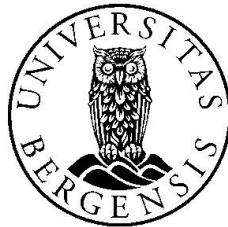


Balancing the thin line between political
and ecological protest
A study of the Shies protest

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Abstract

The Shies protests (2018 -2020), against the construction of a landfill for Moscow waste, in Arkhangelsk, Russia, were allegedly the biggest protests in the history of the Arkhangelsk region. This thesis is an exploratory study of the Shies protest focusing on the developments in the city of Arkhangelsk and the perspectives of activist interviewees. Relying on online newspapers, social media, and interviews, I show how the protests developed and suggest explanations to how the protest managed to reach their goals to replace the governor and close the landfill. I also demonstrate and discuss how different organizations existing before the protest contributed to the protest in different ways, and I present and discuss the interviewee's motivation to protest.

I leave considerable space to present the results of scrutinizing the meaning of "political" and "political protest" in interviews and focus groups with activists participating or abstaining from participating in the protest. By showing and discussing the reasoning of the interviewees on this matter, I want to make it understandable to the reader that the distinction between social and political protest matters in this case and how it matters.

Despite their attempt, the protest movement did not achieve representation in the 2020 gubernatorial elections. By presenting the developments leading up to the elections, I show how this was secured by the Communist Party of the Russian Federation (KPRF) accepting a deal to get a seat in the Federation Council in return for abstaining from the election and by the people's candidate being stopped by the municipal filter.

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Disclosure statement

In the following I make clear to the reader my previous involvements with actors in the studied case. Before I started writing this thesis I was employed by the Norwegian youth environmental organization Natur og Ungdom. This is how I got interested in the politics in the Arkhangelsk area. It also introduced me to people that have been invaluable contacts for writing this thesis. My position was in their project cooperating with and assisting Russian NGOs (*NUs Russlandsprosjekt*). One of the organizations Natur og Ungdom has close contact with is Arkhangelsk based "42". Before I started writing this thesis, when I was a part of the board of the project, NUs Russlandsprosjekt ordered a report on their cooperation with Russian NGOs. This report contains one of the first scholarly descriptions of the Shies protests, and is thus referred to (Holm-Hansen 2020a).

When writing this thesis, I have received financial support from Lånekassen and my parents. The field work in Arkhangelsk was supported the Social Science Faculty at the University of Bergen.

Glossary

To avoid confusion, I include a small glossary to show the translation I have used for selected words.

Oblast	-	Region	
Raion	-	District	
Ekologicheskii	-	Ecological	or environmental –

interchangeably

Transliteration

The "Passport 2010" system, also named "GOST R 52535.1 -2006", is used for transliteration from the Cyrillic to the Latin alphabet (GOST R 52535.1 - 2006, see table A1). Some Russian words are not transliterated, where there is a widely used English translation or transliteration, like for instance "Moscow" and where a Russian author or source in English is transcribed differently in the original source. "Ю" an "Я" are transliterated "Yu" or "Ya", if it is the first vowel of a word, for enhanced readability.

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1. Introduction

From late summer 2018 until spring 2020 the Arkhangelsk region, Russia, has been home to large popular protests. Protestors have opposed constructing a large landfill for waste from Moscow by the train station Shies. The protests spread to many cities and villages in the Arkhangelsk region, several other Russian regions. According to former governor in the region, Igor Orlov, the size of the protests are unprecedented in the region's history (Vasileva 2019). The protests grew to involve many actors, from civil society to business to all significant political parties both non-systemic and systemic, except United Russia. The protest politicized, transgressed into illegal mass protests, and other illegal repertoires. They lasted as long as it took to get what must be called a complete concession from the authorities. The main demands of this odd coalition developed to become that the construction of a waste treatment facility at Shies should be halted, and that the regional governor had to step down. Both of these goals were fulfilled by the fall of 2020. However, the Shies movement's attempt at seeking representation was successfully contained with within-system coercion and cooptation, without providing any further concessions to the Shies movement.

Cheskin and March (2015) argues that an insufficient understanding of Russian contentious politics stems from a narrow focus on the contention in Moscow and St. Petersburg. The Shies protests in Arkhangelsk is an example of a grass-root protest (Poupin 2021), that have been claimed to involve participation by a large and diverse chunk of society (Holm-Hansen 2020b). The Shies protests stand in sharp contrast to protests in Moscow and St. Petersburg where police outnumbered liberal opposition, see e.g. Robertson (2009, 528). As I show, the protest provides a possibility to scrutinize the dynamics between systemic and non-systemic actors in Russian contentious politics. The protests were successful in reaching their quite ambitious main goals, it is a particularly interesting case for scrutinizing conditions for political claim making and strategies to adapt to these conditions by individual activists and protest organizations. The Shies protest was definitely political. The protestors very clearly communicated that they demanded the resignation of Arkhangelsk Region Governor, Igor Orlov, mayor of Severodvinsk, Skubenko, and Komi Republic President. How then could the Shies protest become so big? *How did the Shies protests become successful in halting the construction of the Shies landfill and making the Arkhangelsk governor step down?*

In this study I map how the Shies protests developed in the city of Arkhangelsk. This involves data from interviews with organizers, participants, and those abstaining from participating in the Shies protest. This provides insight into the grievances, challenges and opportunities for actors striving for social change in an increasingly authoritarian Russia. Graeme B. Robertson (2009) describes Russia as "something of a research laboratory in contemporary authoritarian regime design, where new techniques are tested and developed" (Robertson 2009, 547). The regime has developed a range of techniques for hindering any meaningful competition, and challenges to the regime in an attempt to defeat-proof the system (Robertson 2010). *How was the Shies movement contained?*

To shed light on the attempts to contain the protest movement and their attempt at gaining representation I make use of online sources. The media coverage of the protests has been very wide, coupling data from online newspapers, social media and interviews makes it possible to provide a rich description of how the protests developed, and how they were contained.

Amongst the challenges faced by protestors is the Russian authorities' attempt to deem political claims, as opposed to social claims, unacceptable (Cheskin and March 2015, 269). Scholars adopt the Russian concept of political and social protest as concept explaining legitimacy (Flikke 2020, 226), and use it as a basis for creating datasets on protest (Lankina and Tertychnaya 2019). Doing interviews and focus groups I scrutinize the meaning protestors and activists abstaining from protest attach to "political protest", in the context of a politicized protest claiming not to be political. In exploring the meanings of "political" in this context I ask: *How is "political protest" and "political" understood by actors in the Shies protest and its context?*

To answer the research questions, I have conducted an exploratory case study of the protest. The thesis is primarily descriptive. I rely to a large degree on evaluating interviewees' suggestions and perspectives. This applies in particular to the first research question, to which the largest part of the thesis is devoted. For the case description I draw on contentious politics and social movements literature (Jasper 2018, 2004, 1997; Gould 2009; McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001; Tarrow 2012) and literature on both contentious and institutional politics in Russia (Robertson 2010; Ledeneva 2013; Cheskin and March 2015; Flikke 2020; Østbø 2017). The focus of description and analysis is on strategic actors in civil society and the political opportunity structures they act within. The case description based on a rich selection

of sources. I have immersed in and systematically gathered information from local news, blogs, YouTube, webpages of relevant actors and not the least social media, most importantly Vkontakte (VK). I also went to Arkhangelsk for three weeks and conducted nine interviews and focus groups, mainly with environmental activists. The interviewees have varied perspectives, from the grass-root level to activist with more leading roles from various organizations both involved in the protest, and uninvolved, with sympathies reaching from Putin to others.

The geographic focus in this thesis is the protests as they unfolded in the city of Arkhangelsk. Developments in the neighboring city Severodvinsk are included in the analysis, for comparison. Developments in the areas close to Shies are included in the case description as this is the area the protests diffused from. The temporal focus is from the start of the anti-Shies protest in summer 2018 to the end of the mass anti-Shies protests in spring 2020. I will however touch upon some preceding events interviewees highlight as important for how the protests developed, and I briefly summarize the political aftermath of the protests up until the 2021 spring, as this includes the outcomes of the protests.

1.1 Structure of thesis

The thesis is structured in following way. I start by presenting how protest in authoritarian regimes is commonly seen as compensating for lacking information from electoral feedback. I continue by presenting core concepts from the contentious politics literature and social movements literature. Further, the Russian political system is presented as it forms an important part of the context. Literature on the distinction between political, social and ecological protests in the Russian context is then discussed.

In the methods chapter I start by presenting how the case study is carried out, and what written sources are used. I go through how the interviews and sampling was carried out and I present the interviewee sample before I touch upon translation issues and present a discussion on ethical considerations and show how I have gone about anonymizing. I touch upon some challenges of doing research in an authoritarian regime, like self-censorship and the general information environment.

The presentation of the case study is structured in three chapters. The first of which is primarily descriptive and primarily presents the development of the protests in Arkhangelsk

chronologically, but also includes a broader picture by presenting the national garbage crisis and placing the Shies protest in a national setting. The second case chapter is devoted to shedding light on how the Shies movement became successful. In this chapter organizations or groups existing prior to the protest is presented and their contribution to the protests assessed. Significant changes in Russian public opinion preceding the protests are presented and discussed. Quite a large section is devoted to presentation and analysis of interview data on the meaning of "political protest" in this context. This is also discussed in connection with strategy of the protestors. Towards the end of this chapter, I present interview data on the motivation to protest, and discuss motivation to protest also based on comparison of numbers of protestors in Arkhangelsk and Severodvinsk. The third case chapter is devoted to shedding light on how the Shies movement was contained. The main part of this chapter presents how the Shies movement was hindered in having any significant impact on the 2020 gubernatorial elections, but I also present some of the other, less successful efforts at containing the Shies movement. The conclusion sums it up.

2. Protest in authoritarian regimes

Authoritarian regimes are faced with a dilemma when protest arise. They have the capacity to suppress the protest, however lacking the feedback from fair elections the autocrats have an information problem. Somehow, they need to adjust to the preferences of the public, in order not to make bad decisions and create grievances in the long run leading to larger scale popular unrest leading to collapse. Protests can provide otherwise lacking information on grievances (Bunce, Koesel, and Weiss 2020, 1-2). Thus, authoritarian regimes will allow limited protest (Huang, Boranbay-Akan, and Huang 2019). Lorentzen (2013) and Huang, Boranbay-Akan, and Huang (2019) argues that allowing small-scale protests on narrow economic issues is a useful to authoritarian regimes as a way of controlling and limiting corruption by lower-level elites, thereby limiting grievances of the population and contributing to regime stability. Lorentzen (2013) argues that the protests need to be of a loyalist nature, meaning they need to be limited to protecting the interests of the protestors, and show support of the regime by reflecting their values (Lorentzen 2013, 130). Because a small protest is less costly for the regime to crack down on, whereas once a protest is large enough it will have a good chance at succeeding, willingness to protest in authoritarian regimes depends strongly on the perceived willingness to protest of other citizens. If a person think that others are willing to take to the

street they themselves are more likely to take to the street (Hollyer, Rosendorff, and Vreeland 2015, 764).

2.1 Contentious politics

In *Dynamics of Contention* McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly (2001, 5-7) advocate an approach integrating institutional politics into the study of contentious politics and focusing on episodes of contention, arguing that all episodes of contention stem from conflict within political institutions. Episodes being parts of long streams of contention (Tilly and Tarrow 2015, 241). The start of an episode is often easier to define than the end of the episode, especially when the contentious episode is rooted in a reaction to government policy (Bojar and Kriesi 2021, 255), as the Shies protest. Tarrow (2012, 159) emphasizes how the interplay between contentious and institutional politics are central to explaining the outcomes of protests.

McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly (2001) define contentious politics as follows: "episodic, public, collective interaction among makers of claims and their objects when (a) at least one government is a claimant, an object of claims, or a party to the claims and (b) the claims would, if realized, affect the interests of at least one of the claimants (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001, 5)".

They introduce the concepts of contained and transgressive contention, defined as contentious politics (as defined above) where "all parties to the conflict were previously established as constituted political actors" and "at least some parties to the conflict are newly self-identified political actors, and/or (d) at least some parties employ innovative collective action." (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001, 7-8), respectively. By innovative collective action they specify that it includes collective actions with new *or* forbidden claims, claimants, or collective self-representations (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001, 8).

A central concept in contentious politics is political opportunity structures. Political opportunity structures are seen as both shaping the developments of social movements and being shaped by social movements (Tarrow 2012, 77-78). Jasper (1997, 414-415) criticizes Tilly for overly emphasizing opportunities as conditions for protest, as opposed to what he sees as more important, namely threats. This critique is met by (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001, 45) developing a framework for analysis of contentious politics including both opportunities and threats. The political opportunity structures are seen as closely connected to

regime type, with more opportunities in a democracy and less in a closed authoritarian one (Tilly and Tarrow 2015, 240). Because of lacking feedback, the grievances will be higher the less open the political opportunity structures are, thus there will be the most protest in the middle range, between completely open and completely closed regimes (Robertson 2010, 23).

Social movements often mobilize preexisting organizations. The forms and prevalence of organizations and social networks existing prior to the contentious episode is seen by classical social movement scholars as important in attempting to understanding protest (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001). Robertson (2010, 22-23) considers the extent to which organizations are independent or not and their numbers to constitute the organizational ecology, and he sees it as central to understanding protest.

The contentious politics approach to the study of protests has been criticized by James Jasper in several rounds. First promoting an increased focus on culture and morality (Jasper 1997), continuing to present an approach focused on strategies, with consideration of the range of actors' goals, and strategic dilemmas (Jasper 2004). As Hellmeier and Weidmann (2020) point out motivations are not sufficient in explaining collective action. This also needs coordination (Hellmeier and Weidmann 2020, 75). Jasper later suggests an increased focus on psychological factors and "thinking-feeling processes" (Jasper 2017), before arguing for the important role of emotions in protests (Jasper 2018). He does not reject that the structural factors in focus in contentious politics matter, he simply highlights other explanations (Jasper 1997, xi; 2004, 1)

From the contentious politics approach, I bring with me a vocabulary for describing protest, focus on the preexisting organizations, and inclusion of institutional political processes in the study of protest. From Jasper I bring with me the notion of "moral shock", as presented later, and a focus on agency.

2.1.1 Dissentful and consentful contention and compliance

Building on the concepts from the contentious politics literature Cheskin and March (2015) develop a framework for analyzing contentious politics in the Russian context. They suggest a better understanding of Russian contentious politics can be achieved by distinguishing between two dimensions of contention. They draw up a conceptual map of claim-making with two axes where one axis represents behavior, going from contentious to compliant, and the

other axis represent motivation, going from consentful to dissentful. They thereby coin the terms consentful contention, consentful compliance, dissentful contention and dissentful compliance (Cheskin and March 2015, 261). As the definition of transgressive contention by McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly (2001, 7-8) is very wide, I find it useful draw on the conceptual framework presented by Cheskin and March (2015) in the description and analysis of the case.

2.2 Moral shock

"Nothing is more central to social movements than moral emotions. They operate as individual motivations, the ultimate goal [...], which reflect and articulate existing moral commitments and at the same time try to transform them" (Jasper 2018, 127).

In explaining protest Jasper (1997) uses the concept of moral shock. By moral shock is meant an "information or event [that] helps a person think about her basic values and how the world diverges from them"(Jasper 1997, 106). Even though grievances may be high, a moral shock is needed for protest to appear (Jasper 1997, 415). He seems to see moral shock as a necessary condition for mobilization. Gould (2009, 135) similarly argues that moral shock provokes an urgent need for a person to reevaluate oneself, the world and one's role in that world. This can lead people to taking action or not (Gould 2009, 135). The moral shock helps explain how some people start to participate in organizations and networks, organizing political activity, that they were not earlier a part of (Jasper 1997, 106). In this sense it can help explain rises in protest levels, and extraordinary high levels of participation in protests. As the Shies protests are a case of extraordinary mobilization, in this region, the moral shock can be a useful analytical concept shedding light on how the protests could become so big.

3. Russian political system

3.1 Regime type

Political regime is seen important in explaining political opportunities (Davenport 2005, xxvii). Hybrid regime, personalistic autocracy, electoral autocracy, autocracy are all terms assigned to the Russian regime. Levitsky (2010, 21) argues that Russia has moved from being an electoral autocracy to being a full-fledged autocracy in 2007. This means electoral institutions and civil liberties are reduced to a façade status (Levitsky 2010, 13). Whether or not it has sufficient real competition to be defined as a hybrid regime, as opposed to an

authoritarian, it is clear that there are elements of competition and some degree of openness alongside the authoritarian practices of the regime. Protests are not absent (Robertson 2010, 2).

The Russian state has a medium to high capacity, with substantial state control over strategically important parts of the economy, like transportation and energy, a dominant party, United Russia, well integrated with local and regional elites and a strong internal security apparatus (Levitsky 2010, 188-190). Part of the defeat-proofing of the incumbent regimes is the creation of a controlled civil society, the creation of ersatz social movements (Robertson 2009, 545). Ersatz social movements might look like social movements but have close ties to the state and supports the interests of the regime (Robertson 2010, 27).

3.2 Formal and informal power structures

The Russian Federation has a government headed by the President, a Prime Minister, and a cabinet. The president is directly elected. The legislature, the Federal Assembly, consists of a lower chamber, the state Duma, and an upper chamber, the Federation Council (O'Neil, Fields, and Share 2010, 259). Alongside this formal structure there exists an informal one.

Sakwa (2010) considers the duality of the Russian state a core feature of the current regime. By duality he refers to the constitutional state operating parallel to the "administrative regime", the latter being the dominant power system (Sakwa 2010, 199), with institutions parallel to the constitutional state (Sakwa 2010, 194). Although these two structures function separately, there is no clear-cut distinction between the two, and they influence each other's workings (Sakwa 2010, 199-200). The Russian state lacks a de facto separation of powers (Ledeneva 2013, 240). Drawing on Sakwa's work Ledeneva (2013) argues that widespread informal governance alongside central control characterize how Russia is governed. An extensive overcomplicated not internally coherent set of formal rules leaves room for informality and punishment, or even makes it necessary. This leaves actors both within and outside of the state sensitive to signals from above, as the law is not sufficient in guiding "right and "wrong". This leads to lower-level officials' inability to make decisions if they are not sure whether they will be punished. This in turn makes the personalist "rule by hand", overriding legal-bureaucratic processes by the president necessary. This is the self-sustaining logic of the "system" and what inhibits modernization of Russia Ledeneva (2013) argues.

3.3 Parties

The Russian state manages the political parties to a large degree, and the distinction between position and opposition is unclear (Robertson 2010). The Russian electoral system has high hurdles for registration of parties and candidates, and the courts and electoral commissions administering has not been politically independent and has been loyal to the regime's interest in curbing electoral participation by unwanted opposition (Robertson 2010, 160).

The political parties are normally grouped into the position, the systemic opposition and the non-systemic opposition. The position is United Russia, on virtually all levels, from the local to the national. United Russia is the dominant party of power in Russia, endorsed by Putin (Robertson 2010, 157). The systemic opposition consists of the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR), Fair Russia (SR) and the Communist Party of the Russian Federation (KPRF), and together with United Russia constitute the parties represented in the parliament, the duma (Smyth and Turovsky 2018, 185-186). Whereas SR and LDPR are seen as support parties for the incumbent regime, the KPRF is, although systemic, a competitor, to a larger degree (Robertson 2010, 158). Large N-studies support that giving the non-systemic parties important posts in regional assemblies is a cooptation method successful at curbing protests (Dollbaum 2017; Reuter and Robertson 2015). The non-systemic opposition usually refers to the parties PARNAS, Yabloko, etc. and often Navalny. This distinction is not always well defined (Bol'shakov 2012), but I rely on what I perceive to be the most common conceptualization of systemic and non-systemic opposition.

3.4 Political, Social and Ecological protest in Russia

Tarrow (2012, 177) suggests a larger focus on language in the study of social movements. In the case of the Shies protests, the distinction between political and social seemed important. Here comes the theoretical background for the analysis I later provide on the meaning of political and social in the context of the Shies protests. Within Russian discourse protests are legitimate if they are defined as economic or social, a political protest however is illegitimate (Østbø 2017, 282). Cheskin and March (2015) argue that "in the Russian context, it is important to consider not only the distinction between state and society but also the distinction between social and political forms of activism – in other words, activities that the authorities frame as legitimate or illegitimate"(Cheskin and March 2015, 268). During the 2005 protests in Russia, the symbol of which were old women in traditional colorful dresses,

state-controlled media pushed a distinction between legitimate economic claims and illegitimate politicization (Robertson 2010, 180). On the protests following the persecution of journalist Golunov in 2019, Flikke (2020) writes the following: "Precisely the fact that so many ordinary citizens participated, made it difficult for the regime to reject the demonstrators as *political* activists" (Flikke 2020, 226)[original italics]. In other words: framing demonstrators as *political* is a way for the regime to reject them.

This rhetoric needs to be seen in relation to law to understand their importance. The distinction between political and social is found throughout Russian law regulating civic society. Thus this is not only rhetoric. It is norms that found their way into the legal sphere. Since 2010 Russian "socially oriented" NGOs have gained rights and access to funds (Sätre, Varyzgina, and Granberg 2020, 513). These are organizations that are defined by law as "carrying out activities aimed at solving social issues" (Sirotkina, Zueva, and Pavlovaskaya 2020, 116). Since 2010 the new law on socially oriented NGOs has encompassed organizations doing charitable work, educational activities and also organizations working with "solution to ecological problems"(Sirotkina, Zueva, and Pavlovaskaya 2020, 116). The distinction is also present in regional law: The Charter of the Arkhangelsk Region Chapter 1, Article 8.4 have wordings like "support for socially oriented NCOs" (Arkhangelsk Region Legislature 20.03.2001). The discursive distinction between social and political is translated into shrinking the legal room of civil society:

"activists may be punished if authorities suspect civic activities to be 'politically oriented' rather than fulfilling social aims, e. g. by including the NGO in 'the registry of non-profit organizations performing the functions of a foreign agent' (Federal Law 2012, 2018 b).The invisible dividing line between political and social civil activity is found contextually" (Sätre, Varyzgina, and Granberg 2020, 513).

In the sections 6.3.4-7 I use interview data in an attempt at showing this invisible line, in the context of the Shies case.

The distinction political and social protests does not only materialize in law, it also materializes in patterns of repression. As Lankina and Tertychnaya (2019, 29) have shown political protests are more often met with violent suppression than the other forms of protest, being civic, economic and social. Their data are human coded and as the codebook shows their definition of political protest is highly contextually sensitive (Lankina and Tertychnaya 2019, 15). Unfortunately, their operationalization of political protest is too long to include

here. It certainly has been quite a task to create the complicated operationalization. I suggest the length of their operationalization stems from the meaning of political protest, in this context, being primarily derogatory, and the empirical meaning, by being subordinate, being malleable and contested. Thus, not easily empirically captured. As Cheskin and March (2015, 269)" argues what demands are seen as social and political can change, and it follows claims of legitimacy and illegitimacy, respectively. In the sections 6.3.3-8 I substantiate my support for this argument.

4. Methods

Attempting to answer the research question I have carried out an exploratory case study of the Shies protest. The collected are based on 18 interviews, media reports and social media. I also draw on existing scholarly literature on the protests. This chapter starts by presenting the case study, before I present how interviews were carried out and sample created. I end the chapter with some ethical considerations, and how these considerations have materialized in the research process. The primary focus of the ethical considerations and the practical implications thereof is on interviewee safety.

4.1 Case study

The case study is intensive in character and often relies on different kinds of data (Swanborn 2010, 1-2). This is an exploratory case study, meaning the research process has been quite open. When little is known about the studied object an exploratory approach could be justified (Swanborn 2010, 28). When this project started no scholarly work on the Shies protest existed. This has changed since then, and new works on the Shies protest informs this study (Poupin 2021; Chmel, Klimova, and Mitrokhina 2020). George and Bennett (2005, 17) claim that the term case study can have a whole range of meanings, and is a "definitional morass" (George and Bennett 2005, 17). They see case studies as studies of a single unit comprising a phenomenon, with the variation studied being temporal or spatial within case or in between a few cases (George and Bennett 2005, 19, 28). This case study makes use of both temporal variation and spatial variation in attempting to answer the research questions. For example, the number of reported protestors vary in time and in between different locations, this provides cues to why the protests became massive. It suggests that some organizations, events, or issues have played a more or less important role in mobilization.

Information on anti-Shies rallies in the Arkhangelsk conglomerate, from the first rallies on the 20th of October 2018 up until the end of 2019 has been collected systematically based reports from online media-outlets, scholarly literature, social media, and interviews. The data collected are date and city of protests, estimates of number of protestors, whether the protest is sanctioned or unsanctioned, whether it is a picket, rally or parade, whether it happens in the outskirts or city center, which organizations or people organized the action, and which participated, what slogans and demands were communicated, and which symbols appeared. This is synthesized to a general overview of the development of the protests in the Arkhangelsk city, along with an overview of related institutional political processes.

Cheskin and March (2015, 262) argues that an insufficient understanding of Russian contentious politics stems from a narrow focus on the contentious politics in Moscow and St. Petersburg. This case study of the Shies protests in Arkhangelsk provides a rich description of a significant contentious episode in a Russian region, with a focus on the perspectives of the protestors. With this I hope to make a small contribution to a fuller understanding of Russian contentious politics.

4.1.1 The Russian information sphere

There are some peculiarities of the Russian information sphere that are important to keep in mind when doing a case study with most sources being from within this sphere. I will provide some basic description of the Russian information sphere, and its relation to the state, is usually understood. Media control is crucial to stability of the current regime (Ledeneva 2013, 81). The TV-channels and their news websites are mostly controlled by the state and have a large audience (Toepfl 2011). However, TV has become a less important source of news, with social media and internet publications rapidly becoming more important, combined almost as important source of news as TV in 2018 (Zorkaya 2019, 102). Etling, Roberts, and Faris (2014) analyzing a large number of sources and text both quantitatively and qualitatively find that the texts in mass media are quite similar to government sources, as opposed to blogs. Thus, I am not only relying on online mass media outlets, but also other online sources.

