Regime Transition and Recruitment of Elites in Eastern Europe

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TRANSITION AND NEGATIVE CADRE POLICIES

Elite recruitment appears to be the only effective policy process in the countries of Eastern Europe that are currently undergoing regime transitions. Its efficiency is linked, however, to the illusion that exchanging political elites is tantamount to a transition to democracy. Ex-socialist countries suffer from the burdens of the past even when they abandon communist ideology. The need to differentiate between the sub-systems of the political system, especially in the fields of economics and politics, is still not generally accepted. The convergence of political and economic power has not been overcome in most transitional regimes. The political elite has changed, but many members of the old economic elite remain in positions of influence and their behavior has not altered.

Even in Poland, which was the first country to develop a private sector and has never collectivized most of its agriculture, 75% of the industrial production and 84% of the state revenues came from the former "socialist sector" in 1991 (Piper 1991, 41). At the same time, about 1.3 million small entrepreneurs were carrying on various commercial activities confined largely to the margins of the state economy. Many of them were owned or controlled by former managers of state enterprises. In fact, in most ex-socialist countries the *apparatchiki* of the *anciens régimes* grasped the transition to a market economy much faster than the "torch-bearers" of the peaceful revolutions. There is evidence, for example, that former agents of the state security services were getting ready for market economy even before the collapse of the communist system. Large sums of money were transferred to fictitious institutions in order to maintain control over unlawfully diverted funds. Even in East Germany where the Bonn government took over the management of the economy, new scandals are uncovered every day because of the illegal transfers of state funds. There is a paradox in many ex-socialist countries. The new transitional state which wants to privatize industrial enterprises must often fight for the title to public property against well organized and legally protected mafia-like groups of the former *nomenklatura*.

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Since the capitalist system has no steering center, it is not by chance that the processes of transition tend to be erratic and uncontrolled. In 1917, there was hardly any theory of transition to socialism, but Lenin was able to create an *ad hoc* theory with revolutionary force. The masses had to follow in spite of the enormous changes in strategy from war communism to the new economic policies of 1921. The market society, *a fortiori,* can have no theory of transition. Those who offer such a theory act against the spirit of a pluralist market society. Only some "ordo-liberals" in Germany have dared to offer a theory of democratic transition which, however, lacks the necessary precision. According to the pundits in Freiburg, "ordo-liberalism" can outline only the ideal final state of a social market economy. The individual steps leading to the "final state" must be taken by "inspiration and courage" (Herder-Dorneich 1988, 183). This resembles Lenin's hints at the necessity of finding the "weakest link in the chain." Leninism and "ordo-liberalism" are similar in one respect only: both make an attempt to outline transition to a new political order and to a new political economy at the same time.

This is one of the reasons why earlier transitions from authoritarianism to democracy in Southern Europe are not comparable to East European transitions. Even the ex-fascist systems such as Spain and Portugal have overcome their former economic autarchy prior to the onset of political change. With the tacit consent of some political actors, modernizing economic elites of those countries have reintegrated their economic systems into a world market economy. Of all the East European countries currently in transition, only East Germany does not need to change its political and economic systems simultaneously. Its people chose to take wholesale the West German political system and can now concentrate exclusively on the transition to a market society. But even under these privileged conditions, the process of transition is not easy. Admittedly, its success is practically guaranteed by the enormous sums of money that are transferred from West Germany.

In 1991, the East German population received per capita 9,500 DM from West Germany. This is more than ten times the amount that West Germany has received under the Marshall Plan since 1947 (Seibel 1991, 7). These transfers (which were largely allocated to individual consumption rather than investment) represent about 70% of the annual East German Gross National Product. In comparison, the transfers of capital from the West to the former communist countries of Eastern Europe, including the CIS, are rather modest. Curiously, German liberals (ardently devoted to a market society) created a major obstacle to rapid economic growth in East Germany by their insistence on the

principle of restitution rather than compensation for nationalized private property. Economists calculate that this may have delayed the economic take-off in East Germany by three to five years.

Elite recruitment in Western democracies does not deserve the epithet of "policy." Unlike the cadre policy tradition in the socialist countries, a coherent recruitment policy does not normally exist in liberal democracies. Oddly enough, this has been changed in East Germany. Shortly after unification, the great "witch hunt" started in the former GDR. A total replacement of the top political elite would have been normal and necessary. But, step-by-step even back-benchers were subjected to persistent investigations of their past political activities. Out of four East German state (Länder) prime ministers, three have resigned already and the fourth (Stolpe in Brandenburg) is still not safe against increasing attacks on him as a former negotiator with the secret service on behalf of the protestant church. As German writer Rühmkorf put it, "Germans persecute the SED collaborators in order to hide their shame about the missing purges of the Nazi administrators after 1945." A negative cadre policy and an anti-*nomenklatura* policy were developed and implemented in reunified Germany. In early 1990, the governing CDU (Christian Democratic Union) appeared to have no interest in investigating the past in East Germany. By 1992, however, even a liberal minister of education was under increasing pressure to dismiss a number of former East German administrators, teachers, and professors.

