Jeff Kopstein for encouraging me to add these qualifiers.

facile solutions to intractable societal problems today, in this time of rising social inequalities, whatever the national context.

The following chapters proceed as follows. Chapter 2 discusses the juridical structure of the estates and de facto patterns of social rigidity, fluidity, and mobility, as well as the encounter between the Tsarist society of estates and the Bolshevik class project. A social mapping and network exercise for Samara is presented in Chapter 3 to capture the estate aspects of imperial society and their reflection in modern institutions of urban governance, the professions, learning, and the civic sphere. The two chapters on the professions and education, Chapters 4 and 5 respectively, analyze institutional continuities in space and the social logics embedded in the reproduction of social stratification through those very institutions – the public hospitals, the museums, the schools – called on to deliver a new, classless, communist society, and their role in nurturing a quasi-autonomous sphere vis-à-vis the state. Chapter 6 discusses the material dimension of social closure and the ways in which extant social ties within Soviet Russia and outside – encompassing wealthy émigré relatives, friends, former professional and business associates, and their “honor” obligations toward those left behind – perpetuated estate-derived market-supportive and professional possibilities in a post-revolutionary society. The subtle layering of memory, knowledge, and awareness of how the past shapes one’s position in the present are questions I then explore in Chapter 7. Chapter 8 links the spatial components of Soviet development, particularly those related to the coercive aspects of industrialization, to imperial-era developmental and social configurations. Chapter 9 analyzes interregional variations in democratic quality as derived from long-term social-structural patterns. The final chapter, Chapter 10, brings in the cases of Hungary and China to explain how the insights help us understand social structure and democratic – and authoritarian – resilience and backsliding in a variety of contexts with experience of communism. An Afterword concludes the book with a summary of findings and some thoughts about future research questions.