By Runet is usually meant the Russian speaking internet. It is different from the rest of the internet in how it is governed, as it is claimed as a domain of "digital sovereignty" for Russia, and is not governed through international cooperation, like the global internet (Ristolainen 2017).

4.1.2 Online sources

The case description is based to a large degree on Russian online media sources, social media sources and to a lesser extent on YouTube clips, in addition to the interviews. Shots of several entire protest rallies are available on YouTube. The online data collection has been twofold. Consisting of first an immersion in the relevant parts of Runet, and a subsequent systematic data collection. The immersion in relevant parts of Runet has been key to get a grip of the information sphere surrounding the Shies protests.

Social media groups or channels at the city level have recently become important part of the "media ecosystem" in Russia (Dovbish 2020). The most widely used social media in Russia and amongst Russian grass-root movements is Vk (Poupin 2021). Instagram is was the third most used social media in 2018 according to Levada numbers, and has seen a rapid increase during the preceding years (Zorkaya 2019, 113). Facebook and Telegram are mainly used by urban activists (Poupin 2021). With this in mind I have followed several channels, groups and users on these four social media platforms. I have followed local and regional groups and channels like *Seichas / Arkhangelsk* (Now | Arkhangelsk), *Arkhangelskii Upyr*, *Podslushano Lenskii raion* (Overheard in the Lena District) and *Ekologia Pomoria. Severo-Zapad* (Ecology Pomoria, North-West), the last one solely reporting environmental news or propaganda. And a range of other channels, users and groups of regional or national significance, like *Chisty Sever 29*, *Chisty Sever – Chistaia Strana*, *KPRF*, *United Russia*, *FSB*, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, *Ekologicheskoe dvizhenie 42* (Environmental movement 42), former Governor *Igor Orlov*, *Arkhangelsk za klimat* (Fridays for Future Arkhangelsk), *Sverev Superstar*, *Drevarkh* (The wood archangel).

The case description relies heavily on online newspapers, and especially on *29.ru – Arkhangelsk Onlain*, an online outlet accused of cooperating with and having close ties to the revolutionary, Navalny-associated, organizers of the Shies protests by Semushin (2019) writing for EADaily. EADaily being a propaganda outlet for the Kremlin (Navumau 2020). In a series of articles defaming the protests EADaily present intimate knowledge of the intricacies of the Shies movement. *29.ru* seem to me to have solid journalistic integrity, but to avoid bias I also rely on other local and regional newspapers like *Dvina Segodnia* (*Dvina Today*), *News29.ru*, *7x7* and more government friendly *Pravda Severa* in addition to national and international online newspapers, mainly *Kommersant*, *RBK*, *Vedomosti* and *Novaya*

Gazeta, and the Kirkenes outlet *The Barents Observer*. For the case description I draw on both text, pictures and videos from the online newspapers.

Some reports from NGOs, business and research institutions are also used for the case description. Some of the reports on Shies have an overall higher quality than some of the works published on the case in scholarly journals, and are thus of great value.

4.2 Semi-structured interview and focus groups

The semi-structured interview is well suited for creating descriptions of opinions, motives and experiences (Yeo et al. 2014, 180). It allows for the scrutiny of meaning, of the understandings the interviewees have of themselves and the world around (Blee and Taylor 2002, 95). It also allows for researching agency. The strategies of social movements and the actors' own understandings of their impact in their context (Blee and Taylor 2002, 96). Interviews and focus groups give insight into the motivations of individual activists, how both individuals and groups understand the specific protest, in addition to insight into their understand of the workings of their society. The interviews also shed light on different strategies, and the understandings underpinning these strategies, of individuals and organizations working for their visions of societal change and/or seeking to influence policy in an authoritarian regime. Lastly interviews also serve to enhance the internal validity of the conclusions, as the interviews secures that important developments are not overlooked in the research process.

In the following I present how the interviews were carried out, and some reflections on this. The interviews were made in February and March 2020. At this time the Shies protest was still going on, more than 1,5 years after it started. Most of the interviews were carried out at different locations in the city of Arkhangelsk, face to face. I used a topic guide which developed during the research. Suggestions for follow up questions were added, and some questions were added as I was increasingly puzzled by this case. I have used the topic guide presented in *Qualitative Research Practice* as a template (Arthur et al. 2014, 154-159). Some interviews were carried out online, either by video chat or written chat. The online interviewing served two purposes. Firstly, preparation for the face-to-face interviews, to test the topic guide and get more comfortable with and some experience with interviewing. Secondly, chat was used in continuation of interviews, to ask follow-up questions. This was particularly useful when the interviewee was busy at the time I was in Arkhangelsk, and they

wanted to add something, or present documents or explanations that were hard to bring by due to language problems or the interview format. As an elaboration on a question asked in the interview, I even got a drawing from one of my interviewees.

Interviewing people I have perceived as either "important" or skeptical towards me has been most challenging. I have hurried more, to avoid wasting their time, and I have maybe been more careful to dig into the more controversial questions. This might be a "correct" adaptation to my interviewees. However, it has made the amount of data from these interviews smaller, and of a different quality.

In addition to the interviews, I have organized focus groups. Focus groups lets the researcher take part in a more natural expression of ideas and language, than the one-to-one interview (Finch, Lewis, and Turley 2014, 213). The participants probing and reacting to each other made the focus groups particularly useful in getting hold of sensible data on the meaning of political in this context. The same topic guide was used to guide the discussed in the focus groups, as the interviews.

4.2.1 Self-censorship

Autocratic regimes censor media and internet activity. Visible censorship creates an atmosphere where the people get aware of the governments interest in controlling information, and this may alter their behavior (Weidemann and Rød 2019, 23). I have been asked to be careful with what I say during an interview, as it was deemed probable that the interview would be tapped. So, I can assume that also interviewees have performed self-censorship. Robertson (2010, 2) argues that also Russian journalists perform self-censorship, even though some openness exists. This affects what data are available.

4.3 Sample

I will start by describing the sampling process, and then provide a description of the sample. The sampling and the sample are described as accurate, and with as little generalization as possible, yet not precise enough that the individual participant can be inferred from the description.

4.3.1 Interviewee sampling

The sampling strategy is purposive, in aiming at both a wide range of perspectives and in aiming at accessing people with intimate knowledge of how the protests proceeded, for example activists central in the organization of the protests. Bureaucrats, systemic politicians and police certainly would have insight that could help shed light on the research question, but following advice, I deemed these groups inaccessible. The purposive sampling was conducted in two stages. An initial sample was made based on sources describing the specific protests, and scientific sources analyzing governance in the environmental sphere in the region (Arkhangelsk Oblast Council of Deputies 2018; Berg-Nordlie et al. 2014; Ejabatlas 2019; Shies.rf 2018). The sample was adapted as I was doing the first interviews. Interviewees were removed and new interviewees were added to the sample based on the recommendations of the interviewees in the initial sample. For example I initially planned to interview the GONGO *Biarmia*, as they were an actor in climate change adaptation governance in the region Berg-Nordlie et al. (2014, 158). As several respondents had never heard about the organization, or dismissed them as marginal and irrelevant, I chose to prioritize doing interviews with other actors. Similarly, actors were added to the sample based on recommendations. For example, Bessrochka was on the initial list of possible actors to interview, however an interview with them might not have been given priority if it were not for the recommendation of them by several interviewees. When I asked for recommendations of interviewees, I made it clear that I was looking for variation of perspectives and activists with central roles. The people in Bessrochka were highlighted by several interviewees as an example of people with a more "average joe" understanding both of the protests and of the word political. A snowball sample is useful when the researcher has limited knowledge and when the researcher wants to access to a small difficult to reach population having sensitive knowledge (Grønmo 2004, 103; Ritchie et al. 2014, 129). The snowball sampling was important both in getting variation in perspectives and accessing people with intimate knowledge of the protest developments.

4.3.2 Interviewee sample

Table 1. below gives an overview of the sample. The sample consists of 18 interviewees. Some are interviewed in focus groups, some in individual interviews. All the interviewees were living their life in the Arkhangelsk urban area, comprised of the cities Arkhangelsk, Severodvinsk and Novodvinsk. All interviewees were between 18 and 65 years old. With an overweight of interviewees below 40 years old. The main body of the sample are activists that

had an active role in the protest actions, somehow contributing to the organization of the protests or the protest movement. Some of the interviewees have had more of a participatory role in the protests. A few are affiliated with the environmental organization Chisty Sever – Chistaia Strana (Clean North – Clean Country) that did not participate in the protests. In the following I refer to this organization as Chisty Sever, not to be confused with the Severodvinsk based environmental organization Chisty Sever 29, which has been amongst the important organizations in the Shies movement. Some are interviewed primarily for their expert knowledge of the case like journalist(s) or political advisor(s). The roles described above are not all mutually exclusive, nor is it a complete description of relevant roles. Some roles are not mentioned, or described with less detail, to protect the anonymity of interviewees.

Table 1. Interview and focus group sample				
Code	Name/number of interviewees	Organization/role	Selection criteria	Sample: Original (O) /Snowball (S)
Expert	1-3	Journalist(s), political advisor(s).	Expert opinions	O/S
Activist	5-10	People more or less active in "Pomorie ne Pomoika", "42", "Bessrochka", "Interregional coalition STOP Shies", non-systemic opposition and/or "Svobodnyi Sever".	People taking part in anti-Shies-movement	
Bessrochka activist	4-6	People more or less active in "Bessrochka".	-"	
Chistii Sever (CS) associated	3-5	People more or less affiliated with "Chisty Sever- Chistaia Strana"	Environmental organization - not active in protest	
<u>NOT included in final sample, but planned in initial sample</u>				
-	-	KPRF (Communist Party of the Russian Federation)	People from systemic party taking part in anti-Shies protests.	O, failed attempt.
-	-	Biarmia	Environm. -org. GONGO	O, changed my mind
-	1	-	People taking part in anti-Shies-movement	O, prioritized other interviews

The interview data consists of records of 9 interviews/focus groups comprising approximately 9.5 hours of audio recordings, in addition to roughly one hour of interview that was not audio recorded but recorded in writing and straight after transcribed. A big sample can hinder thorough analysis of the interview data (Kvale 1997, 108). Less hours of interviews would have made the analysis a more attainable task. However, the size of the sample, and the fact that several people in the above categories are interviewed, makes it possible to provide more relevant information in the sample description, and yet still hinder possible identification of the interviewees based on that same sample description, interview quotes and other accessible information. This illustrates how measures to protect interviewees creates limits for the research design, thus affecting the overall project, the analysis and thus the possible results.

To get a bigger variation of perspectives I would have interviewed some random citizens, some more people with less experience from civil society and politicians from the *sistemni* opposition. However, given the time, management skills and confidence I had to do this I am not sure the sample would have been more suited had I replaced any of the interviews. Several *sistemni* politicians have made public statements, and interviews, including former Arkhangelsk Governor Igor Orlov. I draw on these interviews as compliments to the interview data gathered.

4.4 Translation

Translation has been integral to almost all parts of the research process. From immersion online all the way through preparing and carrying out interviews, to coding and integrating interview quotes into the thesis. I know only some Russian and can only carry out conversations about known themes at a slow pace. Being able to do online searches in Russian and navigating the Russian web has been very useful.

Most interviews were carried out in Russian, mixed in with a little English. Some interviews were done in English, mixed in with a little Russian. I hired a translator, from a local agency, for doing consecutive translation during the interviews. To make sure that the interviewees would trust the translator, and to be polite and let them judge their own English level, the presence of a translator I hired was presented as an option. I made it clear that I could not conduct the interview myself in Russian. Some interviewees chose to bring a different translator, or no translator at all. At one interview not bringing a translator led to terrible communication. This interview had too low value to justify it being translated and transcribed

thoroughly, given that no one with good knowledge of Russian had access to the original data. Thus, this interview is barely used.

The quality of translation of the interviews is secured by, (1) both interviewee and interviewer controlling translation during the interview, as the translation is consecutive. This happened several times. (2) I have checked translation during transcription of the interview, and added a comment where there are misunderstandings or doubt. Sometimes the meaning of a question, or an answer has changed in translation. In transcribing the interviews, I have been attentive to this, and always used the translated question and untranslated answer in transcripts when there was a difference between original and translation.

To be able to read news, social media, scientific articles and websites in Russian I have made extensive use of google translate. With just a little knowledge of Russian it works quite good, once you get familiar with the usual mistakes, like it always translating "separate waste collection" (*RSO*) to "North Ossetia".

4.5 Ethical considerations

Doing qualitative research in an authoritarian regime poses some challenges, particularly relevant to research ethics. Alena Ledeneva, when researching power networks and informal governance in Russia, was advised by a "general in charge of fighting organized crime [...] [:] 'You do not know and you sleep well. You want to stay sane, do yourself a favor and do not find out'" (Ledeneva 2013, 195). There are obviously limits for curiosity in Russia. In general I have tried to follow the advice of Malekzadeh (2016) on doing qualitative research in authoritarian regimes: "do not panic; make it boring; self-reflect; and panic, if just a little" (Malekzadeh 2016, 862).

Brinkmann (2008, 472) regards the consideration of possible consequences of participation in the research for interviewees, anonymity, and informed consent as ethical rules of thumb when it comes to interviewing. Here I present the considerations and techniques permeating the different parts of the research process. I start off with two interview excerpts that I think serves well as an illustration of what makes the ethical considerations particularly important in these circumstances.

A: Ok. Is it anything you think I should have asked about, that I didn't ask about?

Interviewee: I think you should have asked how the protest affected my life.

A: Yes.

Interviewee: I can say my life got much more interesting. And at the same time, I think people's attitude towards me changed a lot. But still there are people who try to use my participation in the protest to marginalize my activities and my persona.

A: How?

Interviewee: For example, [...] my boss, [he/she] told me, that I shouldn't be seen a lot in this protest. And I know that different people called [him/her], my new boss, and they told [him/her] that "Who are you hiring?", "[He/She] was on this rally on the 7th of April!", [...] and so on. So I know about these calls, and one of them even occurred in front of me. [...] and I heard all the conversation. People are a little bit hypocritical, from soviet times. They can use different facts in different ways. So from the one side it is kind of a one sided thing, like the whole thing, when a person does ecological activities, and it's kind of fine, but when they see it from the political perspective they can perceive it differently and they can see it as negative. So it can happen too.

A: Why are people doing this?

Interviewee: I think because they are cowards (*truslivyi*) and hypocrites, those who do this. I don't think there are so many of people who do that.

Another interviewee says the following:

Interviewee: I'm afraid too.

A: Yes. I see. Uhm.

Interviewee: To have no fear is just stupidity.

A: Mhm

Interviewee: It's an instinct.

A: Mhm

Interviewee: You have to have fear.

These excerpts show that association with the Shies protests has very real consequences for people. It is clear that astray information represents potential harm for interviewees. The primary ethical concern is thus avoiding adverse consequences of participation in this study for interviewees, and the primary practical concern in this respect is not to get ahold of, not to keep, and not to contribute to the spread of information potentially harmful for the interviewees. The exercise of justice in authoritarian regimes tend to be discretionary in disfavor of dissenters (Ahram and Goode 2016). As Poupin (2021) has documented authorities have utilized online sourced materials as evidence in lawsuits against Shies-

activists. It is impossible to safeguard against arbitrary use of power in a malfunctioning judicial system. However, this thesis is carefully produced to be of no meaningful use as evidence in lawsuits against individuals.

When doing interviews, interviewees might disclose information they would later regret (Brinkmann 2008, 472; Webster, Lewis, and Brown 2014, 94). During interviews I aimed at creating an open atmosphere, and this could have led interviewees to talk about the Shies case in ways they would not do publicly. To mitigate the risk associated with this I have firstly, made it very clear to the interviewees, both orally and in the written declaration of consent (Appendix 2 & 3), that they can withdraw their participation at any time. Secondly, to mitigate that interviewees will regret that they disclosed information after the thesis is printed the presented data is anonymized and some data is not stored in the first place. The University of Bergen's platform for safe data processing "SAFE" was used for temporary storing and anonymization of the data.

4.5.1 Anonymizing

The primary goal of the anonymization is to avoid adverse consequences for interviewees, imperative to secure this hindering linking of identifying information with sensitive information. To anonymize I have used generalization and abstained from presenting information (Datatilsynet 2015). Details in excerpts might lead to identification and are therefore made more general or removed as part of the anonymization (Gläser and Laudel 2010, 280). This is done by removing for example a name or a date and inserting "[name]" or "[date]" or removing a section within an excerpt and inserting "[...]". To hinder coupling of details in different excerpts, that could provide for identification the interviewee sample is grouped into four categories. I have showed care not to couple sensitive statements with potentially identifying ones. Presenting excerpts from the focus groups each interviewee is given a number. This number only serves the purpose of separating statements from different interviewees *within one excerpt*. Thus, the number assigned to the interviewee does not provide for coupling of statements from different excerpts.

5. The Shies protest

Shies is a train station with an abandoned settlement on the main railway line connecting the Komi Republic to Moscow and Arkhangelsk. At least, this is what it was before the summer

of 2018. After three years of protests and trials Shies has become a symbol of victorious environmental and regional protest in Russia. An array of actors have been involved in different ways ranging from political parties, both systemic and non-systemic, to business, civil society. The Shies protests have involved people from the high ranks to the "average joe".

In this section I will outline some of the main developments of the protest against the building of a landfill in Shies starting in July 2018 up until the spring/summer 2020. The geographical focus of the case description will be on the events in the city of Arkhangelsk, and to a lesser extent the other parts of the Arkhangelsk urban area (Severodvinsk, Novodvinsk etc.). I will also provide some description of the events in the south-eastern part of the Arkhangelsk region, in proximity to Shies. The south-eastern part of the Arkhangelsk region is where the protests originate and thus constitutes an important part of how the protests developed and are thus crucial include in the geographical scope to be able to provide answers to the research question. There has also been significant protest activity, and resulting reshuffling of governor, in the neighboring Komi Republic (Nilsen 2020). The Komi capital Syktyvkar has seen several large rallies (Holm-Hansen 2020a, 12). The developments in neighboring regions, and other parts of Russia are outside the scope of this description, however. The description concentrates on the contentious politics. It includes some description of the political process within government and the judicial system that the protests relate to. The Shies protests are in part a reaction to policies part of the national garbage reform, thus I present also the garbage reform in short.

5.1 Previous research on the Shies protest

Some of the previous research on the Shies protest helps shed light on how the protests became successful. Chmel, Klimova, and Mitrokhina (2020) identify mechanisms of the politicization of the environmental discourse in Russia by doing a case study of the Shies protest and conducting interviews with 19 residents of the Arkhangelsk region, from the excerpts they seem to be activists. In short Chmel, Klimova, and Mitrokhina (2020) find that distrust in regional authorities, attribution of blame at regional authorities and perception of unfair treatment of the region to be the main contribution to politicization of the debate concerning Shies. They deem that the politicization of the discourse on Shies led to mobilization and the high protest activity in the region. They also stress that interviewees, in

their assessments of the situation, to a greater extent frames Shies as a problem of distributive justice rather than a problem of procedural justice (Chmel, Klimova, and Mitrokhina 2020).

Poupin (2021) through doing primarily online ethnography does a case study of internet activism on the social media Vk, the governments' responses to this and activists' counter strategies in Shies protests. Amongst her findings is that Vk, although under government control, was a very useful tool for the protestors to organize, create a sense of community and spread information. When it comes to Vk and repressive actions by the state she finds that this happened in several different ways, from closing down the most important protest groups at critical moments to taking over or closing the personal accounts of people central in the anti-Shies movement and using social media as an archive and basis for legal persecution. Regarding activists' adaptation to online repression she finds that they use Vk for visibility, but integrate other platforms like Telegram to make safety copy of posts, to circumvent censorship and for activities where visibility could compromise the movements goals or safety (Poupin 2021). During her field work Poupin (2021) goes to Shies, Urdoma and the Komi capital Syktyvkar. In addition to the Arkhangelsk conglomerate these are the areas in which the conflict has been the most pronounced. By doing interviews in Arkhangelsk this thesis can complement her findings.

Holm-Hansen (2020a), as part of an evaluation of a Norwegian-Russian environmental cooperation project, provides a detailed and concise description of the Shies-protests (Holm-Hansen 2020a, 11-14). The description is based on interviews and Russian online mass media. He argues that three sentiment clusters form the basis for the anti-Shies movement. Firstly, the environmental movement, and I assume, as this is in a list of sentiment clusters, that the sentiments involved here are environmental concerns. Secondly, distrust in private-public partnerships and the Moscow housing and utilities services. Thirdly, a center-periphery conflict, based on resentment of the relative material deprivation of ones' hometown compared to Moscow (Holm-Hansen 2020a, 13).

5.2 The garbage crisis and the garbage reform

There is a widespread understanding that Russia in general, and particularly Moscow, has a garbage problem. The understanding that there is a garbage problem reaches from the general public (Ipsos 2018), to international and national commentators and media (Gerschovich 2018), to scientific works (Tagaeva and Gil'mundinov 2020; Wu and Martus 2020, 6; Nikitina

2021, 451; Poupin 2021). In Russian mass media the reform and the protests following it is termed the "garbage crisis" (Zabolotnaia 2019b). The focus is on household waste (Municipal solid waste, MSW) (*Tverdye kommunalnye otkhody, TKO*). The garbage problem includes illegal waste dumps, overcrowding of existing landfills, toxic gases making people ill, the effect on real estate prices, pricing of waste fees, and the placement of new dumps, incinerators or garbage treatment facilities (Nikitina 2021, 452; Tagaeva and Gil'mundinov 2020, 493; Rogoza 2018).

The background for the acuteness of the garbage problem is the rapidly growing waste consumption in Russia in recent years, combined with a lacking infrastructure for waste processing. Only 10% of the municipal waste is in some way processed, whereas the remaining 90% goes to landfills. Amendments of the legislation regulating waste, happened in 2014 and 2017 (Tagaeva and Gil'mundinov 2020, 488). 1. January 2019 changes substantial changes in Federal Law No. 89 "On Production and Consumption of Waste" enters into force (Zabolotnaia 2019a). The reorganization of the waste treatment sector that this law stipulates is what is called the garbage reform. The reform makes the regions responsible for adopting waste management schemes and based on them arrange tenders, as opposed to previously when waste management was performed by the municipalities. With this reform also followed an increase in waste removal tariffs for individuals (Holm-Hansen 2020a). Nikitina (2021) has the following description of what is going on with waste in Russia: "making faked system of new waste taxation without changing of core waste treatment institutions" (Nikitina 2021, 451). This is not an accurate, well founded description, but there are reports of corruption involving both the Rotenberg brothers and the Chaikas. They have had a successful involvement in the garbage reform through winning opaque regional tenders (Martus 2020, 10; Holm-Hansen 2020b). Both the Rotenberg brothers and former general prosecutor Yuri Chaika are considered to form part of the core of the Russian informal governance network *Sistema* surrounding Putin (Ledeneva 2013, 57-60).

Shies is interpreted by commentators as Moscow's authorities' attempt at a quick fix of Moscow's overcrowded landfills (Gerschkovich 2018). Although there is a garbage reform in the making, that is supposed to solve the garbage crisis, the overcrowding of landfills surrounding Moscow has led to many and large protests. Landfills have been closed, which has led to the overcrowding of other landfills, and new protests. The most prominent of the garbage protests in the Moscow region being the protests in Volokolamsk following the

incident of landfill gas reportedly making children ill (Rogoza 2018, 2-3). 57 children were sent to a hospital with nausea and other symptoms, and the children of the city were sent out of the city to rest, or in the word of protestors, the children were evacuated (Press Service of the Governor and the Government of the Moscow Region 2018).

The discovery of the construction of a landfill in Shies happens against the backdrop of this garbage crisis.

5.3 The start of the Shies movement

For the rest of this chapter, I present a chronological analytical description of the Shies protests from their emergence, to the diffusion to the regional center and mass mobilization and to the move into unsanctioned mass protest. All the way to their victory and the greening of Shies. The story about the protesters' defeat, in the gubernatorial elections comes later.

5.3.1 Discovering the Shies landfill

In July 2018, hunters discovered that the company Technopark LLC (OOO Tekhnopark) had started construction of a landfill by the railway station of the abandoned village, Shies in Arkhangelsk Oblast, Russia, in July 2018 (Shies.rf 2018). That Shies was discovered by local hunters is repeated in media, scientific literature (Poupin 2021) and by interviewees. Svetlana Loichenko (2019), writing for the more government friendly regional newspaper Pravda Severa provides a story a little dissimilar, more convincing due to its detail: A taxi driver notified the chairman of the Urdoma council of deputies that a customer, a drunk worker from the public-private Moscow company "Automobile roads" (*Automobilnye dorogi*), had talked about the construction of a landfill at Shies (Loichenko 2019).

The discovery of the construction site sparked a range of reactions, initially from citizens, NGOs and government bodies in the nearby town Urdoma, and then in the borderlands of southern Arkhangelsk region and the south of the neighboring Komi Republic. An activist interviewee describes the initial phase as follows:

Activist interviewee: Start of protest from the summer [2018]. Building continues at Shies. They build many different buildings. People start to write to the government and the police, and they write to the prosecutor's office, but the government and the

police, they all say that there is nothing at this place. And that the construction going on is only something for the railways.

The early fall of 2018 was marked by more compliant repertoires. There were few protests, and no sabotage or civil disobedience, as we will see later.

5.3.2 First presentations of the project

An activist interviewee describes two stages of development, following the discovery of the construction, as follows:

Activist interviewee: [...] rumors stage started. [...] the next point was the actual presentation of the project, and it was presented like it would be a harmless project that would earn the region some money. [It] won't be a landfill, it will be a facility that will employ ecological standards.

The way the project was presented helps understand how the protests could grow so big, but also how they could be sustained. In October 2018 what seems to be a promotional video by Ekotekhnopark LLC for the Ekotekhnopark in Shies is released (Sokolov 2018). I was made aware of the video by an interviewee that was outraged that the creators of the video could think that people could be fooled that easily. The video presents compressing and packing waste in plastic as the state-of-the-art eco-friendly technology like they use in European countries, and the Ecotechnopark as a part of the solution to the overcrowded Russian landfills. The equipment presented looks like a bale wrapper for making silage bales with some modifications. According to the video these garbage bales will be stored on site, and it will be the first step in creating a modern system for treatment of waste (Sokolov 2018). The Swedish company selling the compression and wrapping solution, *Flexus Balasystem AB*, tell the Moscow Times that they don't recommend using their technology for long time storage, but that some of their customers have done so successfully (Brown 2018, time: 15:30). Several sources from blogs to renowned journalists claim the promotional film to be from the authorities (Samokhvalova 2019; Golunov 2018; Gerschkovich 2018). As pointed out by Gerschkovich (2018) the promotional video does not present how the waste will be handled in later stages. Neither is this presented by the responsible authorities claims Gerschkovich (2018), writing for the Moscow Times. "Ekotechnopark" as a term is introduced by the Russian Ministry of Industry and Trade, and is used at least since 2017 to denote modern waste treatment facilities, not excluding landfills (Krupnitskii 2017).

On the 18th of October 2018 the Shies project was presented in the meeting of the Commission on Investment Policy and Development of Competition in the Arkhangelsk Region (Ionaitis and Belova 2018). The regional online newspaper 29.ru report that they give the "long awaited presentation of the project (Ionaitis and Belova 2018). It was decided that it should be special investment project of the region, only Sergei Antufev, leader of the Arkhangelsk Public Council of the Russian Federal Tax Service and leader of the regional branch of the All-Russian public organization of small and medium-sized enterprises (OPORA), voted against (Federal Tax Service of Russia 2021; News29.ru 2020a).

The presentation of the project I get by the activist interviewees is, as expected, a little different and it goes like this: It is planned to be Europe's biggest landfill. It will handle 1/3 of all Moscow's waste, and it will be transported from Moscow with train. The site of construction is a swamp, and pollution from the dump will pollute the rivers of Vychegda and Northern Dvina. As Arkhangelsk and Severodvinsk is downstream it will pollute our drinking water. This story shares traits of stories published in the media (Golunov 2018). Allegedly there were also rumors of plans for using Shies as a site for storing radioactive waste (Interfax 2018). The story of the activist interviewees was not countered with consistent, convincing arguments. There was no consistent, convincing story by authorities about what was going on but silence, lies, concealment, and rejection of the activist's stories as hysteria, ill motivated, that is: motivated by upcoming elections, etc. This was coupled with repeated invitations to dialogue.

5.3.3 The deal with Moscow

So what's in it for Arkhangelsk? The Moscow mayor Sobianin, Tekhnopark LLC and Arkhangelsk governor Igor Orlov made a deal, the interviewees say. The Arkhangelsk region is offered 6 billion rubles for the project, and several infrastructure and maintenance projects is offered to the settlements located nearby, Press-service of ekotechnopark "Shies" (2019) reports in the regional newspaper Pravda Severa. Lena district newspaper "Maiak" reports the number to 10,5 billion rubles (Ivanova 2020). The Shies station is in the Lena district. Even though the ecotechnopark in Shies was never built the Moscow government has sponsored several infrastructure projects in 2019. The Lena district newspaper "Maiak" calls the renovations in 2019 unprecedented (Petrova 2020). In addition to renovating social institutions and roads approximately 800 people have been sent to the best clinics in Moscow and many school children have gone on schooltrips to Moscow through this cooperation

program between regions, funded by the company doing the constructions on Shies, Tekhnopark LLC, The Moscow Government and the Lena District government fund (Petrova 2020; Budina 2019).

5.3.4 A solid foundation for a protest movement

These initial developments in the Shies case formed a solid foundation for mobilization for the Shies protest movement. A resident in Urdoma interviewed by the district newspaper says the most disturbing was that they were neither warned, nor asked about their opinion in the construction, and describe the conduct of the responsible entrepreneur being "like a thief in the night" (Ivanova 2020). The fact that the project was discovered by the public before it was presented to the public by the responsible actors, and the subsequent deception of the public and concealment of facts is considered by Chmel, Klimova, and Mitrokhina (2020) to be the main contribution to lacking trust in the project, and lacking legitimation of the project that contributed to the politicization of the environmental discourse in the Arkhangelsk region, and that this contributed to mobilization.

Political scientist Sergei Starovoitov sees it the other way around, he makes clear in a statement to the press. He explains that "public conflict give rise to a lack of information, a lack of communication, a lack of trust and respect." (Club of Regions 2019). He further elaborates on what he sees as the reason for the lack constructive developments in waste management policy, and makes it clear that he sees angry residents as hindering constructive dialogue between the parties, namely business and authorities (Club of Regions 2019). Citizens are excluded as parties by Sergei Starovoitov. This way of talking about the people, or the protesters, is shared between the President, the Arkhangelsk Governor, and other elites defending the position of the authorities on the Shies issue. Citizens are the problem, not the garbage. However, Starovoitov's argument does not consider time. The lack of information, as demonstrated here, happened before the public conflict. It is possible that the public conflict is the result of the lack of information, as Chmel, Klimova, and Mitrokhina (2020) argues, but that it would be the other way around is not sensical. In the following I will show how the interviews and other gathered data supports that information was concealed and that this contributed to conflict.

Some activist interviewees tell that in the beginning they didn't believe the rumors that Moscow waste would be brought all the way to Arkhangelsk. The interviews with activist

interviewees support that people have felt deceived and that this has led to broken trust in the regional government especially. One activist interviewee provides this fitting description:

Activist interviewee: [...] you know people continued constantly asking the authorities: What is going on? What do you plan? And they lied. They lied. First they lied about some lumber mill. No. first they said that nothing is going there, it is ok, but then they started to tell us that this is a future lumber mill, and then other kinds of lies took place. And you know people were, mmmm, crazy about it. And next big rally, all the region, absolutely united, about 43 towns and villages took part in it. And about 30 000 people came on the streets. Never Arkhangelsk region saw that, such a protest.

In an article published by 7x7 in May 2019, almost a year after the discovery of the construction, it is still not clear what will be the size and nature of the waste facility, nor what is reliable information on the matter (Popugaeva 2019). In August 2018 the government of the Arkhangelsk sends a request to the Russian Railways. They want the Russian Railways to explain to them the nature of what construction is happening at Shies, and state that they with this want to stop the rumors, the title of the article written by the most United Russia friendly publication, "Pomorie", being "There will be no landfill in Shies (...)" (Interfax 2018; Tolgski 2018). Almost a year after the initial construction works in Shies had started, in the summer 2019, then acting governor Orlov in an interview with Kommersant says he knew about Shies from July 2018, and that he knew it was a project for storing Moscow waste (Vasileva 2019). This information was clearly concealed. Orlov in an interview with 29.ru explains that the volume of garbage, the technologies used, how transport will happen, is still in the blue, it is still to be decided by the investor (Ionaitis and Varenik 2019). If we take Orlov on his word, it was never clear whether it was planned a landfill, a waste incineration plant or something else. It was going to be an ecotechnopark, a modern waste treatment facility. What these words meant was never clear. This shows that there has indeed been deception of the public and concealment of facts.

I must note, however, that the decision to help solve the enormous waste problem of Moscow, starting to prepare a facility and not knowing the amounts of waste or how to process it, lays the foundation of anxiety amongst citizens and thereby lays the foundation for protests. Regardless of what information was concealed or not. It is not only the lies and deception that have made people ready to go to the street, but the actual policy and how it is carried out.

Activist interviewees have expressed that they had higher expectations of the authorities and how policy is carried out:

Activist interviewee: They didn't listen people who don't want this situation. And it is not normal situation for us, I think that south people [people in southern Russia] are now more [indistinguishable] [...] Maybe, because it is traditional situation for them that when somebody try to build cottage at the seashore of Black Sea, to cut all forest for them, but for our region it is not normal.

The initial developments in the case provided the movement with a quite the story, with a heap of facts that made it possible to frame the regional government, United Russia and governor Igor Orlov as liars unworthy of the region's trust.

From consisting of mainly citizens appeals and petitions and being concentrated to areas closest to Shies the nature of the contention connected to Shies changes in October 2018.

5.4 Regional diffusion and mass mobilization

In October 2018, protests spread to the regional center, Arkhangelsk. The first anti-Shies protest in Arkhangelsk is held at 20th of October 2018. It is attended by no more than 50 to 60 people. The action was formally approved as a picket (*piket*) only, so moving with the posters and doing speeches it might be considered a rally (*miting*) and thereby being illegal. Instead of parading and listening to speeches people reportedly discussed with each other the issue at hand and how to deal with it (Zabolotnaia 2018b). It is not completely clear whether this meeting was organized by the local organization Svobodnyi Sever (*Free North*) or the local non-systemic opposition party Yabloko. (Varenik 2018a; Zabolotnaia 2018b). The same day there is a rally in Severodvinsk with an estimated 200-400 participants organized by Svobodnyi Sever (Zabolotnaia 2018a; Karpovich 2018c). The contention connected to the issue of Shies had spread. There was diffusion. Then comes coordination:

5.4.1 Pomore ne Pomoika and United Protest Days

"Pomore ne Pomoika" translates to Pomoria is not a garbage dump. Pomoria being synonym to the Arkhangelsk region. This was a slogan, and it became a very important organization both in terms of organizing protests and organizing the parallel social media and media campaign. An activist interviewee starts to tell about the Shies case by telling about how the

initial rallies in the Arkhangelsk conglomerate came about, and the start of what became the main protesting organization in the Arkhangelsk urban area:

Activist interviewee: It was approximately 17th of October 2018. When activists gathered to decide what should we do with this problem. Because we found out about this in the end of July. The fact that a giant landfill will be built and at first actually nobody knew what to do with it. And everyone was very confused, and they didn't know what to do. [...] in Arkhangelsk it was so much small leaders that work separate from each other. But in October we all begin cooperate our activities, in one place, maybe, in one direction, yeah?

A: Mhm.

Activist interviewee: Then we worked at the meetings, and agitation to movement of Pomorie ne Pomoika. [...] Via social media, via Vkontakte, we outlined the plan for the nearest actions.

Pomore ne Pomoika organized the "United protest day" on the 2nd of December 2018 (Varenik 2018c). This is the first of five coordinated actions, where protests happen in several cities and villages at the same time. The United day of Protest became the first large anti-Shies rally in Arkhagelsk. The rally took place by the Solovetskyi Stone, a memorial of gulag on the Solovetskyi Islands in the Arkhangelsk region, and thus a symbol of denunciation of political repression in general and specifically during Stalin rule. Several of the later protest rallies takes place by the the Solovetskyi memorial, in both Arkhangelsk and Severodvinsk. This is however not primarily due to its symbolical significance but rather rejection by city authorities to hold the protest action at more central locations. Some interviewees however emphasize the symbolical meaning of the site:

Activist interviewee: The next action was on the 2nd of December 2018. It was by the Solovetskii stone, actually it's a place of memory of politically repressed people. [...] And that ground near the Solovetskii stone couldn't handle, couldn't get in all the people that came. So many people came. About 5000 people were there. And people were very uncomfortable in that place. Some people were climbing the trees.

Other sources are more conservative reporting the number of protestors, the estimates ranging from over 1 000 to in the range of 3 000 and 5 000. The organizers, Pomorie ne Pomoika, report that the total number of protestors that went to the street on this day, in at least 30 villages and cities, mostly in the region, is 30 000 (Ekho Severa 2020; Vinogradovna, Vasilieva, and Voronov 2018; Varenik 2018c). The number 30 000 is for sure an

exaggeration, however it is clear that from this united day of protest the Shies protests have a coordinated and mass character that is unprecedented in the region.

The day before the United Protest Day the KPRF organized a protest action. This can be seen as a reaction to the policy of Pomorie ne Pomoika of letting the political parties participate in the protests, but keeping them from taking part in the organization of rallies and other organizing activities of the Pomorie ne Pomoika campaign. The KPRF rally was only attended by about 100 people (Karpovich 2018a; Krasnaia Vesna 2018). Whereas the KPRF rally was not attended by many organizations the United Protest Day was attended by a whole range of organizations, movements and parties. Common for all the United Protest Days, this one and the upcoming is the vast number of different actors present representing a vast range of interests. Amongst the actors present in these rallies are systemic and non-systemic parties and civil organizations working on all kinds of issues, and with both some and no integration with sistema: LDPR, SR, KPRF, Yabloko, PARNAS all participate by holding speeches at some point. The flags of smaller parties like National Bolshevik Party and Party of the Great Fatherland are visible. The environmental movement are present, by Chisty Sever 29 and 42, leftist movements by Left Front, the animal rights movement by the animal shelter Mata-Mata, the urbanistik movement by Moi Severodvinsk, all kinds of nationalist flags are also always present, even the temperance movement are present by Garmonia Severa and in Severodvinsk the Union of Gardeners. It is clear that Pomorie ne Pomoika has been successful in the creation of a wide coalition. It seems like everyone is there. All of these movements and organizations have only two things in common, as far as I can see, they are not the incumbent elite and they are all from the Arkhangelsk region.

By comparing the numbers of protestors on the 20th of October and the 1st of December with the rally on the 2nd of December it is clear that KPRF, Yabloko or Svobodniy Sever's had little capacity to mobilize masses on their own, and we can conclude that these organizations' participation cannot explain the size of the protests. As it appears, no organization had a constituency ready for mass protests. As the appearance of mass protest happens when Pomorie ne Pomoika organize them and a coordinated anti-Shies campaign, it suggests Pomorie ne Pomoika have been imperative in facilitating large protests.

5.4.2 Repression and teambuilding

When the next united protest day action is organized in Arkhangelsk the sites offered by city administration for the rally are even further away from the city center. This can be seen as a reaction by the authorities to the unanticipated success of the first united protest day. Except for the freezing cold and more peculiar attempts by authorities to contain the protest, by making the hurdles for participation in the protest higher, the next United Day of Protest is similar to that on 2nd of December.

Activist interviewee: The next protest action was on the 3rd of February 2019. It happened in the left bank of Northern Dvina.

Across the bridge across the river from Arkhangelsk. The remote park, the best of two options given by the city authorities, was covered in snow. An activist interviewee tells with excitement, pride, and joy of the day of protest and the preparations:

Activist interviewee: We took shovels. We wrote a lot of post in different social media groups. We gathered people but, we, the small group of activists were the main ones that cleared the snow, mainly women [...]. We, I walked from here to the Left Bank, my [removed, anonymity] friends from our group they brought shovels by car. So, with the shovels I came about 12.00 midday, and I left about 5pm. And we were clearing the snow all the time, because if we are calling the people to join the protest action we should like, get the mess away. So we cleared it all. And then we had enough space between the trees. And people who came there were very pleased. They were happy about this action. Five to seven thousand people came, it was difficult to count, and also the authorities staged a traffic accident at the bridge, so it was difficult to get there.

Continuing later to describe the spirit and unity. The above and below quotes illustrates well how a hurdle from the authorities can nourish feelings of unity and accomplishment:

Activist interviewee: Despite the weather, despite minus 25, five to seven thousand people showed up. And we felt the unity, I think I never felt it before. It was great! When people walked across the bridge, and the for example gave each other the hands, because in some places there are no roads, if you go up to the bridge, just by the university, there are some places there just covered by thick snow. And people have to climb over this large mass of snow, so people gave hands to each other so other could climb it. So it was great despite of the frost. It was like a city holiday. It had the soul that actual city holidays arranged by the city administration didn't have.

By creating high hurdles for the protests the city administration contribute to teambuilding. The challenges are not only costs, they can also be also quests.

The organizers of the 3rd of February rally asked people not to show banners and posters when crossing the bridge, to get back to the city after the rally. This could lead to serious trouble for the official organizers, as they didn't have the permission to organize a march. However, a group from KPRF chose to have a small parade all the way back to the Lenin Square. This can be considered the first unsanctioned protest of the Shies movement in Arkhangelsk, but it would not be the last:

Acitivist interviewee: On the 3rd of February, on the third action, the people who organized it, said from the stage that it was the last action taken outside the center of the town.

The police monitored KPRFs small march, but it had no further consequences (Mikusheva et al. 2019).

Shies camp and lawsuit

At the Shies station and the surroundings conflict changes character dramatically during February 2019. It enters the judiciary and the protests at the Shies station transforms into a state of permanent transgression. The legal case against Tekhnopark LLC is initiated by the Urdoma municipality. Urdoma municipality is claiming that the constructions going on at the Shies station are illegal (TASS 2020a). The Shies camp turn into a long-standing protest camp and a range of civil disobedience actions were organized at the construction site. the methods of the protestors are turning more confrontational:

Activist interviewee: In February they start to block the road, so they will have no fuel and the construction will stop. They block two roads, because there are only two roads out of Shies, one to Urdoma and one to Madmas. There was many police and "special guys" [my interpretation: private security forces] and workers.

The Shies camp, being a focal point of the media attention connected to Shies, has conveyed a picture of the protest representing the "True Russia".

5.5 Turning from sanctioned to un-sanctioned and first victory of protestors

The Arkhangelsk governor Igor Orlov, in a meeting with unions in Severodvinsk on the 5th of April shares from his anger and frustration with protestors. In an outlash he calls those against the construction of a landfill at Shies, and the protestors "Shelupon". This is caught on film,

and spreads in social media (STV 2019). "Shelupon" is translated in 7x7 as "rubbish/trash" (Strelkov 2019). This is not the direct translation but catches the derogatory meaning. Not long after citizens, the "shelupon", take to the street, and their new name is not unnoticed.

5.5.1 The 7th of April

The protests in Arkhangelsk culminate with the largest mass protests ever seen in Arkhangelsk on the 7th of April 2019. 7x7 reports that the estimates of number of participants in the protest ranges from 3 000 to 10 000 (Zabolotnaia and Filkovsky 2019). An expert interviewee claims there were 3 500 protestors in 7th of April rally. One activist interviewee says there were 3 000 protestors. The Moscow Times (2019) reports of between 2 000 and 3 000 participants. That the rally was indeed the largest ever seen in the city I regard as very probable considering this is claimed by several interviewees and confirmed by the antagonist of the rally, Governor Igor Orlov (Vasileva 2019). 7x7 reports that the two previous united protest days were the most massive (Zabolotnaia and Filkovsky 2019). However, 7th of April protest action is the first, and only, protest event of significant size in the very city center of Arkhangelsk. It was the first and only Shies protest event in Arkhangelsk that could be called a march, or parade. The rally is also the first of the larger anti-Shies rallies considered illegal by the authorities. It can thus be considered transgressive contention. Whether the protest action should have been considered illegal is disputed. An activist interviewee claims that: "According to the law, it should have been legal", the interviewee continues to explain that the city authorities didn't give a reply within the three days' time limit and that they therefore are wrong in deeming it illegal. Several activist interviewees talk of the 7th of April as the most significant protest action. All in all, it seems fair to name the 7th of April march the culmination of the Shies protests in Arkhangelsk city.

The description of the event by the interviewees matches the live broadcast by SotaVision (2019). The parade started close to the River Station (*Morskoi-rechnoi vokzal*), at the Square of the Workers' Unions (*Ploshchad Profsoiuzov*), it went up one of the main streets, Prospekt Troitskii, to the city's main square, the Lenin Square (*Ploshad Lenina*). The police were standing in rows, some places arm in arm blocking the march, some places with crowd control fencing, but the protestors went through the lines without any violence. As the march arrived the Lenin Square there was media and a pop concert with barely any audience. The iconic "Drevarch", an environmental activist and freak wearing wings and a green tattoo of a three all over his face, was first onto the stage. Footage from the march shows that Left front,

KPRF and Pomorie ne Pomoika were present (SotaVision 2019). Several people were fined and the formal organizer of the rally, Yuri Chesnokov, from Yabloko, was arrested (Mikusheva and Varenik 2019). The transgression of the protest predictably marks a shift to more persecution of protesters.

In general the interviewees are emphasizing the 7th of April as a crucial protest. Several are positively surprised by their fellow citizens' courage or by the sudden break with what they see as the widespread inertia of Arkhangelsk people, or even Russians in general. Most activist interviewees tell with a sense of pride of the 7th of April, mentioning the high number of protestors or describing it as spectacular. They also tell about what this day meant to them, and it is clear that for many of the interviewees active in the protest 7th of April is a personal and emotional landmark experience.

5.5.2 Bessrochka, extending the contentious repertoire

The 7th of April is also the start date of the timeless protest (*Bessrochka*) on the Lenin Square in the middle of the city. Almost all the interviewees somehow highlight the importance of the Bessrochka. Whereas several interviewees either talk of conflicts with and within other organizations or express disagreement or dislike with other organizations, like Pomorie ne Pomoika, Chisty Sever – Chistaia Strana or 42, none of the interviewees express disagreement or dislike with Bessrochka. Like the protest camp in Shies it is more idolized as the proof of the unity between the least probable people, or in other words, proof of the unity of the residents in the Arkhangelsk region. Several interviewees talk with a sense of pride of how "all kinds of people" are there. Freaks and Putin supporters, public employees, etc. An activist interviewee writes the following about the 7th of April, and Bessrochka:

Activist interviewee: So, after the 7th of April, the format of protests has changed. What happened is that instead of focusing solely on gathering massive rallies, the movement has begun hosting termless protest events. Particularly, termless protests in Arkhangelsk, Syktyvkar, Kotlas, Severodvinsk, and, most importantly, on Shies. In the cities «бессрочка» [Bessrochka], besides proclaiming disagreement with the conducted policies, also had a role of informing the people about the issue, gathering money on the needs of protest (inventories and paying fines), and bringing new people into the protest.

By naming the Bessrochka as the 5th post they create a symbolic link to the camp in Shies where the 1st to 4th post is. As pointed out by Bessrochka activists:

Bessrochka activist: -This is the fifth post. Why is it? On the 7th of April, when Bessrochka was formed, after the mass meeting on this square people stayed here for an ongoing protest, and at that point there were 4 posts at the Shies station. People kept watch at “Leningrad”, “Koster” (*Fire*), “Banya” (*Sauna/bathroom*) and “Krepost” (*Fortress*), I think. Well, I am afraid to be mistaken. There were four post in Shies, and here the fifth post was established. The fifth post to protect Shies.

At new year it was written with big letters "S novom godom!" equivalent to "Happy New Year!" with big letters in the snow. Activists used the coloured snow to write "Post №5" and "Shies is ours!" (*Shies nash!*). Around the main square lies the city administration, regional government and regional legislature. This means the local political and bureaucratic elite can see the activists in yellow vests, the Urdoma flag and the letters in the snow from their offices every day. Even if there are not so many people protesting there at a time, the Bessrochka constitutes a powerful presence.

"Bessrochka" is considered a neologism by Holm-Hansen (2020a, 12). However, Bessrochka was used when announcing indefinite protest in Moscow after the 2012 Russian presidential elections (Flikke 2020, 47). Accordingly, the use of this term does originate in the Arkhangelsk region and the Shies protest. However, interviewees, both expert and activists, share Holm-Hansen (2020a) view that "Bessrochka" is a neologism. An expert interviewee highlights how he sees Bessrochka as a social technology spreading from Arkhangelsk to other parts of Russia:

Expert: "In Russia there appeared resistance points that actually began to copy technologies that were born of life in the Arkhangelsk region."

Google Trends (2021) shows that the word is in use in 2011, but the use had increased substantially by September 2018 to July 2020. An expert interviewee has the following to say regarding this:

Expert: "Endless protests were announced in Russia earlier, but that it lasted for ten months, I don't remember such a thing."

The interview data, the report from Holm-Hansen (2020a) and data from Google Trends (2021) supports that the concept gained importance, and got popularized, during the Shies

protests. Yandex Keyword statistics (2020), the Runet equivalent to Google Trends, does not provide data this way back. The Bessrochka held stand as a continuous protest at the Lenin Square for over a year. From 8th of April 2019 til 11th of April 2020. From then on it became a mobile protest as a reaction to police harassment at the Lenin Square (Activatica 2020).

Whether or not the Bessrochka is a neologism or a new repertoire in Russia, it represents an extension of repertoires in the Shies protests. This extension of repertoire seems to have been successful in creating a sense of unity amongst activists from different organizations. The Bessrochka, by being unsanctioned also represents the Shies protests in Arkhangelsk turning into a constant transgressive protest. By its central location and long duration constitutes the most visible offline part of the Shies protests. The Bessrochka as a repertoire spread to several other cities, primarily in the Arkhangelsk region following this.

5.5.3 Signs of victory

During the late spring and summer 2019 there are several developments that hint at coming concessions from the authorities. 6th of April 2019 the Presidential Council for Civil Society and Human Rights (HRC) reports of local Rosvodresursy (The Federal Agency for Water Resources of the Russian Federation) branch claiming the planned burial of waste is within the sanitary protection zone of the drinking water of nearby city Koriyazhma and that it will pollute the river system and is a violation of sanitary standards (HRC 2019). The timing of these news are peculiar. As water quality is an issue at the heart of the debates on the Shies ecotechnopark, one could be led to think that this has contributed to the mobilization to the large 7th of April protests. However, using the before:YYYY-MM-DD function on Google, using different searchwords¹, it seems no social media or news to have picked up on this before the 8th of April.

In May 2019, the newspaper Vedomosti reported that according to minutes from a meeting between the Presidential Administration (PA) and the Moscow government the construction of the landfill at Shies will be paused on June 15th 2019 (Mereminskaya 2019). Although this is apparently a concession by the authorities, the interviewees don't express confidence in this, as of March 2020. Distrust seems to be well established. The initial developments in the case

¹ Combinations of росводресурсов шиес/ленский, Двинско-Печорского бассейнового водного управления шиес/экотехнопарк

explains this, as shown earlier. The contention continues to take on new forms: On the 3rd of July 2019, a large billboard poster with the slogan "SHIES IS OURS! The Russian North is not a waste dump for Moscow" ("*SHIES NASH! Russkii Sever – ne pomoika dlia Moskvyy*") was set up by Pomoria in central Arkhangelsk. Journalists make a point of it being vis-a-vis the FSB offices. The poster was up for only one day before it was removed (News29.ru 2019).

To sum up: The 7th of April represents an extension of repertoires and transgression for the Shies protest. By going from sanctioned rallies and other forms of more consensual contention to an unsanctioned march and Bessrochka. Not long after came the first signs of concessions, but the protests continued.

5.5 Complete concessions

5.5.1 Making Putin save you

The incumbent president of the Russian Federation is a man named Vladimir Putin. He has background from the Soviet Union secret service, KGB, and many things have been written about him. In the story about Shies this man gets to play the role of savior. Chaika, the Rotenbergs and Sobianin are all connected to the Shies business somehow and are amongst those closer to Putin. Despite that it took a long time and a lot of effort by a lot of people to get Putin the savior to appear.

During all of the protests in Arkhangelsk two main claims can be singled out: The stopping of construction of a landfill at Shies and demanding the resignation of the Governor. Especially the second demand, that Orlov needs to resign has to a large degree been presented as a claim directed to Putin. Amongst the more spectacular actions begging Putin for help is the one at the military shipyard *Sevmash* in Severodvinsk. On the 24th of April 2019, employees at the *Sevmash*, where nuclear submarines are manufactured, on live broadcasted national television protested with a message on a large banner turning to Putin, demanding that the regional governor, Igor Orlov, step down (Varenik 2019b).

16th of May 2019 the Russian president for the first time answers a question on Shies on the broadcasted Mediaforum of the All-Russian People's Front. In his answer he is underlining "dialogue with the people that live there" when developing municipal solid waste (MSW)

facilities (TASS 2020a; Zimin 2019). The All-Russian People's front being a Kremlin financed organization (Flikke 2020, 41). The president also states that he doesn't really know the details of the deal between regional authorities in Arkhangelsk and Moscow, but thinks it is normal for Moscow to export its waste, as waste trade is normal in Europe. Further he states that the building of "[...] waste treatment facilities, incinerators and so on. If they are made by international standards [...]" would solve the garbage problem (Zimin 2019). Towards the end of his comment, he presents the insolvable garbage crisis, in short: People don't want landfills, they don't want to pay utility fees and they don't want to sort their waste (Zimin 2019). The start of the interaction between Putin and the woman asking the question communicates a clear message: You can be as hysterical, and protest as much as you want, I will hear it, but when I tell you to stop and sit down, you sit down, and you listen to me.

The workers that protested at the Sevmash shipyard were fired. At the large 19th of May 2019 protest concert on the island Solombola, forming part of the Arkhangelsk city, speakers from the Bessrochka action in Severodvinsk translates the firing of these workers, and not Orlov, to distrust in Putin, 29.ru reports (Mikusheva, Belova, and Varenik 2019).

The information that Orlov would be removed by decree was shared by unnamed sources within the Presidential Administration (PA) with the RBK on the 8th of July 2019 (Galimova 2019).

On the 30th of August the municipal council of Urdoma, together with the environmental organizations Committee save Vychehda and Chistaia Urdoma, in cooperation with other parts of civil society collected over 60 000 signatures asking Putin to ask Orlov and Sobianin to take in account the opinion of the population when deciding on the Shies matter. These were delivered physically in Moscow. This was just before the 1st of September deadline the president had given Arkhangelsk governor Orlov and Moscow mayor Sobianin to report to the president on the populations opinion on the Shies project (Activatica 2019). An activist interviewee has the following reflection on the action:

Activist interviewee: This action showed mass character and a very high degree of organization of the protest. Signatures were collected in a short time, and it was really a very powerful mass action. Which forced the presidential administration and Putin himself to make some statements about stopping the construction work at the Shies station.

Another activist interviewee says about the summer 2019:

Activist interviewee: And a very important point is that somewhere around summer last year [2019], the protest rallies that took place in Arkhangelsk, got the attention of federal mass media and federal speakers, politicians, political scientists, journalists. From that moment Shies it became a kind of symbol.

About two weeks after the last United Protest Day is organized all over the region the protestors get their first concession. It is Putin that gives it. 2nd of April 2020 there is a major *rokirovka* apparently related to Shies and involving substitution of the heads of three federal subjects, the governor of Arkhangelsk region, the governor of the Nenets Autonomous okrug (the orkrug to the north of Komi and to the north-east of Arkhangelsk), and the president of the Komi Republic (RBK 2020). Rokirovka is a term for swapping jobs (Ledeneva 2013, 277). Igor Orlov announces his resignation and Aleksander Tsybulskii is appointed new governor of the Arkhangelsk region by presidential decree (Filipenok 2020). Tsybulskii has been, although not always very clearly stated, against the construction of the landfill in Shies, this way Putin ends up being the savior. Both Orlov and Tsybulskii represent the United Russia party. As does most governors in Russia at the time being. The strategy of appealing to Putin the savior worked for getting rid of Orlov. Orlov could have lost in the upcoming gubernatorial elections, and had he won it would probably mean widespread suspicion of electoral fraud, and protests. So, by replacing him with Tsibulskii United Russia was able to enter the gubernatorial elections with a candidate that could win the elections with less suspicion of election fraud. The appointment of Tsibulskii was the first of three vital steps taken to contain the Shies protest and ensure United Russia's victory in the upcoming gubernatorial elections, the other two are presented in the section on the "People's candidate".

5.5.2 Regreening Shies

Putin kicked out Orlov, but what would happen on Shies was still in the blue. We go back to august 2019 and go through the main developments from there up until the regreening of the construction site at Shies. In August, the Levada Centre conducted a survey in the Arkhangelsk region with 1 008 respondents, with the aim of mapping popular opinion on the construction of the landfill at Shies. The results show that 95% of the respondents answered that they are against the construction of a landfill in Shies (Agapeeva and Greben 2019). This gives substantial leverage to the protestors' cause. As presented by (Hollyer, Rosendorff, and

Vreeland 2015), in authoritarian regimes willingness to protest is largely dependent on perceived willingness to protest.

The protests continue and 22. September 2019 another "United protest day" is organized in over 30 cities all over Russia. The protests are against the garbage reform and export of Moscow waste to the regions. The size of these protests varies from 1-man pickets, in the city Kazan, to larger demonstrations in Arkhangelsk and Kotlas (Novaja Gazeta 2019; Pomoria is not a dump 2019).

The Interregional Coalition "STOP-SHIES" (*Mezhregionalnaia Koalitsiia "STOP-SHIES"*) was formed on the 12th of October 2019 at a meeting in Kotlas, the largest city in the south-eastern part of the Arkhangelsk region, closer to Shies. It is a coalition of 29 different initiatives and organizations from the Komi Republic, Vologda region and all over the Arkhangelsk region. Their main goal is halting the construction of the landfill in Shies. From the beginning they seek to gain influence through the upcoming governor elections ("STOP-SHIES" 2021; Bisnes-Klass Arkhangelsk 2019).

On the 9th of January 2020 the Arkhangelsk Arbitration Court rules that the constructions of Tekhnopark LLC is illegal, but this is appealed by Tekhnopark LLC (TASS 2020a) As it is still not clear what will happen to the projected landfill in Shies the protests continues, with United Protest Day organized on the 15th of March 2020. Despite the signs of a coming concession in Severodvinsk the reported number of protestors by regional online outlet 29.ru is 2 700 (Karpovich and Belova 2020).

On the 9th of June 2020 the Tekhnopark project was no longer a special investment project of the Arkhangelsk region (News29.ru 2020c). 16th of October 2020 the greening of the Shies construction site is reported to have started (News29.ru 2020b). Not only was the building of a landfill, possibly Europe's largest stopped, but the constructions were reversed and new trees planted. This was before the final court decision: 26th of October 2020 the Arbitration Court of Appeal in Vologda dismissed the appeal from Tekhnopark LLC, and Urdoma municipality went out as the winner of the court case (TASS 2020b). The Ecological Movement 42 comments this on their Vk-page: "This is an important historical moment for the civil society! Let's remember, how this was."(Ecological movement 42 2020).

The popular resistance of the waste reform continues. People refuse to pay EkoIntegrator, the new regional waste operator firm, for garbage collection. By November 2020 six million rubles were paid, yet 20 million rubles were still owed to EkoIntegrator. The waste operator warns that the matter of the unpaid bills will be brought to court (Karpovich 2020b). Not paying the waste bills is supported by several actors in the Shies-movement. To what extent the lacking payment of bills is a coordinated action is not investigated here.

Did the protestors win? After all the final decision was taken in court. Interviewees stress that they can not succeed in court without massive protests, referring to the Russian legal system being dysfunctional:

Activist interviewee: You know in Russia the court system is not functional. [...] [I]f you make your lawyers work without any mass protest it will not work, absolutely not. And otherwise. Uhm, mass protests alone without work in courts is very weak. It must be commonly work. Letters, complaints, petitions, courts, mass rallies, pickets, mass media, vastly. This is all social media marketing, and marketing in common.

That the regreening started before the final court decision adds weight to this argument. As the quote above illustrates, one can see the continuation of the protest after the construction of the landfill has entered the legal system as an acknowledgement of, and strategic adaptation to, the importance of top-down informal governance, as described by Ledeneva (2013) and Sakwa (2010). Their strategy has not only involved pushing courts on the streets, as the below quote show it has also involved using the street to try influencing investor's interests.

Activist interviewee: I hope that the investors stop to give money for the construction at the Shies, because the construction need money for security, for heating, for food for the workers, and that the project will be closed.

It seems probable that the large Shies protests were necessary to get a concession in the courts, but to establish this is probably close to impossible. That influencing courts through the street is an outspoken strategy of the protestors makes it possible for protestors to assert their impact.

5.6 The Shies protest, nationwide

The Shies movement has attempted to spread to other parts of Russia. Although the United Protest Days organized by Pomore ne Pomoika on 3rd of February 2019 was "All-Russian", the number of protestors outside the Arkhangelsk region was small. But smaller anti-Shies protests and pickets have repeatedly taken place in many cities and villages all over the

country. If it the protests didn't spread directly, the news on Shies, and the knowledge of Shies spread.

Starting in late summer 2018 Shies and the Arkhangelsk region reached the headlines of Russian national media (Golunov 2018; Britskaia 2018b). Glukhova (2019) in her study on "City Conflicts in Modern Russia" considers Shies to be one of four main news stories in Russia in the summer of 2019. On the social media Vk Shies was the fourth most discussed topic during the whole of that same year (Poupin 2021).

Several prominent Russians have shown support to the protestors, ranging from leading oppositional politicians to celebrities. Some examples: Leading oppositional figure Liubov Sobol, visiting Arkhangelsk in July 2020, is photographed with a t-shirt with the slogans "We stop #Shies, It is our swamp" (*Ostonovim #Shies, Eto nasje boloto*) (Arkhangelsk Navalny Office 2020). Super model Sergei Zverev, with 1mio followers on Instagram (zverevsuperstar 2021), on the 4th of march 2019 had a picket outside the Kremlin with a poster reading "Superstar, I am against the building of the factory by Baikal and the landfill at Shies" (*Super Zvezda, Ya protiv stroitelstva zavoda na baikale I svalki na shiese*) (Gubkina 2019). Also famous blogger and youtuber Ilia Varlamov released a film on Shies on his YouTube-channel, as of June 2021 it has more than 1 million views (varlamov 2019).

In social media "#Shies2"("#uuuc2") has been used for protests related to the garbage issue and garbage reform in for example Kaluga and Tatarstan. The Shies protests continue to inspire protestors in other parts of Russia, as one participant in a demonstration against local pollution in the Siberian city of Omsk had written on his poster "Shies could, and we can" (Sibir 2020).

That Shies got so well-known has contributed to people's engagement in the protest. Overall the activist and expert interviewees express pride in the protest. They express pride of their fellow protesting citizens. They tell with pride of the protests, and Arkhangelsk. That their city and their protest is on everybody's lips. An activist interviewee talks about the media attention with excitement:

Activist interviewee: [...] Arkhangelsk region did not appear on the federal level on the media before, it even leads to some celebrities to mixing up our town with Astrakhan.

The same interviewee says about the 7th of April action:

Activist interviewee: it was a turning point for me basically, and at that point I decided to start participating in this because what I have seen is, that the things that are happening in my region is absolutely unique to Russia and that, well that the issue is of course also unique, and that there is a place for my skills, for my knowledge, for my courage, for change.

This is an example of how the motivation to participate in the protests has been manifold. It is not only the anger and disappointment that contributed to mobilization, that the people protesting got the opportunity to feel that their voice and being matters, in history and society also contributed to people's engagement. The media coverage contributes to this feeling of importance of being in the middle of events, and thus contributes to peoples sustained engagement in the protest.

6. How the Shies movement became successful

6.1 Preexisting organizations

I have showed how the creation of a organization and a new coalition, Pomore ne Pomoika and the Interregional Coalition "STOP-SHIES", were crucial for mobilization and the ability to carry out coordinated actions. However, most of the actors in the protest were not new. There existed a civil society, a political society, an environmental movement, ties between activists and ties between people, and places to meet, before the protests. In this section I show how organizations and movements existing prior to the protest were decisive for the mobilization to and organization of the Shies protests. The interview by Popugaeva (2019) with Komi activist and entrepreneur Viktor Vishnevetskii illustrates well how this served as mobilizing structures in the southern Arkhangelsk Region.

"As soon as I saw the publication on the Internet, I checked this information. I went to the activists of "[Clean] Urdoma" [(Chistaia Urdoma)], to Svetlana Babenko, asked her what was going on there, what was being built. They say: "Yes, we are building a landfill." And I tell them: "Do you mind if I come to you?" They answered: "Yes, we are waiting for you." On the weekend I got to them, and on this day, August 11, they were collecting signatures against the construction of the landfill in their house of culture. At the time when I was there, there were already 840 signatures." (Popugaeva 2019).

Several organizations existing prior to the protests have contributed in different ways to the success of the Shies movement. Chisty Sever 29, Chisty Urdoma, The Union of Gardeners and 42 are all organizations that existed before the protests broke out, that in different ways worked with the garbage issue and became important actors in the protests. Chisty Sever 29, Chisty Urdoma and 42 are environmental organizations, in the coalition. Chisty Sever 29 and Chisty Urdoma are local grass root organizations based in Severodvinsk and Urdoma, respectively.

Some of the organizations involved in the protest have been more influential than others. There is large uncertainty in the number of estimated protestors, and it is not always clear what organization organizes a rally. In most reports of protests an individual is reported to have organized the rally. These individuals may be involved in one or more organization, and some even change their role throughout the protest. With all of this in mind, looking at the numbers of protestors at the different protest actions in Arkhangelsk and Severodvinsk and what organizations were the organizers of the actions it is clear that the large protests are organized by two organizations. In Severodvinsk by The Union of Gardeners of Severodvinsk and Pomore ne Pomoika and in Arkhangelsk by Pomore ne Pomoika. It is also clear that people associated with different actors in the non-systemic opposition is involved in organizing the large rallies. The smaller rallies, less than 500, are organized mostly by political parties. Mostly the systemic opposition by SR and KPRF, but also Yabloko and the organizations Free North organizes a small protest. This shows that neither of these organizations have a constituency ready to get mobilized. The spoiler protests by SR and KPRF, often organized at the day before or after or even at the exact same time, are always small, and whether they take part in the larger protests or not does not seem to affect the number of protestors present. The non-systemic opposition party PARNAS, although they have participated in the protest, doesn't seem to play a big role, neither in organizing or mobilizing to the protests.

To sum up: Looking at the number of protestors KPRF, SR, Yabloko and Svobodniy Sever seems like insignificant organizations, on their own, when it comes to mobilizing for protest actions. Conversely Pomorie ne Pomoika and The Union of Gardeners of Severodvinsk seem very important for mobilizing large numbers of people.

6.1.1 Handling the Spoilers

Systemic parties and system integrated civil society was also present before the protests started, and are present throughout even though, as shown above, comparison of number of protestors at different rallies suggest that the role of the systemic parties in mobilization has not been important. A comparison with the 2015 Trucker strikes show how strategic decisions made by the liberal organizers may have contributed to the protests being sustained. In the 2015 truckers strike the infighting between systemic and non-systemic actors led to demobilization (Østbø 2017). There has been infighting in between the organizers of the Shies protests, but the infighting has primarily been in between the non-systemic actors, thus the dynamic described by (Østbø 2017), where systemic organizers attentive to signals from above has made the movement's action toothless, and non-systemic actors have pushed politization that was not very welcomed by the masses, is not visible in the Shies protest. The below excerpt shows how strategic decisions have prevented this dynamic, and thus may have contributed to delaying demobilization:

Activist interviewee: We from the first steps claimed that no political movement, no political force will lead that protest, never. No political party, no political movement, no even single politician will lead the protest. We have relations with them, we are asking for support, not financial, but support in media, there may be laws, that they are taking, deputies., but we never give a preference to any of them, and never let them lead, we are side by side.[...] Because if you want a real real massive protest, you will not give a preference to any political idea, any religious wiew, or anything else, only common idea to stop landfill on Shies. Period. [...] Just imagine that Navalny leads that protest, just imagine that. How many people will go for him, and how many will not. I think the protest will be five, ten times smaller in that case. So we took that important decision. That's very hard because there were tries to lead us, and sometimes it's very hard to push back.

A: So, in your opinion, which political parties support you?

Activist interviewee: All of them excluding United Russia. But in our country, it's hard to openly support. So, they, I would say so: I can't say that party supports, no, its members, personally, yes. I think very very many of them, but not the party, because the party is, uhm, it moves with decisions of leader in Moscow, and they are very very scary of Putin and...

Avoiding to let political parties, systemic or non-systemic, have a leading role in organizing a protest, and not pushing politization as an organizers may be a fruitful strategy for organizing

sustained mass protests in Russia, large enough to get concessions and the desired social change.

To be fair, using the concept of spoilers to describe systemic parties, and other systemic actors, is problematic. The organizations may function as spoilers, however that is to overlook dynamics within the parties. As an illustration of the above point, an activist interviewee has the following to say about individual deputies from the systemic parties in the regional legislature:

Activist interviewee: Oh, they are afraid, but some of them are brave.

6.1.2 Horticulturalists

The Union of Gardeners Severodvinsk were already involved in protesting the proposed landfill by Rikasikha, a village in between Severodvinsk and Arkhangelsk, close to some of the dacha² associations organized under The Union of Gardeners Severodvinsk (Severnaia nedelia 2018). The organization was the organizer of many of the first anti-Shies rallies in Severodvinsk, and managed to mobilize quite considerable amounts of people to the protests. Some times a lot more people than the Svobodnyi Sever movement. The comparatively higher levels of protestors in Severodvinsk compared to Arkhangelsk in the start of the protest, might be attributed to the population already being mobilized by the Union of Gardeners Severodvinsk. The Union of Gardeners and Svobodnyi Sever have attended each others rallies, and there have been reports of the liberals helping the Union of gardeners with organization of rallies. However, the Union of Gardeners have been hesitant to cooperation with the other parts of civil society within the frames of united protest days and the coordinating organizations. Although the Union of gardeners of Severodvinsk have protested against the Shies dump, the focus of the rallies organized by them has been more on the dump in Rikasikha. Thus the demands for the Severodvinsk mayor (Skubenko) to step down are just as visible as the demands for the regional governor's (Orlov) resignation.

Stammler and Sidorova (2015) find that the dacha is a space that is often more social, and with more communication than the neighborhood. Thus one can imagine that this is a place where grass-root protests can emerge. The dacha is no insignificant place. In Levada polls 24% of respondents answer that they spent the 2018 summer holidays on the dacha, and this

² A dacha is a cabin, very often combined with a quite substantial allotment garden.

makes it the most popular place to spend the 2018 summer (Zorkaya 2019, 127). Gardening also ranks amongst the activities that gives Russians the most happiness (Zorkaya 2019, 124). Coupled with the facts there are 27 million gardeners and dacha households in Russia (ILO 2009) the following claim of an ILO (2009) report makes sense: "[T]he Union of Horticulturalists [Gardeners] of Russia [...] [are] capable of influencing electoral campaigns of all levels" (ILO 2009, 21). Indeed the Shies case shows that the Union of Gardeners can be a considerable political force. In this case they have been amongst the organizations showing dissent in the more consensual form. The Shies case shows that they have the ability to mobilize masses for protests.

6.1.3 Environmental organizations

The environmental organizations mentioned here always take part in the large rallies organized by Pomorie ne Pomoika and The Union of Gardeners of Severodvinsk, depending on what city the environmental organization belongs to. They never take part in the spoiler rallies organized by KPRF and SR. There existed organizations that had good knowledge on the garbage issue, and they had been actively promoting recycling in the region. A local awareness, and knowledge about the issue might have contributed to the strength of the moral shock, and thus contributed to mobilization.

The Severodvinsk based environmental organization Chisty Sever 29 has been active in the protests from the very beginning, and they are visible throughout the protests. Their leader Mandarynkin has held countless of speeches, and been very present in the media. When the Interrregional Coalition STOP-SHIES wanted to participate with a candidate in the 2020 gubernatorial elections, Mandarynkin was elected as their candidate.

42 is a regional youth environmental movement (*dvizhenie*) based in Arkhangelsk (Ecological movement 42 2021). I want to remind the reader that this is a movement I know through my previous work in the Norwegian environmental youth organization NU. I have been too involved to not be quite biased, thus I will keep this short. 42 have not been amongst the organizations most visible at the protests, however their flag is spotted on several photos of the protests in Arkhangelsk, and they have been amongst the many actors that have spoken from stage at rallies. People from 42 have never been the organizers of rallies, unlike people from many of the other organizations mentioned. For many years they have worked with

promoting recycling, primarily in Arkhangelsk, in cooperation with the Arkhangelsk garbage recycling factory (AMPK). The one point I want to make regarding 42's role in the protests is that their extensive work to engage citizens in recycling, in both the city of Arkhangelsk and the Arkhangelsk region, may have contributed to citizens' sense of ownership to the garbage issue and thereby increased citizens' readiness to protest.

It seems the companies and authorities responsible for the construction of the Shies landfill have not counted on the public's ability to critically evaluate the information materials they have created. One thing I have learned from my previous work with the Russian environmental movement is that they have accumulated an incredible knowledge about waste. In other words: There is a vast amount of recycling nerds in the Russian environmental movement. And they have different specialties. Many know a lot about waste management in other countries, how to live a zero-waste lifestyle, the regulatory framework for recycling of batteries, here are plastic nerds, composting nerds, and all kinds of other expertise. This means there is a capacity to critically evaluate waste policy and information about it, and to present this critique with at least some credibility. This helps delegitimize the usual technocrat arrogant attitude of authorities, expressed in claims that the general population has a lacking "cultural level" and that protestors don't know what they are talking about.

Jasper (1997) highlight the knowledge intensity of environmental protest, and the importance of scientific reports for creation of the rhetoric (Jasper 1997, 285). As shown earlier this production of knowledge has not been limited to civil society. State institutions like the agency for water resources, Rosvodresursy, have delivered expert evidence or advice that has contributed to the rhetoric of the protesters and thereby the legitimation of the protests. In addition to the efforts by environmental organizations above in spreading knowledge on waste treatment and recycling, Greenpeace Russia's has had a role as an important apolitical producer and spreader of waste expertise amongst grass-environmental organizations, as they have in Russia in general (Wu and Martus 2020, 502-503).

6.1.4 The recycling factory

Business interests in the garbage industry have taken part in the protest according to Kommersant's sources (Vinogradovna, Vasilieva, and Voronov 2018). The business interests they refer too at least includes the Arkhangelsk garbage recycling factory. They have actively opposed the regional garbage policy, at least in on social media. AMPK's site on Vk actively

engages with the Vk sites of Pomorie ne Pomoika, 42 and Chisty Sever 29 (AMPK 2021). The motivation for their engagement in the issue seems clear: AMPK is excluded from the household waste market as a consequence of the garbage reform. But they continue to work with other kinds of waste (News29.ru 2021).

The story of what has happened with the AMPK is an important part of how the protestors in Arkhangelsk present the garbage reform on social media and in interviews. The story provides substance to the narrative of corruption and mismanagement by the ruling elite, by being a local example. The story in short goes like this: High officials in Moscow, Putin's friends, use the garbage reform as a way to tax people and take this tax directly in their own pockets. Fees for citizens are artificially high, not corresponding to the level of services provided. These very profitable contracts are provided well connected elites through corrupt tenders. Existing local garbage business are collateral damage. In Arkhangelsk the garbage reform so far has meant dismantling of the existing infrastructure for collecting recyclables. The regional government has invited the AMPK and the environmental organizations to discuss the issue (News29.ru 2021). In general, my impression from reading the news on the Shies protest is that many of those involved as organizers of protests are entrepreneurs.

6.1.5 FBK

The Anti-Corruption Foundation (FBK) is founded by Navalny (Flikke 2020, 50). It is commonly referred to as the Navalny Office (*Shtab Navalnogo*). In the Shies protest they have not been very visible. Yet, I think FBK's role in the protest should not be overlooked. Firstly, some developments suggest that the fact the local FBK office haven't been very visible is a successful strategy of local former FBK activists to aid the protests. Secondly, I argue that the experience people gained from their work with the local FBK office in organizing protests has been important for successful mobilization. Thirdly, the stories of corrupt elites communicated, to a large part, by FBK and Navalny has provided protestors with a background for interpretation of what is happening at Shies and has thereby FBK's activities have contributed to legitimization of the protests.

In August 2017 FBK opened an office in Arkhangelsk, but this was closed on the 2nd of October 2018 (Varenik 2018b). The closure of the office can be interpreted as a strategic decision. The former leader of the office, Aleksander Peskov, has uttered that the closing of the office was because of lack of funds (Barysheva 2018). The movement (*dvizhenie*)

Svobodnyi Sever created in October 2018 had a central and organizing role in the very first anti-Shies protests in Severodvinsk and Arkhangelsk, and the flag of the organization and the people associated with it appear at most of the protest actions throughout the Shies protests. Svobodnyi Sever's goal is the development of civil society as stated on their Vk-page (Svobonyi Sever 2021). Deutsche Welle reports that the movement is made up of former coordinators in the local Navalnyi office, and that the movement was made to hinder the import of Moscow waste to the Arkhangelsk region (Barysheva 2018). These people have occupied a central position in the movement throughout the protests. They have been central in forming the organizations that brought the different actors in the movement together, Pomorie ne Pomoika and later the Interregional Coalition STOP-SHIES.

Activist interviewees confirm that people associated with FBK played an important part as organizers in the Shies movement in general. A crucial point I want to make here is that FBK-activists' central role is controversial. People participating in the early stages of protest have been dissatisfied that people earlier involved in the Navalny office had a central role at the protests (Krasnaia Vesna 2018). The interview excerpt below also shows how FBK's is controversial amongst activists and how their activities are observed with suspicion, by some:

Activist interviewee 1: Here is this regional Navalny office, there was the Navalny office, and many people know each other in this office. And when the presidential campaign ended, the office also finished, and they needed something to do. And they chose to protest against prices in public transport, after they protested in pension reform. So they became professional protest people, and so, when they have good experience in protest, so that is why they have very good campaign against Shies, and [Name, removed anonymity] was in this Navalny office. And the campaign Pomorie ne pomoika, he invented this campaign, and the name of this campaign, his idea.

Activist interviewee 2: It is very good when some protest starts to have some people with experience. They can suggest some system of connection. They know what is more important than other. And we also have several people who have more experience than other, because a lot of people don't have any experience. They did very important thing, they suggest system of connection, it is telegram chats, it is better than nothing, because people trying to call somebody, and have contact in V Kontakte, and they don't know what is more effective. For example for us it was very effective to create thematic groups, for example and mass media-chat, agitation materials chat, and others, it is more effective. And also this people know that it is

very important for every public campaign to create some slogan, and the slogan “Pomorie ne pomoika” was their creation.

I argue that the knowledge and strategic focus of people coming from FBK and the Navalny presidential campaign has been important for the success of the protests. In addition to their experience with internal organization of a movement and production of a successful campaign, as illustrated by the quote above, interviewees highlight that the people from FBK have brought with them knowledge on how to engage with the media. This might have contributed to the massive media coverage of the Shies issue and made it impossible for government friendly media and the Russian government itself to ignore Shies. The crowdfunding for paying informational materials the fines of activists is also organized by the people coming from FBK, and some interviewees accuse them for "taking all the money". Crowdfunding is a well established skill in the FBK (Flikke 2020, 69). The protests emerge within a discourse where the opposition is framed as being paid by and serving foreign interests (Flikke 2020, 8, 57). Showing that you get money from fellow nationals is a strategy for adapting to this discourse. The crowdfunding skills of FBK are thus not only important for paying fines and making it financially possible for people to continue being engaged in the protest, as one interviewee highlights.

In general there is a difference in the homemade and the premade posters on the Pomorie ne Pomoika organized actions. Whereas the homemade posters mostly feature anti-Shies slogans there is always a heap of premade posters shaming individuals in United Russia and other people in organizations closely tied to the regime, like the All-Russian People's Front. The posters have a professional design, sharing graphic features of the Pomorie ne Pomoika campaign. They feature pictures of individuals and the text "Toxic!", "Shameful regiment of the Arkhagnelsk region" and "Party of crooks and thieves" together with it's logo. Party of crooks and thieves is an anti-United Russia slogan of Navalny used in connection with the 2012 presidential elections (Flikke 2020, 43).

Even though most people might not like Navalny, they might believe in him and the corruption revealed by FBK. The FBK has "created a master frame about corruption and mismanagement [of Russia by the ruling elite, (my int.)] (Flikke 2020, 187). Without this master frame on the workings of Russia as a political system, how it distributes wealth, and knowledge of who preys on the Russian budget, the narrative of the people active in the Shies

protests could not have been as rich, coherent, and strong. The Chaika family, and Igor Chaika especially, was already established as a symbol of corruption, greed and gluttony. FBK has contributed to this (Navalny 2015). In section 6.4 on motivation to protest I show how interviewees see Shies in relation to corruption and mismanagement.

6.1.6 City wide social media groups

In studying the social media connected to the Shies protests Poupin (2021) find that "Several dozen local (city life or protest) groups became actively involved in the struggle: they were connected to large personal non-activist networks, unlike political opposition communities" (Poupin 2021). Large local groups in V Kontakte, both general city groups/channels like "Typical Severodvinsk" and more specialized ones like the group of "Union of Gardeners Severodvinsk" are used for fundraising and mobilization by. When a channel like "Typical Severodvinsk", with over 80 000 followers, in a city of 120 000 encourage people to come to protests it is reasonable to expect that it contributes to mobilization (Tipichnyi Severodvinsk 2019; SSRGS 2019).

From immersing in this Shies and Arkhangelsk part of Runet I have the impression that there is a clear inverse relationship between belonging to the system and having a successful social media account. Across platforms, from Vk to Instagram, the systemic opposition, and not the least the systemic position, seem to have few followers, few views and little engagement. As both Poupin (2021) and expert interviewees stress, social media has been a vital part of the protests. Ledeneva (2013, 149) sees grass-root organization through the internet, as a possibility for holding Russian authorities accountable for their informal governance, and thereby promoting the rule of law.

6.2 Changes in Russian public opinion

An activist interviewee, when talking about how this protest came about, emphasize what they see as an all-Russian development towards people losing their patience with the regime. An other interviewee expresses this more directly by letting off some steam:

Activist interviewee: All the situation which we have in our country. Including the time where we have Putin, and Putin, I am tired from Putin.

Interviewer: How does this relate to Shies?

Activist interviewee: Everybody is tired of Putin, and from... and everybody don't see the real future from our country, the real good future.

These interviews, where interviewees are explaining the Shies protests partly as a result of general changes in public opinion, led me to look at the data available. I conclude that these interviewees might well be right. "Putin is really popular" is the story normally told by commentators. However, if we look at the polls there are several shifts in Russian public opinion just prior to the Shies protests that possibly form part of the reason for why the Shies protest turned out to become so big. In the second quarter 2018 opinion polls reveal a dip in the approval ratings of the incumbent president and at the same time a considerable increase in the willingness to protest (Shulman 2018; Levada-Center 2021a). The arguments presented here rest on polling of Russian citizens. I could not find data on the regional level. The arguments rest on the assumption that the trends in opinions are somewhat similar in the Arkhangelsk region to the trends in Russia as a whole. This may well be false, but as the Arkhangelsk region is neither a general outlier (as one could expect for example Moscow or Chechnya to be), and considering the shifts in opinion are quite pronounced, I regard it as probable that the trends in Arkhangelsk are similar. I regard it as use of the best data available.

The willingness to take part in both economic and political protest as measured in surveys made a jump just before the Shies protests broke out. From March to July 2018 the share of respondents answering that they would take part in a mass protest if it happened in their city raised from 8 to 28% for economic protests and 6 to 23% for political protests (Levada-Center 2021a). The numbers were comparatively stable before and after this (Levada-Center 2021a). Similarly a vaguely put question by Levada on the legitimacy of street protests hints at a quite significant shift towards more positive attitudes to protest from August 2017 and November 2018 (Zorkaya 2019, 94). A general shift in attitudes to protests in Russia might be part of the explanation of why the protests became so big.

There was a significant dip in the president's approval ratings just before the start of the Shies protests. According to state's Foundation of Public Opinion (FOM) cited in Shulman (2018)³ the percentage of respondents that answer that they would have voted for the incumbent president drops from a 69% high in the end of January 2018 to 45% by the end of November

³ The data cited by Schulman was no longer available on FOMs webpage.

the same year. The chunk of the drop happening within June (from 60% to 48%), just before the Shies protests start (Shulman 2018). The drop in approval in the same time frame is also reflected in polls by the Levada-Center (2021b). This might have led to authorities being more careful with the use of force.

The Russian public opinion on environmental issues provides a cue for how the Shies protests could get so big. When Russians are asked what are the most important environmental issues their country is facing, dealing with garbage comes out as number one (Ipsos 2018). To sum up: A protest somewhere in Russia, on the garbage issue, starting in the summer of 2018 is not that surprising given the data on Russian public opinion presented above.

6.3 Balancing consentful and dissentful contention

In this section I will show how the Shies movement continuously have employed compliant repertoires all through the protest, whilst gradually moving into using increasingly contentious methods. The moves towards more contentious methods were justified by referring to the compliant methods not working. The activists think about their actions as strategic, in relation to authorities:

Activist interviewee: To my mind, stopping the illegal construction works, freezing them, is a big achievement for the people. The main thing right now is that the landfill is not being built. So now it is just a matter of waiting. The authorities are in a zugzwang position, they don't know what to do next. And we are waiting, and we will stand until the end.

People involved in the protests base strategy on their understanding of the workings of their environment, including the authorities:

A: Why nobody stopped the protest?

Interviewee: Haha, good question. And if I try to explain it will be necessary to use the exact words. The structure of power in Russia is built vertically. At the same time, in this vertical, a person occupying a specific position does not try to show initiative. Because when you don't show initiative there is a chance that the higher leadership will not punish you.

The success of a social movement depends on how well the goals of the movement align with regime norms (Cheskin and March 2015, 270). However, protestors want to change something, thus a balance must be struck between challenging and aligning with general

norms (Jasper 1997, 287). The gradual move towards more contentious methods, seems to have been successful in striking this balance, and the goals of the Shies movement seems to have been *suitably* ambitious.

6.3.1 Citizens appeals

Several interviewees mention that citizen's appeals (*Обращения граждан*) were tried in the initial stage, but that it lead nowhere. Indeed formal channels were used continuously, to address all kinds of issues related to Shies. For example, a citizen delivered an appeal on the subject of changes in waterflow due to road construction in connection to Shies to the Dvinski-Pechora Water Basin Administration of the Federal Agency for Water Resources on 11th of January 2019. The appeal was forwarded to the Arkhangelsk Interdistrict Environmental Prosecutor's office and the head of the Directorate of the Federal Service for Supervision of Natural Resources (Rosprirodnadzor) in the Arkhangelsk Region, and got back with an orientation that the recipient of the appeal was not competent on deciding the matter (Rosvodresursy 2019).

Not only individuals, but also organizations have used formal channels. Also city wide social media groups like "Urdoma online" have promoted use of official channels as a means to halt the Shies landfill (URDOMA Online 2019). The organization Pomorie ne pomoika delivered documents for a citizens' appeal to the election commission six times, in an attempt to get a referendum on banning the import of waste and practically reversing the garbage reform by giving back the municipalities the responsibility for handling of waste (Mikusheva 2019). By using the opportunity of citizens' appeals, regardless of the prospects for success, the protestors can say that "they tried, but no one listened". This thereby serves as a legitimation of using other, less compliant repertoires. The Shies protesters have continuously played by the book. They have not transferred into more dissentful contention without a thorough legitimation by first trying the compliant consentful methods for affecting policy change.

6.3.2 Sanctioned protests

The first rallies in Arkhangelsk and Severodvinsk, up until 7th of April 2019, were all approved by the city administration. For protestors the drawback of only organizing rallies approved by the authorities is that one will only be allowed to protest in remote places, a known approach to unwanted protest by Russian authorities (Flikke 2020, 193). As one

activist interviewee notes: "It was outside the center of the town in quite remote location, so the authorities gave us a ground where we couldn't be seen, although many people came there." The same activist interviewee underlines that in the beginning "[...] it was only about peaceful and agreed actions, by the administration". (S)he makes it clear that this is a strategic choice to avoid being suppressed.

6.3.3 The Shies protest – political, social or ecological?

In section I turn to the distinction between "political" and "social" protest in Russian discourse. Several scholars point to a protest being political in Russia going hand in hand with it being framed as illegitimate by authorities (Flikke 2020, 226; Østbø 2017, 282). The Shies protest was clearly politicized and political at the time of interviews, with demands of the governors' resignation being one of the two main demands of the Shies movement. The interregional coalition "STOP-SHIES", a broad coalition, a coalition that included several of the least "political" Bessrochka-initiatives, had gaining representation as one of their goals. Yet the protests apparently enjoyed widespread legitimacy, in news, amongst parties, both systemic and non-systemic, and not the least amongst the many people that actively took part in the protest. The protests were not met with massive police forces, and authorities ruling over law enforcement thereby help communicating the protests' legitimacy. This makes an interesting case for scrutinizing the use and meaning of "political" in this context.

The section presents and substantiates a core argument in this thesis. Namely: That the Shies protests, in a Russian context, can be argued to be ecological or social as opposed to political forms a crucial basis for their success. This is part of the balancing between conforming to and challenging regime norms. The claim that the governor "Orlov must go" was very visible during the protests, a clearly political claim. How is this navigated? One activist interviewee tell that the organizers of the protests didn't intend to make any such political demands, but some people just came to the protests with such posters. Another activist interviewee similarly claims:

Activist interviewee: We do not force the politics questions. Never did. We absolutely know that any protest, any protest grows to a political level. It is inevitable, when authorities do not listen to protester, it's inevitable. It will be political.

Not forcing the politics question appears to be a strategic move by the organizers. I discuss this further in summing up this section on "political protest".

I start off this section by arguing the relevance of the distinction between "political", "social" and "ecological" in this particular case based on the interview data. I then show how interviewees perceive the nature of a protest, whether it is political or social, as an independent variable explaining repression. Towards the end of the chapter I analyze the meaning interviewees attach to "political" and "social" with use of Lyons (1983, 53-54) distinction between descriptive and expressive meaning. This analysis concludes that (1) the expressive meaning of "political protest" is derogatory and delegitimizing, thus supporting the arguments of Cheskin and March (2015) and Østbø (2017, 282) that adding "political" to "protest" is used as way of delegitimizing dissent. Further (2) I argue the descriptive meaning of "political protest" is fluid, but primarily connected to the suspicious motivation of the organizer, and (3) that the fluidity of the term "political protest", and that others' motivation always can be put into question, provides the basis for discursively challenging what might seem very clear, namely that the Shies protest is political. (4) Counter to Robertson (2010, 180) and Cheskin and March (2015, 268) that see the use of "political" marking illegitimacy as top-down discourse, the interviews suggest that protesting activists also engage in the reproduction of this discourse and suggest that only very few challenge the derogatory meaning of "political".

6.3.4 Why does "political" matters, and what can it explain?

In section 3.4 I have showed that scholars have highlighted the distinction between political and social protests in the Russian context. In the following I will use interview quotes to show that this distinction has relevance also in this particular case. Whether something is political, social or ecological is significant to, and has meaning to the interviewees. In all interviews the interviewees express opinions on whether the Shies protest, another protest, individuals or an organization is political. Most are eager to explain to me, engage in an exploration with other interviewees or defend their or their organization or actions as apolitical. Asking whether a protest is political, and exploring it's meaning seems to be relevant to the interviewees and seems to me to be a truly relevant questions in this context. Toward the end of this section I will show the causal power interviewees link to "political". In other words, what does something getting "political" lead to? What can it explain? The focus is still on "political protest".

In focus group F the interviewees disagree, quite strongly, on whether the Shies protest is a political, social or ecological protest and whether all protests are political or not. The

discussion on this last for quite a while, is heated from the start, and gets so heated (yet polite/friendly) in the end that transcription is difficult and partly impossible. After a long discussion one interviewee is too tired of this discussion, and suggests to move on, but another finds the heated discussion interesting, engaging and wants to continue:

Activist interviewee 1: Maybe next question? It is very difficult.

A: Yes ok. Uhm....

Activist interviewee 2: No, why? We can continue on this question!

In the end I choose to move on as most of the interviewees seem exhausted from this question, and I am too. The heat of the discussion makes it clear that the question of whether the Shies protest is political or not and what constitutes political and social protest indeed matters to these activist interviewees.

Some interviewees more explicitly express that the meaning of the word "political" is interesting, when I bring up the discussion:

Activist interviewee: (...) And you know, for example in Norway there are very many of organizations that unite people not on political basis, but on some common working. Ecological or any other kinds of activities. It is now starting in Russia. Massively.

A: So, when you say, when you use the word political like this, you use it as, in opposition to ecological, so what...

Activist interviewee: Ohh, oh, that's very interesting question. (...)

No other questions posed to this activist interviewee provides a similar response. This is thus of the questions that (s)he finds more meaningful and in the continuation of the interview it is clear that the interviewee finds the question very interesting because of the normative connotations the word political carries in this context.

Interviewees treat whether or not something is political as an independent variable explaining repression. For example one interviewee explains the absence of repression in the Shies protest by referring to the apolitical nature of the Shies protests. As the quote below shows:

A: So, why do you think it is not criminal sentences here, but there is in Moscow?

Activist interviewee: [*Translator's translation*]: Because in Moscow such actions were on political topics, but we are not political here. [*my translation*]: Because there were political action and here the actions are not political.

Opposite, interviewees explain the repression of activists in the Shies protest by referring to the Shies protests being perceived as political by local authorities. Although the interviewees may differ in describing the Shies protest as political, in both cases the interviewees see a protest being political as leading to repression.

One activist thinks that once the authorities perceive an issue as political, solutions are perceived as political and good policy development by the authorities ceases. Then shows how (s)he thinks that if the authorities perceive a protest as a "political protest" the protestors will be treated as "political activists" and then (s)he continues to explain the repressive measures it will lead to:

Activist interviewee: [...] But anyways the regional administration already perceives this protest against Moscow trash as a political protest.

A: And what does that entail?

Activist interviewee: It means that people, that people on Shies who fight against the landfill, they are treated as political activists. They are marginalized and discriminated in the same way. Like, there are media campaigns to say that these people get American money, they use some facts from their personal life to spoil the reputation of these people. Invent some facts that don't exist. They try to scare people, for example in my apartment door they stole the peephole (*glazok*) and they started to call my house door (*domafon*) at night, and always at the same time, to piss them off, to make a personal unstable and stressed. [removed: anonymity] And participation in the protest may be used as a reason to discriminate a person in their personal life.

From the excerpts and discussion above it is clear that whether something is political or not matters to the activist interviewees. They also regard that if a protest or is political it will be met with repression.

6.3.5 The descriptive meaning of "political"

During the interviews I am trying to get a grip on the descriptive meaning the respondents include in "political". Respondents have different takes at what makes a protest political, they conceptualize it in different ways. The intentions, hopes and wishes of protestors, if protestors blame the government, and if so what level of government is blamed, whether the president is to blame or not, whether aiming at changing the government is an instrument for change in some policy, a goal in itself or pursued for personal wishes of power and money, whether most organizers or participants are from political parties or other organizations, if the protest

is organized in front of the city hall or not, if the protest happened in Moscow or other places, these are all examples of what interviewees refer to when they draw the line between political protest and other types of protest. Thus, the first of two main arguments in this section is: The descriptive meaning of "political" in "political protest" is fuzzy. However fuzzy the meaning is, the second argument is that at the core of the descriptive meaning of "political" lies intentions, and that intentions can be hidden provides for the debating and contesting of whether a protest is political.

Most interviewees talk about three different kinds of protests. Political, social and ecological. Sometimes they use these concepts as if they are mutually exclusive. If a protest is social it is not political. Sometimes they argue that a protest can be a little bit of both. Like this activist interviewee:

Activist interviewee: [...] The protest around Shies is not only ecological. [...]

A: So, if you say, it's not only ecological protest [...] Like, if it's not only ecological, what is it then?

Activist interviewee: Beside being ecological it's also political, because in our country ecological problems are often caused by the actions of the authority.

The activist interviewee further makes clear that by "actions of the authority" it is the actions of the governor, and not that of "Moscow".

In online chat another activist interviewee suggests several aspects making a protest political in responding to the question:

A: "In your opinion are the protests political? (...)"

Activist interviewee: Everyone has a different take on what's political. If we consider demand of Orlov's resignation as something that makes the whole protest political, then yes. Otherwise, the other aspects of a political protest, for example inclusion of federal political agenda, critique of the system as a whole, and participation in the elections, has been gradually increasing over time. BUT, the most significant raise has happened after 7th of April when the government has issued tens of fines to participants.

Firstly, this activist interviewee here explicitly states that there are different opinions on what is "political". Secondly the activist interviewee suggest several delimitations of what is "political". First of which is that demanding the head of the region's resignation makes the

protest political. This is suggested as something one could disagree on. The further delimitations of what makes a protest "political" are not presented as questionable, and I interpret this as this activist interviewee's take on what would for sure make a protest political. This includes including in the protest, I guess as in demands and/or in organization, the "federal political agenda, critique of the system as a whole, and participation in elections" (Activist interviewee), all of which, at least the first and the last, I would argue, are core functions of a democratic system, thus threatening the autocratic Russian regime.

Some interviewees make a distinction between what they themselves mean by "political" and what they perceive as the common meaning of the word. In one focus group with activist interviewees, I ask the question:

A: So uhm, the protest, what is your opinion, what do people think, in your opinion, are the protests political?

Activist interviewee 1: I think that...

Activist interviewee 2: (Interrupts, indistinguishable)

Activist interviewee 1: I think that part of people of course think that it is political protest, and of course part of initiative group [Shies activists] think it is political protest also, I don't know, because I can't say it's political protest, of course some initiative groups, some of people want not only to stop this building, but also they want change this government, because this government make this building possible, and if they stop this building, this government can make possible another building, in another place, in another town, so if we only stop this building it does not solve problem. Because Moscow must utilize their waste. But they don't want to solve this, the problem with the waste. They only want to uhm..., transport it from there.

A: So do you agree? What do you think, its political or not?

Activist interviewee 2: Every protest is political protest.

Activist interviewee 1: I don't agree.

I interpret this excerpt to show two things: First, there is disagreement on what means political. Secondly, some people think that whether a protest is political to what the protest is an instrument for. If it is an instrument for stopping Shies it is not political. If the protest is an instrument for changing the government, it does not make it political, as long as changing the government is an instrument for stopping Shies.

Several interviewees emphasize the motivation of the individual as key to distinguishing between political protests and social or ecological protests:

A: (Question translated like this, and directed at Activist interviewee 1) What do you think about the protest in general, is it political in general or are there different categories?

Activist interviewee 1: I think that there can be different kinds of protest. Because sometimes there can be protest when people go to strike because they have something with their territory, near their houses, and maybe they don't think about government, and president, and something like this.

Activist interviewee 2: And I, I think that it really can be different, because now we have this process with constitution, and if our protest was very political, I think that people will continue go to the street, go to the strike, and maybe we will have many people who go to the strike against this constitutional changes, but we don't have it, so that means, that just this problem with waste very disturb people, not the government. Mostly this situation.

After discussions of whether Moscow protests are political, one interviewee, with frustration at the interviewer, makes even more clear that whether a protest is political or social is really about the intentions and motivations of the protesters, in their view:

Activist interviewee 1: But, you must understand WHY people against a leader of some village. Because some people want to become leader? It is political. But if leader do something bad, for example, he start building a landfill, it is social.

This provokes the following response:

Activist interviewee 2: Hmm! That means people who against Putin and go to the Bolotnaia it's social protest, and not political.

The response shows how scrutiny of the descriptive meaning of political in this context opens up for questioning whether the most political protests, the reactions to fraudulent elections, are political.

There is no clear, definit, descriptive meaning of what is a "political protest". I is clear from the interview excerpts that "political" is a contested concept in this context. And I guess in at least in some additional spheres of Russian discourse, if not in Russia in general. The reason for it being a contested concept, I suppose, is that it is overshadowed by an expressive derogatory meaning. This is shown in the upcoming section.

6.3.6 The expressive meaning of "political"

The focus group with people associated with the organization Chisty Sever – Chistaia Strana (Clean North – Clean Country), an environmental youth organization in Arkhangelsk that did not participate in the protests, sheds light on the expressive meaning of political in this context.

A: [...] it seems like you work with some group called Eco Safu, maybe, because I see it's like you share each other's things, but is it like, you have cooperation with them, or you have cooperation with anybody else.

CS interviewee 1: The leader of this Eco Safu is also member of Chisty Sever, and also [this person] leads several project personally, and we cooperate with the youth parliament on the regional level. House of the youth, our regional organization. With the government of course.

CS interviewee 2: I think its important to say that we don't have any political issues, and we position ourselves as apolitical, non-political organization. Nothing that is connected to any political parts or any kind of political question, no issues at all.

At this point the interview has been going on for 10 minutes, and this is the first comment CS 2 provides. I want to stress that I haven't provoked this response, in any way I can see, directly. The word "political" is not mentioned by me nor any other interviewee before this point. Continuing:

CS interviewee 1: Yes.

A: Yes, I see. So, but, I, what then, because I don't understand, or may..., I don't understand what this means.

CS interviewee 3: They have no political issues, they are not working with political parties in no way, they are not making any positions about something that's going on at the political level, they don't make, how to call it, like they don't connect themselves with political parties in any way, like political...

CS interviewee 1: We never take part in a demonstration, and it doesn't matter it is demonstration that was organized by government, or by a protest organization, radical organization, radical parties. We don't take part in these demonstrations.

A: You work in a different way.

CS interviewee 2: In this time, we are working with ecological issues. [My comment: I sense that the primary feeling communicated by C.S interviewee 2 here is contempt.]

This sarcastic comment by CS interviewee 2 shows that Chisty Sever, by being apolitical and focusing on lectures instead of protest, are not simply occupying a niche in the flora of environmental organizations. In this comment CS interviewee 2 claims the moral high ground for the apolitical organizations, like their own. The argument here, by Chisty Sever affiliates, I interpret as follows: The environmental organizations that take part in demonstrations, or are political in any other way, are not really environmental, they are therefore not only less valuable but also fake in branding themselves as environmental. This is underlined by the following comment by CS interviewee 1:

CS interviewee 1: In our goals: Real solutions to real problem. It is our devis, our main idea.

CS interviewee 3: Well, now we are spending a lot of time discussing politics, ha-ha.

With this comment CS interviewee 3 effectively stops this part of the interview. It is clear that it is clear that the topic is sensitive and continuing this topic is not welcomed.

Asking for people I could interview with a different perspective I was told I would find it in the Bessrochka. I was told that normal people were there, all kinds of people, also those who supported Putin. Doing a focus group with people from Bessrochka I was hesitant to dig into the meaning of "political", as I was advised before a previous interview, not to talk so much about "political", as this was sensitive. After some time, I chose to introduce it carefully.

A: I'm going to ask you a difficult question, so you don't have to answer. Some people might say that it is political protest. Would you agree or disagree?

Bessrochka 1: I don't agree.

Bessrochka 2: There is a thin line between a political and an ecological protest. But right here, on "Bessrochka", we have an ecological protest. Some people who come here are from Yabloko, PARNAS, Navalny headquarters, Libertarians – all kinds of parties, but there is no common flag.

The instant response to the question is a defensive stance. This supports the claim that the word "political" implies something negative. This initial response is followed by a more reflecting response. Bessrochka interviewee 2 defends that the protest is ecological, yet I interpret that by referring to Yabloko, Parnas, Navalny headquarters and libertarians Bessrochka interviewee 2 defends his/her position against the imagined counter argument, namely that this protest is indeed political, and thereby Bessrochka interviewee 2 reveals

his/her expected counter argument, namely that the protest is political because people from Yabloko, Parnas, Navalny headquarters and the Libertarian party take part in the protest. As these are parties one could assume that "political" in this context be equaled simply to partisan. However, I would argue that as we know that these parties are the non-systemic opposition, and other parties are not given weight, but are just referred to as "all kinds of parties" the primary meaning of "political" here is communicated as encompassing the non-systemic opposition. This descriptive meaning fits well with a derogatory meaning within this context and it hints at the descriptive meaning being based on, and defined by, the derogatory meaning of the concept, and not the other way around.

Continuing where we left, we see that the question on "political protest" initiated a longer discussion:

Bessrochka 2: (...) but there is no common flag.

Bessrochka 3: Yes, there is. [R5.3 points to the flag].

Bessrochka 2: [laughs] –The flag of Urdoma municipality, right. We are not outside politics, but our goal is ecological, not political.

A: Do you agree?

Bessrochka 1: Yes.

A: Do you agree?

Bessrochka 3: I think that Bessrochka, just like [R5.1] said, is ecological only. But Shies in general is a political problem. Because Shies could only have happened in a country where corruption is so developed, courts are so underdeveloped, civil society is so underdeveloped. So I think, if we cannot influence the politics of the country, we will not be able to avoid Shies. Not only in Arkhangelsk Oblast, but also in other regions of Russia.

Bessrochka 2: We influence politics via ecology here.

Bessrochka 3: Yes.

The interviewees express agreement with the ideas that this protest can be ecological, as opposed to political, even though the protest is "not outside politics", deals with "political problems" like corruption, workings of courts, development of civil society and even though the protest "influence[s] politics". They do this as they as they perform what I interpret as a defense of their protest action, and this defense is triggered by the question: "Some people might say that it is political protest. Would you agree or disagree?". The thorough defense

triggered supports that "political" is used in a derogatory manner by those "Some people" that might say Bessrochka is political. I think it is fair to say that these interviewees see naming them or their protest "political" as an accusation.

This repeats itself in the interviews. Continuing in this interview where we left:

Bessrochka 2: Ecology is our point of pressure, but we still press the people who have authority. Because those who govern need to be governed. Ideally, it would be “the power of the people”, according to the 3rd article of our Constitution. But we are trying to make the authorities listen to the demands of the people. You can call this politics too, but without a flag.

Only after a thorough defense of their action, mixed with discussion of the empirical meaning of "political", one interviewee admits that this protest could be called "politics". That this admission is delivered only after speaking for a bit, showing mutual openness, and after defending one's position shows that to lift this veil of derogatory meaning some little kind of trust is needed.

The interviewees continue in an even less defensive, and more reflecting conversation:

Bessrochka 3: Sometimes it might seem that people who stand against Shies, stand only against the landfill. But in fact, we all stand for the raise of civil society, for making the authorities implement the Constitution,

Bessrochka 2: And listen to the people

Bessrochka 3: ...yes, for making them listen to the people and give us the rights that we must have. So, Shies is something bigger. It's not just a landfill.

Bessrochka 2: And it is not the only landfill planned. There is another one at the 30th kilometer, an inter-municipality landfill for Severodvinsk, Novodvinsk and Arkhangelsk. That area has most beautiful lakes, wonderful nature, recreation facilities. We wonder who chose that area. We will resist that too. There is waste operator, regional operator company, and it is implementing a scheme, it's just a fraud scheme to make money. If you want, you can always find this information about it online. We are strongly against this company. So it's not just about Shies. The range of problems is rather wide. We try to do what we can.

Bessrochka 3: Do you think the Shies protest can be called political? [Posed to Bessrochka interviewee 4]

Bessrochka interviewee 4 did not say anything after this question initially was posed by me to the group. Bessrochka interviewee 3 makes the move to include him/her in the discussion. The response is emotional:

Bessrochka 4: I don't know what to say. I used to be an absolutely apolitical person; I didn't even know the names of our deputies who represent the city in the City Assembly. I did not think about it before this Shies thing started. But when this injustice happened, I had to look up all those deputies, the Regional Assembly, and to make conclusions, and it made me learn their names for the first time. I am here only for ecological reasons, but when you understand that there is so much injustice (pause). Take Shies – they are fighting on and on, but the courts keep rejecting, delaying and what not. Of course, it ...

Bessrochka 1: is politics.

Bessrochka 4: ...cannot go on like that. And there is a good poem by a northern poetess, Olga Korzova. [Bessrochka 4: proclaims the poem].

One quote from Bessrochka interviewee 4 illustrates what I think goes on in almost the entire above paragraph. In the statement "I am here only for ecological reasons, but when you understand that there is so much injustice (pause)." Bessrochka interviewee 4 starts with a defense of his/her "pure" ecological motivations and continues by defending that more political motivations are legitimate in this case. Bessrochka interviewee 4 don't want to express explicitly that he/she has political motivations even as Bessrochka interviewee 3 puts the words in his/her mouth. This supports that "political" is primarily derogatory in this context.

In a focus group with activist interviewees, although there is disagreement on whether it is sensible to talk about protests that are not political, there is agreement between the interviewees that "political" is commonly seen as something bad:

A: So, for me, I don't understand this, why is it important if it is political, or social or ecological.

Activist interviewee 1: Because nobody is utilizing their political freedom [noise: not completely clear that the last word is freedom]

Activist interviewee 2: Because in our country political it is bad word.

Activist interviewee 1: Well, because politicians are deceiving.

Activist interviewee 2: Our, mass media try to make it some bad context.

A: Mhm

Activist interviewee 2: But in Norway it is normal to have political goal, it is not bad, but in our country, when somebody want to discredit, somebody say: it is political protest – they want only to change our government, but to change our government that is to want something bad for our country, so it is because of it, it is very important for us, and I think that...

A: Do you agree?

Activist interviewee 1: Yes

Activist interviewee 3: Yes I agree, becau..., but I think why it's have a bad, uhm, why it can be bad, because it means that somebody, somebody have some benefit from this protest

Activist interviewee 2: Mhm

Activist interviewee 3: Because our government don't think that some group of people really want to make the life and life of another people better. They think that somebody give money for this people and somebody would like to have benefit and like to change all of the people who at the top of our system.

Activist interviewee 2: because they have all the news, and their main values, it is money and power. And if somebody want to change something they think that they want money or power, or both.

This suspecting of dishonest intention of the protesters and the leaders of protest is brought by in an efficient way by naming them political. That naming a protest political implies that it has leaders that want power for powers sake or to enrich themselves repeats itself through the interviews. These ideas are also visible in other sources: Arkhangelsk governor Igor Orlov comments the Shies protests in interviews with Kommersant. In explaining the unprecedented size of the protests he argues that they are aimed at the elections and that the protest leaders have personal political ambitions (Voitsekhovskaia 2020; Vasileva 2019). By doing this he discredits the protests. Any attempt at seeking power is discredited.

In two interviews I ask towards the end if they agree that "political" has a delegitimizing expressive meaning. I get positive answers in both:

A: [...] I think, maybe it's like this: The political is equaled to the not legitimate, and bad, they use the word political to show that something is bad, and it is easier to repress it. Do you agree?

Activist interviewee: Yes, it is our culture, it is culture that our mass media (SMI), our TV channels translate for us, and of course if you see tv every day, you will adopt this position, [...] Of course many people think that political that is bad.

The response is similar in the other interview.

6.3.7 Extension of "political" as a derogatory term

I have showed how "political" has a derogatory meaning when coupled with "protest", in the term "political protest". However, I find that the derogatory or delegitimizing use of "political" is not limited the term "political protest". In the interviews "political" also has a derogatory expressive meaning coupled with "people", "activities", "activists", "slogans", "organizations", "person", "words" etc. However, "political" is not always used in a derogatory manner by the interviewees, as illustrated by the following quote:

Interviewee: About Igor Orlov: So he is just a political prostitute that shouldn't be in the governor's seat. I don't know. He is just a bastard. Well that's all.

Here political carries a descriptive and expressively neutral meaning, although the sentence is derogatory.

6.3.8 Summing up "political protest"

There are two main uses of the expression "political protest" in the gathered data. (1) A derogatory meaning, implying the attitude of disapproval. When used in this way the expressive meaning is imperative whereas the descriptive meaning is malleable, and subordinate. This is the most prevalent use of the word. (2) A descriptive concept, where the expressive meaning is neutral, or even approving, and subordinate to the descriptive meaning. This use of the word requires trust and a calm conversation. In a heated conversation the word is used in the disapproving way. The two uses of the word are confused with each other. This creates messy conversations and laughter.

The interview data shows that the distinction between "political" and "social" and its descriptive meaning is contested, that there exists competing descriptive conceptions of the distinction and that rejection of the distinction also exist. When it comes to the expressive meaning, rejection of "political" as a derogatory term is scarce in this sample. Reproduction of the derogatory meaning of political protest is not only a top-down discursive practice where the political is intentionally constructed to be derogatory as a means of delegitimizing

any competitors for power, but is also reproduced by those who challenge and question those in power.

Claiming that an act is not political is to claim its legitimacy. It can simply be to claim that the search for power, or criticism of power, is not driven by one's personal ambition or greed, but for the common good or for protecting your material rights. Whether some action is political or not, in this context, is at least partly defined by motivation, and this provides for suspicion.

Claiming to be a social or ecological protest doesn't matter, once you move from consensual to openly dissentful contention. Because the act of claiming you are not political, is an attempt at creating a space where it is possible to disagree with the government.

By letting political demands appear bottom-up, or by presenting the story that this happened, the organizers manage not to lose legitimacy, yet the protest can politicize. Some organizers expressed political goals yet didn't promote politicization. This can be seen as an adaptation to contextual constraints. Protestors balance both appealing to and challenging common understandings (Jasper 1997, 287). If we look at the claims of protestors in this way, to argue that the protests are not political can be seen as a strategy adopted by protestors. It is a way of both adapting to and challenging the existing common understandings. It challenges the empirical meaning of "political" but does not challenge the derogatory expressive meaning of the word. To claim that the protests are not political seems to be a strategy primarily originating bottom-up within the protest.

6.4 Motivation to protest

Data from 1997 to 2000 on protest from the Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD) suggests the vast majority of demands of protestors had a conservative, and material nature (Robertson 2010, 46; 59). By conservative nature is meant that they are primarily concerned with protecting the status quo and upholding the law. This general description is based on descriptions by the MVD mostly no longer than one sentence (Robertson 2010, 59). If we were to describe the demands of the Shies protests shortly it would certainly be something in the line of "halting the construction of a landfill at Shies". Given the landfill was deemed illegal, it would nicely fit with the pattern of protest demands in the late 90ies, with mostly conservative and material demands. However, participants in movements always have a range of motivations (Jasper 1997, 81). Interviews provide the nuance a short description cannot

provide, and they show that the goals and motivation of those participating in the protest stretch well beyond the mere stopping of the Shies landfill.

The interviewees have told what they hope for, what surprised them, what makes them angry but also about more positive feelings. As shown earlier the tense and sometimes fearful situation contributed to feelings of unity. This section shows that the hopes of the protestors for what the Shies protest can lead to, representing a part of their motivation to protest, have a wide range, and are not limited to the two, narrow main slogans and official goals of the movement, namely the resignation of regional governor Igor Orlov and halting the construction of a waste management facility at Shies.

Activist interviewee: [...] The protest around Shies is not only ecological. It is also that the region of people are angry at the fact that Moscow puts the region in such a low, humiliating position. Arkhangelsk oblast builds submarines, it produces diamonds, it gives forests to other regions, and in exchange Moscow suggest that we take their municipal waste. So it was important to mark some self-identity for people. [...]

This story about the nuclear submarines, diamonds and timber flowing out of the Arkhangelsk region, and garbage coming back, is told again and again in media, in social media, in the interviews and is clearly amongst the most important arguments people present for their engagement in the protest. It is also highlighted as particularly important by Chmel, Klimova, and Mitrokhina (2020).

6.4.1 Moral shock

I asked most interviewees some version of the question "What has surprised you with Shies/in the Shies case?". The instant response of one activist interviewee to the question is:

Activist interviewee: Firstly, the project! I never think our government can do this very crazy thing. To take the waste all the way from Moscow to Arkhangelsk, and just dump it in the forest, it's very crazy, and must be very expensive. I think it would be much cheaper for Moscow to fix the waste problem there, and to make a better recycling system.

This is the shock. The activist interviewee's answer is filled with emotion. How the shock is interpreted makes it a moral shock, as the continuation of the excerpt shows:

6.4.2 Regional dignity

Activist interviewee: Now I more understand how our system works, that it is very corrupted, and that someone gets money from this, some director of a railway company or someone in Moscow or something. [...]

I am surprised that our government think people can endure everything. [...]

[About the Shies protests:] It is really unbelievable, I never think that people can be so concerned and troubled. [...]

I am surprised because I never think that people can be so cohesive. I know it only from, we have the second world war, then people were really stand together and cohesive. Shies shows it's still possible to unite people in some problem.

The activist interviewee quote shows a break of trust in the capacity of the authorities to carry out decent policy. Similar to Chmel, Klimova, and Mitrokhina (2020) I find that the offering of money from Moscow is seen as an insult by activist interviewees. Regional governor Orlov is named a prostitute for engaging in such a deal, by an interviewee. Below I provide an overview of the ways the shock is interpreted and framed.

Holm-Hansen (2020a, 13) suggests the Shies protest is partly a centre-periphery conflict. There is a sense of pride in Arkhangelsk. There is a repeated story that goes like this: The northern farmers were free, unlike the peasants in the feudal structures in the rest of Russia. Thus the northerners are not as prone to repression as other Russians. There is also the saying that people in Severodvinsk are Peter burgers, of decent, and are therefore similarly of a more freedom loving kind. A variation on this is provided by Radio Liberty's presentation of their media project covering the whole of North-Western Russia: "The inhabitants of the North are educated, European-minded people, they are not afraid not only of cold weather, but also of any life circumstances: they defend their rights, freedom of speech, and their native nature" (Sever.Reali 2021). These myths, creates resonance for slogans like "Free North".

Organizing political resistance based in a narrow liberal Moscow environment can be framed as not representative, and hamper the legitimacy of such efforts (Flikke 2020, 74). Organizing political resistance in the Arkhangelsk city, and Arkhangelsk villages in the middle of the taiga forest, having the image of being a movement of narrow, rich, western, liberal, muscovite elite, it is not on your list of problems. This may have made it harder to frame the protest as illegitimate.

Where the protestors speak for the good of the region, elites seem to regard the common good and good of Moscow as synonym: For example: Head of the all-Russian organization *Zelenyi Patrul* (Green Patrol) in the discussion on Shies and garbage reforms states the following: "Eternal resentment of the province against the capital and unwillingness to see the situation as a whole. After all, it is clear that there is nowhere to take out garbage from Moscow [...] therefore, it is very important to separate environmental issues from political interests." (Club of Regions 2019). In an interview with Kommersant (Vasileva 2019) governor Orlov presents a similar attitude, by for example stating the following:

"I am sure that it is in the interests of every inhabitant of the region to have relations with the largest, financially and intellectually capacious constituent entity of the Russian Federation. You need to live with the strong, help them and find benefit in each other." [...] We must learn to interact and do many things that are important for the country, and not to satisfy the political ambitions of the small towns. [...] If there is a clean Arkhangelsk region, but dirty Moscow, then Russia will be very dirty. Although I love the Arkhangelsk region very much, I am a citizen of the Russian Federation" Igor Orlov cited in Vasileva (2019).

None of the interviewees share this unselfish, or self-sacrificing, attitude on behalf of the region that some elites present in their defense of the construction of the landfill at Shies. On group loyalty and morality Jasper (2018) writes. "In most societies in history, loyalty to one's group has been considered the essence of morality" (Jasper 2018, 127). This may explain the strong reaction against Orlov. One interviewee talks with surprise of Orlov's actions and is disappointed as they thought higher of him. His apparent lacking loyalty with the region thus constitutes part of the moral shock.

6.4.3 Mismanagement and corruption

Interviews with participants in the Feb. 2019 Chisty Sever – Chistaia Strana Eco-Forum provides a peek at how pro-regime elites see the protest in Shies and the resistance to the garbage reform (Club of Regions 2019). Head of the all-Russian organization *Zelenyi Patrul* (Green Patrol) Andrei Nagibin claims that the population don't understand why they need to pay more for garbage removal when there is no improvement in the overall garbage management situation, and he sees this as a problem of communication (Club of Regions 2019). Nagibin's description of the population's perceptions fit with what the activist interviewees say about the garbage situation. However, contrary to seeing the combination of

increasing prices and lack of improved waste management as a communication problem the activist interviewees see it as a problem of mismanagement and corruption.

The protestors in social media, and some interviewees frame the garbage reform as rotten and corrupt at its core. It is talked about as a faked system for enriching the political elite. Hashtags like #garbagemafia (#mursornaiamafia) is widely used. These claims are substantiated drawing on how the garbage reform has been carried out locally. See the section on the Arkhangelsk waste recycling factory (AMPK).

In chat with an activist interviewee pose this question:

A: Why do you care about Shies, and who is responsible in your opinion?

Activist interviewee: I care because it's just unlawful and it's expected to be extremely harmful. And the reason why it happens is not because there's no other way, or the other way wouldn't be affordable, but because of overwhelming corruption and the commercial interest of Chaika family in particular. I don't want to let them become richer in expense of my land (and even though I cannot say that I've been to many places in Arkhangelsk oblast, I still can say that this is indeed the field of my special responsibility in my country).

The activist interviewee assumes responsibility for "his land". However, this quote shows how feelings are embedded in context and knowledge. A person that didn't know about the accusations made by FBK that the Chaikas are corrupt (Flikke 2020, 135-136), could not have this particular motivation, or at least it could not be as well founded, and thereby it could probably not be so strong. This shows how the FBK contributed to the Shies protests indirectly, through their previous information work. In section 6.5.1 I present how FBK has contributed indirectly with organizational knowledge.

6.4.4 Environmental and health concerns

Environmental concerns form some of the basis for the Shies movement (Holm-Hansen 2020a, 13). Not all activist interviewees mention their environmental concerns connected to the Shies landfill. Those who do present their main reason for concern to be the risk of water pollution of the river Northern Dvina, along which Arkhangelsk and Severodvinsk resides. This is reflected in slogans like: "*We drink this water!*" (Tipichnyi Severodvinsk 2019).

In an interview with 7x7 Komi activist and entrepreneur Viktor Vishnevetskii makes clear his motivation for participating in the protest:

"- Why are you against the Shies test site?

- It threatens the health of my relatives and me, people, nature. This threatens my financial interests, because living so close to the Moscow dump, even, one might say, under the dump on Shies, is a loss of image and a financial loss. And I want to live in the Komi Republic" (Popugaeva 2019).

Viktor refers to living and health. In several interviews with activists environmental concerns are uttered in connection with "home", the "earth", the "river" and the *heimat (rodina)*. One expert interviewee sees the connection with these powerful symbols as central to understand how Shies could make so many people angry. This resonates with Jasper's (1997) argument that "the most effective moral shocks are those embedded in, translatable into, and summed up by powerful condensing symbols"(Jasper 1997, 161).

6.4.5 Cumulative grievances

As shown: To the protestors, Shies is not only about a landfill, but also about corruption, drinking water and regional dignity. Part of the answers to the question how the Shies protest could become so big and successful is that these protests are not about Shies. In Arkhangelsk city Shies was the culmination of a local protest wave on a range of issues, from pension reform to local landfills and the garbage reform. And as they developed, also about radiation safety. Two of the interviewees, when asked the first question, to give a brief description of the developments in the Shies case, emphasize the developments leading up to Shies, arguing also that there are "cumulative effects". One interviewee argues that there has been a steady increase in protest activity in Arkhangelsk since March 2017.

6.4.6 Rikasikha

Comparison of the number of protesters in these first protests in the Arkhangelsk conglomerate provides for a hint at how the Shies protests could become so massive. There are more than double the number of protestors this first day in Severodvinsk than Arkhangelsk, even though Severodvinsk is a city almost half the size of Arkhangelsk (180 000 compared to 350 000, approximately). This pattern of relatively larger protests in Severodvinsk than in Arkhangelsk is consistent throughout the protest cycle. Although it is more pronounced in the beginning, up until February 2019. There is of course a great deal of

uncertainty connected to reported participants. The difference between lowest and highest number of reported protestors is generally larger in Severodvinsk than in Arkhangelsk. Severodvinsk also saw considerably more protest voting than Arkhangelsk in the 2020 gubernatorial elections hints at cumulative grievances playing a role and the Shies protest being not only about a landfill, not even only about garbage.

The first anti-Shies rally in Severodvinsk was originally planned as a protest against the construction of a landfill by the village Rikasikha and posters protesting Rikasikha were most prevalent (Zabolotnaia 2018a).

Activist interviewee: About 35 kilometers from Arkhangelsk. It is a conglomeration of three towns. And there were protests, protesting against the landfill there. No one back then, didn't hear about Shies, not once. And people of, citizens, people of Severodvinsk were protesting against this landfill in Rikasikha, so the mass of people were ready, were warm, uhm, were concerned by this, this, theme, about landfills.

Whether the massive anti-Shies protests are primarily the result of a wave, both organizers and protesters were already working, or whether it is about the number of grievances, is hard to tell, but it is reasonable to conclude that the preceding protests, and especially the ones on Rikasikha, has "had a massive impact on this case", to quote an interviewee.

The nuclear accident in Nenoksa was followed by an increased number of protestors at the rallies in Severodvinsk, and it seems reversed the demobilization that started after they got a complete concession on Rikasikha. Resistant to dangerous tests at Nenoksa appeared as one of three main slogans on the rally on the 22nd of September 2019 (Fokina et al. 2019).

6.4.7 Hopes

The interviewees have a range of goals, hopes and visions for what the Shies protest should and could lead to. These hopes form part of the reason they participate in the protest. Some interviewees express hope in the description of the Shies protest, they see it as part of a deeper social change:

Activist interviewee: And uniting. Uniting and solidarity. Absolutely fantastic. Our society, Russian society is very atomized. Uhm, the Soviet, Soviet year were spent to atomize us massively. We protest, we were protesting in our kitchens. And now, now

all the Russia is one big Kitchen, because of internet, because of higher level of trusting to each other, people are learning to trust.

The hopes for future development of solidarity, trust, civil society and more openness and competition in the political system is pronounced in the interview data.

It is not always easy to separate goals, hopes and visions, as the below answer to a question about hope shows:

Activist interviewee: There are two parts, first part is local

A: Mhm

Activist interviewee: I hope the project Shies will be cancelled.

A: Mhm

Activist interviewee: And the second part is vast and long. I hope that Russia will become a truly European country. I hope that this government will go. I hope that we will start a normal open market. Uhm. Global economy, and love and freedom life.

Writing about the protests, Navalny and the "new rebels" in Russia, Flikke (2020) states: "Russia's rebels must also be very careful in profiling and choice of message. The new rebels don't see themselves as "westernizers", even if the regime frame them as such" (Flikke 2020, 21). Even if the regime frame anything western as the enemy (Cheskin and March 2015, 269), and even if the opposition has to align their rhetoric to this master frame, Europe forms an ideal for some protestors, as the quote above shows. The ideal of Europe is also reflected in the rhetoric of those promoting Shies as a waste treatment facility that will use the newest European technology (Sokolov 2018).

The hopes for the outcomes of the Shies protest have a vast range. In interviews some are focusing more on justice by legal persecution of what they see as a criminal ruling elite. Others have environmental hopes for technical, social and legal aspects of the future of waste management in the region or the country. Some have more solidary hopes that the Shies protest, through providing inspiration and learning, will benefit other regions that will have similar problems. Some hope that the Shies protest can increase the popular support of the systemic and/or non-systemic opposition, and a subsequent increase in votes for these parties and thereby an increase of their power. The quote below well illustrates the range in scale of desired impact of the Shies movement:

Activist interviewee 1: We hope our goal will be achieved, that we will keep Shies.

Activist interviewee 2: That we'll change the governor.

Activist interviewee 1: Change the governor, yes, that's one of the goals [...].

Activist interviewee 2: That we will live better. It is not even hope, it is confidence, because we are standing for it and we will stand until the end.

Activist interviewee 3: My hope is that people will be more responsible for their actions. Whether it is an election vote or buying food in a non-recyclable package. A change of attitude at all levels. I hope people will learn to speak up if they don't like something, they will go out, stop being afraid of saying things.

Activist interviewee 1: Yes, that we will be able to wake up the civil society. That people will get up from their couches.

Activist interviewee 4: I agree about separate waste collection, I used to live without thinking about it, but when it all happened at once, I realized it, and now all my family is collecting recyclables separately. [...] So if all our friends and acquaintances will do the same, it will give great results.

Certainly not all these hopes were fulfilled as the protests came to an end. The efforts by the Shies movement to expand their goals beyond stopping Shies and getting rid of the governor were contained. I now turn to this.

7. Containing the Shies movement

In an attempt to answer the second part of the research question, how the Shies movement was contained, I provide here a description of the attempts to contain the Shies movement combined with a discussion of the effect of the attempts. The Shies protests were not forcefully stopped in one clear display of force, as one might imagine an authoritarian regime would do. However, they were contained.

The arrests and fines distributed to Shies activists are well documented in local and national media. However, the attempts to contain the Shies movement go well beyond arrests and fines. The interviews provide nuance to how authorities and others have reacted to the protests. The range of defeat-proofing techniques for containing contention in this case is impressive. The efforts made to contain the Shies movement goes from arrests to dumping snow where a rally is planned and faking a car accident to make it difficult for people to attend a rally. It is clear that attempting to contain the Shies movement involves a lot of resources, coordinated and uncoordinated, from above and from below, and a range of actors with different expertise. The level of conflict has been lower in the Arkhangelsk conglomerate

than in Urdoma, the village closest to Shies. Activists in Urdoma have used more transgressive methods and have been met with more harsh repression in other forms. Arkhangelsk has seen no blocking of internet, power and roads, like Urdoma (Poupin 2021) This suggests that there is a symmetry in the methods used for containing the dissent, a pattern where transgression leads to more harsh repression.

7.0.1 Public relations

The attempted public relations strategies came too late, and were of a too low quality to prevent protest. Contrary to preventing the protest, they possibly fueled it. As shown earlier the promotional video of the Shies project and the fancy terms and phrases like ekotekhnopark and newest European technology were received as insults. A quote on analyzing the PR preceding Ceausescu's fall is fitting: "In a closed political system—where information is tightly controlled—the regime's effort to put out its own version of the truth often succeeds in giving the public information it otherwise would not have had, and in alienating them by insulting their intelligence" (Hall 2000, 1078). The exception being that Russia is not a closed system. Free media exists, and although transparency might be low, information flows. The responsible authorities and investors were not ready for this.

7.0.2 Law enforcement

There no doubt has been persecution of activists, in different forms. However, the court has not always been willing to take the cases presented by the police (Amnesty International 2019). Poupin (2021) finds no criminal sentences based on social media materials, only administrative.

The 7th of April march was an unsanctioned mass protest. Several interviewees note that there is no, or little, violence by the police on the protest march on the 7th of April 2019. One activist explains why police wasn't acting very forceful towards the protestors by referring to the fact that the policemen and their children live here.

Activist interviewee: And Orlov gave the order to the police, although he and the police are two different branches of government, to arrest us, but in Russia this “telephone law”⁴ still exists. But we know that the police refuse to arrest us. When we

⁴ According to Ledeneva (2013) "Telephone law" refers to "political influence or pressure on the judiciary" (Ledeneva 2013, 279).

were taken in [removed: place] later, me and [removed: other people]. The police were supportive towards us. Because the policemen, their children live here and [removed: context that could aid identification]. So there was no open pressing or discrimination and of course there was no open support because they just can't do that, but somehow they showed us solidarity. So, on the 7th of April they came to the action purely formally, I am talking about the police. They didn't apply any force. And guess some people in the government may have suffered from it even, we don't know that. We can't know that.

In interview with the journal 7x7, similar observation is presented by activist Elena Kalinina, who announced the start of Bessrochka. (Zabolotnaia 2019b).

"I saw perfectly what was happening on April 7th. The police refused to disperse the demonstration because the officers understood that their parents, children, friends and acquaintances were in the crowd." Elena Kalinina in Zabolotnaia (2019b).

An activist interviewee has a similar explanation of the conduct of the police on the 7th of April but adding that there are allies of the protestors in the governing machine.

A: So, why do you think it is not criminal sentences here, but there is in Moscow?

Activist interviewee: [...] And we know that we have allies (*soiusniki*) in the governing machine, and even in the police department apparatus. Besides that, all these people they live here on this ground, and their children also live here, and they understand that if the landfill will be built then... Even if they sell all their apartments in this town and all their lodgings, they will not gain enough money to buy ok housing in Moscow. And I think that's why.

The activists of course might have an interest in telling the story of police defection, and police supporting them. In other words, assuming their interest is getting concessions appearing strong might give them leverage. The excerpts must be read with this in mind. Poupin (2021) writes about one instance the use of Komi OMON, by Shies, instead of the Arkhangelsk OMON, reportedly based on authorities being cautious of defection in the Arkhangelsk forces. OMON is the Special Purpose Mobile Unit (Holm-Hansen 2020a, 12). This supports that there has been defection, or at least a fear amongst the authorities that there could be defection. However, the instance of use of Komi OMON in the Arkhangelsk region

happened close to Shies, and thus much closer to the Komi capital than the Arkhangelsk one, thus it could also just be a case of logistics.

Some protestors were arrested after the sanctioned concert rally 22. September 2019, on the grounds that they participated in the unsanctioned 7th of April protest (Kuznetsov 2019). In general arrests and other forms of repression seem to happen with a considerable lag.

In Arkhangelsk only a few have been met with harsh repression. For the "Tree-arch-(angel)" (*Drevarkh*) this resulted in fleeing the country (Britskaia 2019). Drevarch, a tree planting environmental activist has a tree-tattoo all over his face, dresses in white and wears angel wings, an iconic figure in the Shies-movement. His actions were absurd and included ridiculing of police, the ridiculing of the police seems to represent a red line.

I will turn to an unconnected incident in the same region, within the same time frame that gives weight to the claim above. In late fall 2018 a minor committed a suicide bombing at the FSB Arkhangelsk headquarters, and three FSB employees were hurt (Zakharova et al. 2018; Britskaia 2018c). The last comment from the bomber on Telegram shows that the motivation for the attack is political, but not connected to Shies (Zakharova et al. 2018). Governor Igor Orlov blames protest actions, that affect the minds of young people, for the suicide bombing (Karpovich 2018b). The governor thus makes the link between the Shies protest, pension reform protests and others, and puts the blame on organizers. Following the incident media outlets and 17 people that have commented, discussed, or supported the attack have met charges. Some have been subjected to psychological and linguistic examinations, some are sentenced to pay fines, and some have been convicted to psychiatric treatment or prison for up to five years. Torture by the FSB is also reported (Britskaia 2018a; Skorodumov 2021a, 2021b, 2021c; Varenik 2020b; Karpovich 2020a). This incident is not linked to Shies in any other way than discursively, through the statement of Orlov. Seen in relation to the repressive reactions to the Shies protest the persecution of people making comments in social media on the suicide bombing seem excessive. These instances suggests that the institutions of the repressive apparatus are much more sensitive to criticism or ridicule of themselves, than that of politicians.

7.0.3 Covert repression

Whereas arrests and charges against activists are well covered in the local media, they seem to miss the report on some forms of repression. The more covert forms, where the repressor is maybe not known. Examples of this has appeared in interviews. For example, knocking on the door of activists in the middle of the night, at the same time every night, stealing their peephole in the door and trying to influence employment opportunities by putting pressure on employers in the public sector. If this is a widespread phenomenon in Russia it can help account for the documented low participation in protests by middle class employed in the public sector (Rosenfeld 2017). Grave threats have also been reported by interviewees. Some of these repressive activities are not of a top-down character, but rather repression amongst peers. Extralegal repression of the kind described above can of course, as pointed out by an interviewee, lower the quality of life and be detrimental to mental health for activists. It seems this form of repression, just as the attempts to contain the protest through law enforcement, is targeted at people that have, or seem to have, a central role in organizing the protest. It thus represents a threat to this group, but not to the average participant in a mass rally.

7.0.4 Chisty Sever – Chistaia Strana, a reaction to the Shies movement?

The organization Chisty Sever - Chistaia Strana starts its operations in spring 2019. Holm-Hansen (2020a) writes the following on new copycat environmental youth organizations in Murmansk and Arkhangelsk: "Whether these initiatives are just another example of mimicked civil society or real organisations for young people engaged in the environment but unwilling to challenge the regime, remains to be seen" (Holm-Hansen 2020a, 19). I argue that it is sensible to interpret them as both an ersatz social movement established as a reaction to the protest and part of the defeat proofing of the regime, and as an organization for youth engaged in the environment yet unwilling to challenge the regime. I also draw on the interview with Chisty Sever and other interviews.

Chisty Sever is financially supported by the UN Environment Program, the Russian Presidential Grants Fund for Development of Civil Society, and the Government of the Arkhangelsk Region (Uspenskii 2020). In the interview with associates of them they first say that they are cooperating with the government, but another interviewee quickly plays this down. Their relation to the government is thus sensitive.

As I was conducting interviews in Arkhangelsk I participated in a lecture by Chisty Sever on eco-cosmetics. An expert talked about how to be a green cosmetics-customer. What soaps or deodorants were good for the environment, and also how “natural” and eco-friendly products were good for you. However, the emotional emphasis was on something entirely different. Namely to buy Russian products and not being too extreme in conducting an eco-friendly lifestyle. The only non-Russian produce that was not bad was *Lush*, a brand too strong to bash, I guess. Other unnamed environmental organizations and individuals were criticized for promoting a zero-waste lifestyle, and other extreme measures. Chisty Sever thus places themselves primarily in opposition to more radical environmental organizations, and discursively shrink the room for legitimate actions for environmental organizations. Their financial relations and rhetoric suggest they could be called an ersatz-social movement.

A similar organization to Chisty Sever, *Chistaia Arktika* (Clean Arctic), appears at approximately the same time in Murmansk (Holm-Hansen 2020a, 18). In the interview with Chisty Sever I am explained that the organization "Oikumena" is the organization with the budget, whereas Chisty Sever – Chistaia Strana is the *dvizhenie* - movement. This is peculiar, as this is combining informalization with diversification, two of the state-of-the-art adaptations to the foreign agent law (Tysiachniouk, Tulaeva, and Henry 2018, 628, 629). Both of these facts suggests that Chisty Sever being part of a general defeat-proofing strategy more than being a specific reaction to the Shies protests.

To evaluate if Chisty Sever - Chistaia Strana is part of the authorities' reaction to the Shies protests I looked into their formation. Logically, if they were formed before the protests started in 2018 they could not be a reaction to the protests. 24.04.2019 the regional environmental organization "Oikumena" is registered (Rusprofile.ru 2021a; Oikumena 2019b). Their first available activity on Vk is from 25th of February 2019 (Oikumena 2019a). The forum with the name "Chisty Sever – Chistaia Strana" was organized on the 26th of February 2019 by the Public Chamber of the Arkhangelsk Region (*Obshchestvennaia palata Arkhangel'skoi oblasti*) (Portal of Housing and Communal Services of the Arkhangelsk Region 2019)⁵. The logo of the forum is identical to the logo of the still to become organization Chisty Sever – Chistaia Strana (Overheard in the Lena District 2019), which is

⁵ The article says this is in 2018, but the date of publishing, participants cross checked with other sources, and the date on the photo makes it clear that this is indeed 2019.

registered on the 11th of July 2019 (Rusprofile.ru 2021b). That the forum "Chisty Sever – Chistaia Strana" in activists' interpretation was a spoiler environmental civil society forum, the borrowing of their design, the proximity in time between the formation of Oikumena and the forum, and what seems to be an attempt at hijacking the brand Chisty Sever from the established environmental organization Chisty Sever 29, suggests that the movement Chisty Sever – Chistaia Strana might be a reaction to the protests.

7.1 People's candidate and KPRF in gubernatorial elections 2020

The protest and the politicization of it got far, to the point of the Interregional coalition "Stop-Shies" seeking representation. They started the people's governor project. A project aimed at getting a candidate from the anti-Shies movement as governor in the Arkhangelsk region (Varenik 2020a). As demonstrated by Smyth and Turovsky (2018) the current Russian regime has a vast range of tools to secure the outcome of gubernatorial elections. United Russia was the only significant party not participating in the anti-Shies protests, and surveys showed that 95% of the population were against the construction of a landfill in Shies (Agapeeva and Greben 2019). That provides a solid basis for challenging the incumbent party. In this section I provide a description of how the elections could turn out to be, to use the word of an activist interviewee: "successful", meaning victory for United Russia. There were two challengers that could be envisaged to gain substantial support in a gubernatorial election. The anti-Shies movement by the Interregional coalition "STOP-Shies" and the KPRF. Both being very visible in the protests, with considerable grass-root organizations and having a certain capacity to organize. The main argument in this section is that two factors were decisive in securing a victory for United Russia, in addition to replacing Orlov with Tsibulskii: The municipal filter stopping the candidate of the Shies movement and KPRF refraining from the elections in return of getting a seat in the Federation Council. This made the protest vote inconsequential by channeling it to less popular SR. This argument also implies that an interpretation of the election result as if this was a democratic election, that United Russia was winning because of their popularity, is ill informed. I also argue that the participation of systemic spoiler party Green Alliance was excessive be it as a strategy to secure systemic victory, to channel protest votes or as legitimization of the elections.

The people's governor project started with a within-movement run-off elections in two rounds. There were three candidates in the second round, one from Chistaia Urdoma, one from Bessrochka Severodvinsk and Oleg Mandarynkin from Chisty Sever 29 (Litvinova

2020). Mandarynkin spoke at the first anti-Shies protest in the agglomeration, in Severodvinsk 21st of October 2018 (Zabolotnaia 2018a). He later takes part in several rallies throughout the protest. This gives him legitimacy as sincerely engaged in the struggle against the Shies landfill, and thus legitimacy as an anti-Shies people's governor candidate. The role played in the protest by candidates for people's governor was underlined by an interviewee as the important criteria for who to choose as people's governor in the run-off election. Mandarynkin won the run-off election.

Neither LDPR, SR or KPRF accepted Mandarynkin as their candidate. Yabloko was willing. Several signatures were collected by deputies in local government all over the region, but reportedly administrative resource was used to make municipal deputies retrieve their support for Mandarynkina's candidacy (Litvinova 2020). Administrative resource refers to the top-down extralegal use of power (Ledeneva 2013, 72,273). The municipal filter refers to the needed support of district level council deputies to get the approval of the nomination as a candidate in the gubernatorial elections (Smyth and Turovsky 2018, 186). Mandarynkin was denied access to participate in the 2020 gubernatorial elections in Arkhangelsk (Election Commission of the Arkhangelsk Region 2020a). His candidacy was stopped by the municipal filter, however not necessarily because this level of government is dominated by the United Russia party, as stressed by Smyth and Turovsky (2018, 186), but reportedly with use of administrative resource.

Tsybul'skii, gubernatorial candidate for United Russia, won an overwhelming victory in the gubernatorial election with 69,63% of the votes (Election Commission of the Arkhangelsk Region 2020b, 2020a). Looking at the spatial distribution of the votes for Tsybul'skii he received the least support where the protest was at its largest and most intense. Starting with the election district with the lowest percentage of votes for Tsybul'skii: In the Lena district, where Shies is situated, Tsybul'skii received 38,26% of the votes, followed by the cities closest to Shies, Kotlas 59,95% and Koriashma 65,86%, and the city of Severodvinsk, 61,36% and 60,20% in the two election districts of the city (Election Commission of the Arkhangelsk Region 2020b). Just Russia did comparatively well in the election districts wherein United Russia had limited success (Election Commission of the Arkhangelsk Region 2020a). The garbage reform and Shies are still on the headlines of Just Russia's regional webpage in 2021, as they were previous to the gubernatorial elections as well (Spravedlivaia Rossiia 2020). The opposition party role is assigned to the weakest party of the systemic

opposition. SR was the weakest party in the Arkhangelsk region in the previous elections for the regional legislature (Election Commission of the Arkhangelsk Region 2018).

7.1.1 Spoiler green party

The party *Alians Zelenykh* (Green Alliance) and their candidate for governor, Aiman Tiukina, took part in the 2020 gubernatorial elections in Arkhangelsk (Election Commission of the Arkhangelsk Region 2020a). This seems to be a part of the defeat-proofing tactics of the regime. Aiman Tiukina is the co-chair of the regional branch of the All-Russian People's Front and outspoken critic of the Shies protestors throughout the protests (Varenik 2019a; All-Russian People's Front 2021; Ionaitis 2018). Green Alliance did not participate in the previous gubernatorial elections in the Arkhangelsk region in 2015 (Election Commission of the Arkhangelsk Region 2015). This makes it clear that Green Alliance is best characterized as a systemic spoiler party existing primarily on paper. Their participation in the election is an example of excessive effort to secure successful elections, as illustrated by the election results. The Green Alliance were not very successful in the gubernatorial elections with only 1,24% of the votes (Election Commission of the Arkhangelsk Region 2020b). Whether their participation was aimed at the ecological vote or at creating the illusion of legitimate elections it was not successful. The regime can learn from this not to overestimate the political illiteracy of the electorate.

7.1.2 KPRF's role

The role of KPRF in the elections and protests is interesting, and twofold. In his comprehensive study on Russian protests Robertson (2010, 59) finds that KPRF often responds to popular demands, but seldom leads protests. The Shies protest seems to fit this pattern, at least in Arkhangelsk. KPRF in Arkhangelsk have some spoiler actions, organizing a separate protest the day before a larger coordinated protest action is planned (Karpovich 2018a), but they are not many. If they have a spoiler protest, deputies from KPRF participate in the larger protest also, usually. Footage from the protests all over the Arkhangelsk region, and in Syktyvkar, in all stages of the protests leave no doubt that they are consistently very visibly present. The activist interviewees have interesting and differing opinions on this:

A: [...] I see on pictures in very many protests, in here, in Kotlas, in Severodvinsk, it's, KPRF is always, very many times there.

Activist interviewee: Yes.

A: But they only come, or they only organized.

Activist interviewee: In Russian this would be that they mounted the protest (*osedlali protest*), like you mount a horse. They didn't organize a single action, no. But they use the trash topic for agitation for their party. And the scariest thing is that people actually get caught by that (*liudi vedutsia*). People believe. They believe that these communists do have any relations with the protest. So, they just use the trash topic. And they don't do anything to solve it, although they are in the regional assembly, and they have the tools to do something about it. They are just not working on this theme. And on the other hand, they fool people by saying that during the soviet times, life was great. And people believe them.

A: And can you say the same about. Or, if I say that to me it looks like Just Russia and LDPR was only very little taking part in the protest, a lot less than KPRF, do you agree?

Activist interviewee: Yes, yes, yes.

A: But they are there?

Activist interviewee: So, not the parties themselves, the official position, no, but the their single representatives participated in the protest, yes. Of Just Russia and LDPR. A small quantity of people.

Another activist have a more positive evaluation of KPRF's participation.

Activist interviewee 1: Because...

Activist interviewee 2: No, no, I am not finished! Because people start to protest because of all of things we have in this country. Many are tired from this situation, and more and more people are tired from this situation. And politicians use this. And it is good. Because they should use it, politicians. United Russia says we must make this landfill, but other party said we should not make this landfill. So, people support these parties that don't support this landfill, and after they vote for these parties. [...] KPRF are against the landfill. KPRF are very popular because they are populist.

I interpret that activist interviewee 2 in the quote above envisages a kind of democratization on the regional level by power transfer to the parties opposing the construction at Shies. Time showed that activist interviewee 2's more hopeful vision of KPRF gaining votes from United Russia, that the activation of people in the Shies protests could lead some democratic control

of power through elections, this vision failed. KPRF did not participate in the election (Election Commission of the Arkhangelsk Region 2020a).

KPRF deputies in the Arkhangelsk city дума got fined for participation in the protests (Mediazona 2019). However, the decisive crackdown on KPRF comes from within the party, from above, and not from law-enforcement. In May 2020 it is reported by RBK that sources within KPRF tell of a deal in the making, where KPRF sponsor Nekrasov is nominated by to-become-governor⁶ Tsybulskii to the Federation Council, and in return don't nominate a candidate for the upcoming governors elections (Galimova, Fedorova, and Kuznetsova 2020). 9th of October 2020 Arkhangelsk Governor Tsybulskii nominated Nekrasov for the Federation Council and Nekrasov is from this date in the Federation Council (Federation Council of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation 2021; TASS 2020c). To the online newspaper 29.ru sources in KPRF explain that they won't participate in the election as they expect not to pass the municipal filter, whilst the leader of the regional branch Aleksandr Novikov, expresses his regrets of the decision of the party leadership (Mikusheva 2020). RBK reports that there was speculations within KPRF that the deal might lead to a split of the party's regional branch (Galimova, Fedorova, and Kuznetsova 2020). I could not find any reports of any subsequent splits within the local or regional branch of KPRF. Giving a seat in the Federation Council in return for not participating in elections, is an established tool to secure successful gubernatorial elections for United Russia (Smyth and Turovsky 2018, 186).

In addition to governor Orlov being replaced. The two factors decisive in hindering the Shies movement to gain representation were the Municipal filter and KPRF bailing the elections. The municipal filter, reportedly administered by use of administrative resource. KPRF is bailed out through economic control of the party. Top-down extralegal control over KPRF and municipal deputies were important to contain the Shies movement.

8. Conclusion

The Shies protests are an interesting object of study, being an example of sustained and coordinated protest in an authoritarian regime being successful in reaching their main goals. An overarching research interest has been how a protest movement could be successful within

⁶ This is before the 2020 gubernatorial election, but the election result is already given, at least with such a deal.

the increasingly authoritarian Russia. How do the activists and organizers of a protest movement maneuver in an authoritarian environment, where freedoms and political competition are restricted? Thus, activists' and organizers' perceptions, knowledge and perspective on their environment and on how they engage in this environment is of interest and forms a Attempting to establish the final causes for a protest is futile (Tarrow 2012, 24). In this thesis I posed the question: How did the Shies protests become successful in halting the construction of the Shies landfill and making the governor step down? Providing a decisive answer to this question is not the goal. However, the data from interviews and media reports suggests some leads.

How the protests proceeded, from the discovery of the landfill construction by the public, through to the stopping of the construction work at Shies, forms the background for answering the question: The lying and concealment of facts by the authorities provided for distrust, as Chmel, Klimova, and Mitrokhina (2020) find. The beginning of the Shies protest in late summer and early fall of 2018 was marked by compliant repertoires, petitions and citizens appeals. Diffusion from the area surrounding Shies to large parts of the Arkhangelsk region and the first large rallies followed. The organization Pomore ne Pomoika, that quickly became the face of the protests, the organizer of the largest rallies and coordinated United protest Days around the region, was created in Arkhangelsk at this time. On the 7th of April 2019, the first large unsanctioned march took place in Arkhangelsk, and the start of the Bessrochka. This represented a widening of repertoires, including even more contentious repertoires in the protests. The Bessrochka meant constant street presence. All in all the 7th of April represents increased political pressure on the authorities. The first signs of coming concessions come from the HRC and PA around this time, and shortly after. Parallel to the protests, the municipality wherein Shies is situated, Urdoma, has taken the issue to court. Protests continue as protestors don't see the judicial branch as independent from the government. In April 2020 the president intervened, by relieving the increasingly unpopular regional governor Orlov from his duties. In October 2020 Urdoma wins the second round in court. This happens two weeks after the reclaiming and greening of the construction site at Shies started.

The authorities' actions, especially in the beginning, seems to have been decisive in creating opportunities for the protestors: Waiting, concealing and lying, by the authorities (Chmel, Klimova, and Mitrokhina 2020) made it possible for activists to "win" both the media and the social media battle. Despite of attempts by and the resources of the regime for controlling or

influencing this sphere (Poupin 2021; Ledeneva 2013, 81). Activist interviewees highlight how they have always responded to media requests and thereby facilitated the massive news coverage of the Shies issue. The initial lying and inertness of authorities made it possible for the activists to create a powerful, convincing and rich anti-Shies narrative, in media and social media. I have left space for the perspectives of Russian elite supporting the construction at Shies. They talk of the people and the public as the problem, as opposed to the garbage. Blaming the lazy or crooked people for the way Russia is governed is common among Russian governing elite (Ledeneva 2013, 239). This way of talking and thinking, that people are the problem, no matter how right the Russian governing elite may be, may contribute to anger and the readiness to protest.

The strategy of the organizing activists was, to a large degree, playing by the rules of the game. Dissenting the way one is supposed to. Starting with signatures and the use of bureaucratic channels, progressing to sanctioned protests before the unsanctioned ones seems to have been an important aspect of a successful strategy. Successful at balancing challenging and aligning with regime norms (Jasper 1997). It has helped the protest staying within what in the Russian context is possible to argue is social and ecological, and not political. This is adaptation to norms for contentious conduct in Russia and has provided for legitimation of the protest and probably contributed to mobilization and making repression a harder choice. This fits the theses that the success of a social movement being dependent on how well the goals of the movement align with regime norms (Cheskin and March 2015, 270).

Prior to the Shies protest there existed a civil society, already partially mobilized protesting a more local landfill. This has made mobilization a more attainable task. Different parts of the existing civil society had (1) knowledge and experience on how to organize a protest, and a pragmatic and strategic attitude to the promotion of social change, (2) deep knowledge on the issue at stake, waste treatment, (3) ties with businesses that had financial interests in policy developments related to the issue complex Shies turned out to become the header of, (4) a constituency of gardeners with clear material interests in the placement of waste treatment facilities. This knowledge, attitudes, networks and constituencies of the civil society organizations have in different ways contributed to the movement at its success. Large preexisting local and city wide social media groups to became tools for agitation and propaganda (Poupin 2021). The systemic opposition took part in most protest actions, but

comparing numbers of protestors at different rallies, the systemic opposition's ability to mobilize support on the street appears minuscule compared to civil society in this case.

Changes in Russian public opinion in the months before the protests started, with and increased reported willingness to protest and a significant drop in Putin's popularity may have made repression a harder choice and may partially explain the size of the street protests. Other developments at the national level may also have played a role: The Shies protests progressed against the backdrop of a national garbage reform and substantial media attention to the subject. The garbage reform, illegal landfills, overflowing landfills and construction of new waste treatment facilities had already moved from institutional to contentious politics with ongoing protests in a range of communities across the country, including the twin city of Arkhangelsk, Severodvinsk.

I also posed the question: How was the Shies movement contained? The protests were contained by providing the movement with complete concessions. The governor had to step down and the Shies site was reclaimed. The efforts to contain the Shies movement before this were many and diverse and contained both visible and covert repression. Several people in the movement, among them leading activists, were fined and arrested. Protests were not allowed in the city center, and the offered venues for protest by city administration were increasingly remote. Amongst the more creative efforts reported by media and activists are dumping of snow at protest venues and faking car accidents to make it hard to get to a protest event. Efforts at containing the movement includes covert forms of repression and possibly includes the creation of an ersatz social movement. Spoiler festivals were arranged by city administrations, spoiler protests by the non-systemic opposition. None of these activities have been sufficient for preventing large scale street protest. Some efforts at containing the Shies movement have a peer-to-peer, rather than a top-down character.

The Shies movement, represented by the broadest coalition of organizations, the Interregional Coalition "STOP-SHIES", aimed at getting representation by participating in the gubernatorial elections. Relying on description of the unfolding of events I argue that three factors were decisive in hindering the Shies movement in getting represented in the gubernatorial elections. Firstly, the replacement of Orlov by party colleague Tsibulskii. Secondly, administrative pressure on municipal deputies making the candidate of the Interregional Coalition "STOP-SHIES" not pass the municipal filter, and thirdly, the deal

made giving KPRF a seat in the Federal Assembly in return for not participating in the gubernatorial elections. The Shies-movement have not given up on their ambitions to gain representation. As of May 2021 the interregional coalition STOP-SHIES decided that they will nominate has started the work to get Mandarynkin and two other candidates into the state дума (Zholobova 2021).

Cheskin and March (2015) highlight the importance of considering the "distinction between social and political forms of activism [...] in the Russian context" (Cheskin and March 2015, 268). In this thesis I have explored the meaning attributed to "political" and "political protest" in the context of a Russian protest. Political and social in Russia being a marker of legitimacy of different activities (Cheskin and March 2015, 268). The exploration is based on data from interviews and focus groups with environmental activists and people somehow engaged in the Shies protest, in Arkhangelsk. The analysis is structured by the empirical and expressive meaning attributed to "political". The causal power interviewees attribute to something being "political" is also shown. Overall, this exploration confirms that adding "political" to "protest" as opposed to adding "social" or "ecological", is to claim the protest's illegitimacy. It further shows that the empirical meaning of "political" is malleable and contested, that "political" is not only derogatory when coupled with "protest" but can bear the same meaning also in other expressions. Flikke (2020, 226) and Østbø (2017, 282) write of how authorities claim the illegitimacy of a protest by attaching to them the label "political". I show that "political" is used in a delegitimizing sense not only by the authorities but also amongst activists, both friendly to, and critical to the regime.

The Union of Horticulturalists represent a large group of Russian gardeners and there are countless local associations all over the country. They played a considerable role in the contentious politics playing out in Severodvinsk during the Shies and Rikasikha protests. As the dacha is a space often more social, and with more communication than the neighborhood (Stammler and Sidorova 2015), horticulturalists may well be the origins of grassroots claims and movements in the future. Private waste management businesses have taken active part in the contentious politics surrounding the garbage reform in Arkhangelsk. Amongst the faces and organizers of the protests several are entrepreneurs. An entrepreneur is also the leader of the Volokolamsk garbage protests (Rogoza 2018, 6). For future research on Russian protests the role of entrepreneurs, small and medium sized businesses and the gardeners would be an interesting subject.

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Appendix 1: Topic Guide

I start this appendix with a brief description of how this document was used. The headings have been guiding. The numbered questions have been given priority in most interviews. Depending on the interviewees. The bullet points are either suggestions for follow up questions or less important questions that can be asked to get more in-depth data, and a better understanding of the case if the interviewee, interpreter and interviewer has time and energy. Italics signifies notes to the interviewer. Not all questions have been relevant in all interviews. In most interviews most questions are not asked, and other follow up questions are asked that noted along the way. The phrasing in this guide is more formal than the tone in the interviews. In general, the interviews have been more listening and more attentive to the interviewee than the impression one might get from this quite extensive guide. It was useful for me, however, to create an extensive guide both to think through possible questions and follow up questions, make priorities and to make the interpreter as prepared as possible.

Introduction

Hi, thank you for accepting my invitation to do an interview with you!

I will make a short introduction before we start the interview. I am Arjo Kvamme, master student at the University of Bergen institute of comparative politics.

Study topic, and this project is financially supported by the University of Bergen.

Thesis aims and objectives, research questions.

Explain confidentiality and anonymity.

Expected duration of interview (1h), semi-structured questions, please add stuff, and don't hesitate if the question is unclear. Might use quotes from the interview in thesis. Data storing and SAFE. Recording, transcription and deletion. Make sure the interviewee understands that I can only guarantee what is within my control and knowledge, and that there is a possibility, however precautionous I am, that data could be stolen or I could make mistakes.

English skills, Russian skills and Interpretation. The interpreter will let us know when we need to take a break. You please also do so.

Right to withdraw, and not answer at any time. Ask whether interviewee wants to proofread transcript.

Questions?

Happy to continue with the interview?

Go through information sheet and statement of consent (New round of questions.)

Interview:

Could you just briefly tell who you are, like education, job, family situation, age etc. (Spare time?)

Can I start recording? If “yes”:

-----**START RECORDING**-----

1 What has been your role in the Shies case? (Role in e.g. civil society from before, or did this mobilize you?)

Case Introduction:

2 Could you give a brief overview of the main development of the Shies case, the way you see it? (max 5 sentences) - *Assess whether it would be useful to inform the interviewee about the “purpose” of this question. (I ask this very open question to get an impression of what the interviewee think is important, and/or what is the core narrative, to what degree they focus is on the contention, the politics, or its interplay if it is central of peripheral, and/or to get an impression of what the interviewee think I am is interested in, which might shed light on the “role” the interviewee assigns me)*

3 What has suprised you (or others) as the protests and/or shies case has evolved? (*Hope to reveal expectations and other perceptions, e.g. about causal relationships?*).

- In your opinion, are there any “turning points”? When has the activity of protests/other kinds of dissent been higher and lower. What triggered, in your opinion these shifts in activity? (*I ask this as a triangulation and “flesh” on other data on the level of contention*)

Has your role in this case changed? (*This might shed light on the workings of the movement, changes in internal conflict/cooperation etc.*)

- How do you obtain information on development of this case, (legal/political and contentious) and on what is going on? (friends, media (which), social media? closed networks? open networks?) (How normal would you say it is to get one’s info from these places?).

Rumors about stuff. Are there rumors, what kind of rumors? What have you heard? What parts of the “reality” of the case, the facts, are contested (within the movement, (in the public sphere))?

Protests nature:

4 Has the nature of the protest changed from the outset, to (fall 2018, spring 2019, autumn 2019?). How has it changed? (Organization, coordination, alliances, geography, intensity, demands, repertoires, authority reactions, social base, identity) (*This question provides both primary and interpretive data*).

- There has been street marshes, lawsuits, pickets, posters, blockage, the camp, has there been any other form of activities? What has been the most successful way? Why do you think so?

To what degree would you say the protests (protest movement) are coordinated? (*I want to find out if it is wild-cat or coordinated, and what parts might be wild-cat and which parts not*). Has this changed?

Are there groups outside the coalition? Or are most inside?

Have labour unions played a role in the protests?

What have been the claims of the protesters? How did the claims develop? Why is this claimed? Where in the “movement” does the claim come from? (Try to get reflection on claims and their “roots”, relations to other claims) (*This hopefully sheds light on the relevant organizational ecology*)

It seems to me a central slogan has been “pomorje ne pomoika”, do you agree? Are there other important slogans? What is Pomoria? Follow up, if not elaborated: What does Pomor mean to you? What distinguishes a Pomor from others? Do other people share this conception of Pomor? Who shares it, who does not?

- Does Pomor mean something else before and after Shies? Why has the pomor identity been used by protesters, and not the Russkij Sever? (How inclusive are these identities?)

Who have supported the protests, and how has this evolved? (Who are “we”, “them”, the different/core/peripheral “them’s” (and “we’s”)?) (Parties, officials at different levels, bureaucratic/elected, constituencies, groups/types of people)

With whom has your organization cooperated? When did you start the cooperation with these different actors, and when did you end the cooperation? How has the cooperation been, tight/loose/other?

- Has there been cooperation with official or political organizations? How has this cooperation been? What has been it’s results?

On the concept of political protests

5. Are the protests political?

If yes: When did they become political.

If no: What kind of protests are they, were they. Economical?

Why do some people call it political and others don’t. Why does it matter? Where is this debate?

What other categories of protest are there?

Are all the “methods” used in the Shies case political?

- What is/are the antonyms of political?
- What are the synonyms?

What constitutes the political? How can one identify it?

Back to Case and perceptions

6. What would you say, so far has been the successes and disappointments in the Shies case (*Could reveal expectations*).

- What, in your opinion has been the biggest victory of the protesters?
- What has been the biggest defeat?
- What other victories are there?
- What other defeats are there?

Who are responsible for the construction of the polygon in Shies? In your opinion?

Repression of dissent (evaluate in the situation whether this is too sensitive):

- How has the law/police been used to stop dissenters in the Shies case? (Other government means have been used?) (Other private means have been used?)

Have you gotten in any trouble because of your involvement in this case? (What kind of trouble?) Why do you think you got in trouble/did not get in trouble? Do you see a pattern in persecution (right word?), or is it more random? Is it a question of degree?

- Only individuals got trouble with the law, or groups or institutions/organizations/NGOs got trouble? Are there any patterns here?
- Why did some individuals/groups/institutions get trouble and others not, in your opinion?
- Did the authorities try to stop the protests? When, who and how? (Why questions, follow up, to get interpretations)
- Many protests in Russia have been stopped by the authorities. The Shies protests have not been “successfully” stopped, why do you think that is?
- Many people take part, yet only some people are being arrested, some are not. Why is this? What's the difference?

Future:

Reflections on effectiveness of protest vs. legal or other measures. What reactions are anticipated from the different? (*Try to dig into what is the foundation of the anticipations, what knowledge and erfahrung is it built on?*) Is there a new pattern emerging where once you shout loud enough Putin will help you and fix it? (*This is both a question to make the interview end on a positive note, but it also might shed light on learning/adaptation, narratives and interviewee values.*)

What have you learned from the Shies case? What do you think others have learned/what should they have learned? (*This is both a question to make the interview end on a positive note, but it also might shed light on learning/adaptation, narratives and interviewee values.*)

What are your hopes/prospects for future developments in this case? *(This question hopefully contributes to the interview ending on a positive note, but it also might shed light on narratives and interviewee values.)*

Consider presenting your thoughts/hypotheses and ask for their opinion on this.

Practical:

Thank you very much for your time!

Do you have tips about other people I could interview? People active at certain times, people with certain varied perspectives.

(Repeat confidentiality?) Happy to answer questions you might later have.

-----**END RECORDING**-----

Thank you very much for your time again! A Norwegian chocolate bar is given to the interviewee to show gratitude.

Probes: Why do you think so? Would others (the average joe, or some more specific category) agree with this, you think?

Chisty Sever interview, extra questions:

What do you work with?

How would you compare your organization to other organizations? (Methods, what you work with etc.)

How is Chisty Sever organized? (Why do they have this special "dvizheniye" organization structure?)

Excluded sections or questions, that were not removed from the interview guide before it was put to use:

From where, would you say, do protesters learn/get inspiration (international, national and nationalist/oppositional)

Supporting of dissent: (This section never seemed relevant and therefore never felt really appropriate)

Has law/police or other government means been used to support the protesters? (Private non NGO means?) (Different branches/levels of government?)

How has this support taken place?

Why has it taken place?

Appendix 2: Declaration of Consent (English)

Do you want to participate in the research project

”Protesting a landfill in Shiyes”?

This is a request for you to participate in a research project where the intention is to investigate the emergence and development of the protests related to the establishment of a waste deposit at Shiyes. This form provides you with information about the aims and objectives of the project, and what participation will mean for you.

Project aim

The aim of the research project is two-folded. Firstly, we wish to make a description of the protests related to the Shiyes waste deposit with a focus on the early phase. We also intend to describe which methods, apart from protests, are used to hinder the construction of the waste deposit.

Secondly, we want to understand how the protests have become so big and widespread, geographically and temporally, and why the government seemingly has allowed them.

This research project is part of Arjo Kvamme’s master’s thesis at the Department of Comparative Politics at the University of Bergen.

Who is responsible for the research project?

Arjo Kvamme is responsible for the project. He is a master’s student at the Department of Comparative Politics at the University of Bergen.

As supervisor of Arjo Kvamme, Per Selle has academic responsibility in the project. He is a professor at the Department of Comparative Politics at the University of Bergen.

The project is financially supported by the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Bergen.

Why have you been asked to participate?

You have been asked to participate in this study because of your knowledge about the protests connected to the Shiyes waste deposit. Five to ten people will be asked to take part in an interview.

What does participation mean for you?

If you agree to participate in this study it means that you will take part in one interview. The interview will last between 30-60 minutes. In the interview you will be asked about acts and thoughts related to Shiyes. You are free to refrain from answering questions you find too demanding.

Although we will apply several information safety measures, it is impossible for us to guarantee that a third party does not somehow obtain information from the interview. As the protests are a contentious issue, we kindly ask you not to share any information that could compromise your own or third parties' safety or wellbeing.

Arjo Kvamme will take notes during the interview. *If you consent*, he will also do a sound recording of the interview in order to recreate the session as truthful as possible.

Participation is voluntary

It is voluntary to participate in this project. If you choose to participate, you can withdraw your consent at any time without giving a reason. There will be no consequences for you if you choose not to participate, or if you choose to withdraw your consent after the interview.

Your privacy – how we store and use your information

We will only use the information about you for the purposes stated in this document. We treat the information confidentially and in compliance with the Norwegian privacy regulations.

Your personal information and the transcript of your interview will only be processed by Arjo Kvamme and Per Selle.

Your name and contact information will be replaced by a code and stored in a separate list, separated from the interview data.

SAFE, the University of Bergen's solution for safe data processing, will be used for the processing and storing of the transcribed interview. If the interview is sound recorded, the record will be directly transmitted into SAFE and deleted from the dictaphone as soon as the session is finished. The sound record will be permanently deleted from SAFE as soon as it is transcribed. The data will be processed in Norway, and for a shorter period of time in Russia whilst the interviews are conducted.

Neither name nor gender nor age will be specified in the master's thesis. An approximate age and/or your role in the Shies matter might be specified in a way that does not make it possible to identify you. Quotes from the interview will be reproduced in the master's thesis. If you or third parties can be identified from the interview, the name, role or whatever contributes to the identification will be removed from quotes or otherwise anonymized. If anonymizing these parts of the interview is not possible, it will be deleted. We cannot guarantee that third parties will not recognize you from the quotes in the thesis if they, in one way or the other, know you well. For example, if they know your opinions or the way you verbally express yourself.

What happens with your information when we end the research project?

The project is intended to be finished by 03.06.2020. The data will be deleted when the project is finished, or at latest by the end of 2020.

Your rights

As long as you can be identified in the data, you have the right to:

- access what personal data are registered in your name
- get your personal data corrected
- get your personal data deleted
- get a copy of your personal data, and
- send a complaint to the Data Protection Official or the Norwegian Data Protection Authority on the processing of your personal data

What gives us the right to process your personal data?

We process your personal data based on your consent.

Where can I find out more?

If you have questions about the research project or wish to make use of your rights, please contact:

- Arjo Kvamme by e-mail, (akv040@uib.student.no) or by phone: +47 919 96 924
- The University of Bergen by Professor and supervisor Per Selle by e-mail: (Per.Selle@uib.no).
- The University of Bergen's Data Protection Official: Janecke Helene Veim by e-mail: (personvernombud@uib.no).
- NSD – Norwegian Centre for Research Data AS, by e-mail (personverntjenester@nsd.no) or phone: +47 55 58 21 17.

Yours Sincerely

Arjo Kvamme
Project responsible
(Student)

Per Selle
(Supervisor)

Declaration of consent

I have received and understood the information about the project "Protesting a landfill in Shiyes", and have had the opportunity to ask questions. I consent to the following:

- to participate in an interview
- that my personal data is processed in Norway and Russia
- that information about my political attitudes that might appear during the interview is processed and stored as stated in this document
- that information about my philosophical beliefs that might appear during the interview is processed and stored as stated in this document
- that information about my previous convictions or contravention of any law that might appear during the interview is processed and stored as stated this document
- that quotes from the interview is published, despite the possibility of third parties identifying me, based on knowledge on my opinions, actions or ways of verbally expressing myself
- that my personal data is stored until the research project is finished, or no later than the end of 2020

I hereby consent that my data is processed and stored until the project is finished, and no later than the end of 2020

(Signature by interviewee, date)

Appendix 3: Declaration of Consent (Russian)

Вы хотите участвовать в исследовательском проекте «Протест против полигона для хранения отходов в Шиесе»?

Мы предлагаем вам принять участие в исследовательском проекте, целью которого является анализ возникновения и развития протестного движения, связанного с закладкой полигона для хранения отходов в Шиесе. В данной анкете вы найдете информацию о задачах и целях данного проекта, а также о том, какое значение для вас будет иметь участие в этом проекте.

Цель проекта

Цель данного исследовательского проекта двойная. Во-первых, мы хотим дать картину протестных заявлений против закладки полигона для хранения отходов в Шиесе, обратив особое внимание на начальный этап протестного движения. Мы также намереваемся описать, какие методы, кроме протестов, используются для того, чтобы препятствовать закладке полигона для хранения отходов.

Во-вторых, нам хотелось бы понять, каким образом протесты оказались таким мощными и массовыми, с точки зрения их географии и времени проявления, и почему правительство, казалось бы, разрешило их.

Этот исследовательский проект является частью дипломной работы на степень магистра Арья Квамме студента Кафедры сравнительной политологии Бергенского университета.

Кто отвечает за проведение исследовательского проекта?

Арья Квамме отвечает за проведение данного проекта. Он студент магистратуры Кафедры сравнительной политологии Бергенского университета.

Куратором Арья Квамме является Пер Селле, и он отвечает за учебно-методический аспект проекта. Пер Селле – профессор Кафедры сравнительной политологии Бергенского университета.

Факультет общественных наук Бергенского университета финансирует проведение данного проекта.

Почему мы приглашаем вас участвовать в данном проекте?

Мы попросили вас участвовать в этом исследовании, потому что у вас есть информация о протестах, связанных с планами закладки полигона для хранения отходов в Шиесе. От пяти до десяти участников данного проекта будут также приглашены на интервью.

Какое значение имеет для вас участие в проекте?

Если вы соглашаетесь принять участие в данном исследовании, вы будете приглашены на интервью. Длительность интервью от 30 до 60 минут. Во время данного интервью вам будут задавать вопросы о ваших действиях и ваших взглядах касательно ситуации в Шиесе. Вы можете отказаться от ответа на те вопросы, которые вы сочтете слишком каверзными.

Несмотря на то, что нами будут предприняты надлежащие меры предосторожности по обеспечению нераспространения информации, мы не можем гарантировать, что информация, обсуждаемая на интервью, не попадет третьим лицам. Так как протесты являются вызывающей споры темой, мы просим вас не делиться информацией, которая могла бы скомпрометировать вас или третьих лиц и поставить под угрозу вашу и их безопасность и благополучие.

Арья Квамме будет стенографировать интервью. *Если вы согласитесь*, он также сделает звукозапись интервью с тем, чтобы было можно воспроизвести максимально правдоподобно атмосферу интервью.

Ваше участие добровольно

Ваше участие в данном проекте – добровольный акт. Если вы согласитесь принять участие, вы в любое время можете отказаться без объяснения причины. Ваше решение не принимать участие в проекте с самого начала или ваше решение отказаться после проведения интервью не будет иметь для вас никаких последствий.

Защита личной информации – как мы храним и используем вашу информацию.

Мы используем вашу личную информацию только в целях, указанных в данном документе. Мы сохраняем полную конфиденциальность полученной информации в соответствии с нормативными требованиями по защите личных данных, принятыми в Норвегии.

Только Арья Квамме и Пер Селле будут иметь доступ к вашей личной информации и стенограмме вашего интервью для их анализа и обработки.

Ваше имя и контактные данные будут закодированы, и они будут храниться в особом списке отдельно от материалов интервью.

SAFE (система автоматического программирования), которая используется Бергенским университетом для надежной обработки данных, будет использована для обработки и хранения расшифрованных стенографических записей интервью. Если будет сделана звуковая запись интервью, она будет отправлена в SAFE и стерта с диктофона сразу по окончании интервью. Звуковая запись интервью будет удалена сразу, ~~и~~ только звукозапись будет затранскрибирована. Вся информация будет обрабатываться в Норвегии только в течение короткого периода времени в России, когда там будут проводиться интервью.

Ни ваше имя, ни пол, ни возраст не будут упоминаться в дипломной работе на степень магистра. Примерный возраст и/или ваша роль в происходящем в Шиее возможно будут упомянуты, но таким образом, что будет невозможно идентифицировать вашу личность. Цитаты из интервью будут использованы в дипломной работе на степень магистра. Если будет возможно идентифицировать вас или третьих лиц в материалах интервью, то ваше имя, роль в происходящем и любые данные, которые могли бы способствовать идентификации вашей личности, будут либо удалены из цитат, либо обезличены. Если обезличивание этих частей интервью невозможно, они будут удалены. Мы не можем гарантировать, что третьи лица не узнают вас по приведенным в дипломной работе цитатам, если так или иначе хорошо вас знают. Например, если они знают вашу точку зрения или вашу манеру речи.

Что произойдет с вашей информацией, когда мы закончим этот исследовательский проект?

Предполагаемая дата окончания проекта 03.06.2020. Все данные будут уничтожены, когда проект будет закончен, но не позднее конца 2020 года.

Ваши права

В случае, если ваша личность тем не менее можно будет идентифицировать, у вас есть право на следующее:

- получить доступ к персональным данным, зарегистрированным на ваше имя
- изменить ваши личные данные
- удалить ваши личные данные
- получить копии ваших личных данных и
- направить жалобу должностному лицу, ответственному за защиту данных, или в уполномоченный орган защиты данных в Норвегии касательно обработки ваших личных данных

Что дает нам право на обработку ваших данных?

Только ваше согласие дает нам право на обработку ваших личных данных.

Где я могу узнать подробнее об этом проекте?

Если у вас есть вопросы касательно этого исследовательского проекта или если вы хотите воспользоваться вашими правами, вы можете связаться с нами:

- Арья Квамме, по e-mail: akv040@uib.student.no или по телефону: +47 919 96 924
- Куратор проекта профессор Бергенского университета Пер Селле, e-mail: Per.Selle@uib.no
- Уполномоченный по защите данных Бергенского университета- Янеке Хелене Вейм, e-mail: personvernombud@uib.no
- NSD - Norwegian Centre for Research Data AS, по e-mail: personvertjenester@nsd.no или по телефону: +47 55 58 21 17.

С уважением

Арья Квамме (Arjo Kvamme)
Ответственный за проект
(Студент)

Пер Селле (Per Selle)
(Куратор)

Заявление о согласии

Я получил информацию о проекте «Протест против полигона для хранения отходов в Шиесе», его содержание мне понятно, и у меня была возможность задать интересующие меня вопросы. Я согласен:

- принять участие в интервью
- на обработку моих личных данных в Норвегии и России
- на то, что информация о моих политических взглядах, которая могла быть получена во время интервью, будет обрабатываться и храниться в соответствии с данным документом
- на то, что информация о моих философских взглядах, которая могла быть получена во время интервью, будет обрабатываться и храниться в соответствии с данным документом
- на то, что информация о моих предыдущих судимостях и правонарушениях, которая могла быть получена во время интервью, будет обрабатываться и храниться в соответствии с данным документом
- на то, что цитаты из интервью будут опубликованы, несмотря на то, что третьи лица могут идентифицировать мою личность, если они знают о моих взглядах, действиях или о моей манере речи.
- на то, что мои личные данные будут храниться до окончания действия проекта, но не позднее, чем до конца 2020 года.

Настоящим я выражаю своё согласие на обработку и хранение моих персональных данных до окончания проекта, но не позднее, чем до конца 2020 года.

(Подпись интервьюируемого лица, дата)