This pattern of negative elite recruitment prevailed in those countries where the communist regime collapsed rapidly. On the other hand, where the old regime eroded step by step (as in Poland and Hungary) much less "witch-hunting" was needed and demanded. An incremental replacement of elites had already taken place during the dying stages of the old regime. In Czechoslovakia resistence on the part of intellectuals against the introduction of a similar "hunting season" was stronger than in East Germany, and the situation of those under suspicion was more favorable, partly because the Czech secret police managed to destroy a much greater number of files than did the East German Stasi. But even here, the right-wing parties (and even President Havel) advocated more thorough investigations of the past activities of ex-communist elites. Early in 1992 the attorney general in Czechoslovakia was dismissed for failing to carry out such thorough investigations (Kohler 1992, 6). In October 1991 President Havel signed a "lustration or screening law." It provides that former communist party cadres, members of the "people's militia," and informal collaborators with state security services are ineligible during five years for appointments to higher positions in public administration, in the administration of justice, and

in the remaining state enterprises. The legal protections against incrimination appear to work much better in former Czechoslovakia than in East Germany.

TRANSITION TO DEMOCRACY AND PARTY ELITES

It appears that the adoption of aggressive negative recruitment policies may be related to a specific type of regime change that prevailed in a particular country. A distinction between change initiated by pragmatic piecemeal engineering and one driven by ideology-guided attempts to bring about radical innovation is highly significant. The amount of steering from above or pressure from below also had an influence on the continuity/discontinuity of the elite sectors in each country. With necessary caution, Table 1 (Roads to Democratization) depicts four variations of democratization processes in Eastern Europe.

Clearly, the roads to democratization in Eastern Europe are very different from the precedents established in Southern Europe in the 1970s. The dictatorships of Southern Europe broke down because they lost wars and, at the same time, lost their remaining credibility in the population (Portugal, Greece), or lost a dictator (Spain). There was relatively little change or replacement of the elites in these countries. In Spain, the dismissed adherents of the old regime party (the *Movimiento*) obtained new positions in the public sector. Most importantly, many specialized sectors of the Spanish economy and society were already deeply penetrated by new untainted and younger elites. Consequently, regime change in Spain did not mean a career stop for the younger generation as it did for many professionals, administrators and managers in the ex-communist countries.

TABLE 1
Roads to Democracy in Eastern Europe

	Pragmatic piecemeal engineering	Ideological system innovation
Steering from the top	Attempts to save some communist structures: Romania, Bulgaria until October 1991	Innovation of the communist regime: Soviet Union under Perestroika until August 1991
Pressure from below	Erosion of power: Poland, Hungary, Slovenia, Croatia	Regime collapse: GDR, Czechoslovakia

Furthermore, the opportunity structures in the ex-communist regimes were distorted. Their educational systems were on the whole conservative and old fashioned and they did not produce the kind of professionals and managers needed for a changing economy. Instead, they contributed to the existing distortion of status ascription. The opportunities for younger aspiring elites were declining correspondingly with their higher qualifications. The growth of the tertiary economic sectors of services was blocked by the communist regimes still burdened with a powerful bias in favor of the heavy manufacturing sector. The value of services was not even included in the calculations of the national domestic product. (Haller, Kolosi, Robert 1990, 69). In spite of all the propaganda about the scientific-technical revolution, the East European economies and societies remained underdeveloped and unprepared for a new post-industrial world.

The established gerontocracies impeded the necessary rotation of elites in many sectors, not only in the political arena. Clearly, there was a relationship between gerontocracy and regime collapse: where new, young and aspiring party activists were distrusted, the **regime collapse** model was more likely, as in the GDR and Czechoslovakia. Where the party made efforts to rejuvenate itself even in the 1980s, the model of **erosion of power** was more likely, as in Poland and Hungary. In Hungary, the *renouvellement des élites communistes* during the 1980s was probably more profound and extensive than elsewhere, but it was still insufficient to arrest the continuing mobility lag. It is not by chance that the peaceful revolution of 1989 was dubbed a "revolution of deputy-heads of departments," mainly because the highly skilled middle-aged officials in the second level ranks of the state bureaucracy had no opportunities for further upward mobility. Many of them quickly switched allegiances and joined new political parties and groups formed under democratic conditions.

The disintegration of multinational states (such as the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia) cannot be explained exclusively in terms of suppressed nationalist sentiments which came to the fore because of *glasnost* and *perestroika*. Because the opportunity structures in those countries changed, many regional elites no longer count on upward mobility in the central government apparatus. Instead, they create new opportunities in their regions and within their respective ethnic or national contexts. This is one of the major reasons why demands for separation and independence became so strong among small ethnic and national groups.

Another explanation for the breakdown of authoritarian rule has been suggested by Adam Przeworski (1986). He contends that the cause may be found in a split among the governing elites and mobilization of the

masses by a competing elite sector. This explanation applies more to democratic transitions in Southern Europe than it does to Eastern Europe. In the former quasi-fascist countries, such as Portugal and Spain, the remnants of economic *autarky* have already been undermined by the young modernizing elites, such as Opus Dei in Spain (von Beyme 1971). Domestic economic systems have been harmonized with the international economic environment before regime changes occurred. The situation in the former communist countries, however, was dramatically different. The new post-communist elites found themselves in Lenin's position. Power to govern fell into their hands easily and unexpectedly, but later they had to face the grim task of creating new economic foundations for their countries. Certainly, there were policy differences among the new governing elites about more or less open economy, but, at that stage, no major splits had developed.

In the **erosion of power** model (Poland, Hungary — Table 1), the communist regime did not collapse and the ruling elite did not split. The communist party was forced step-by-step into a "negotiated revolution" (Bruszt 1990) which may be also called a "concerted or corporatist revolution." The debate about corporatism invaded the world of "real socialism" long ago. But until 1989 it produced only a kind of "meso-corporatism."

In Poland, communist government and Solidarity opposition organized Round Table negotiations which lasted from February to April 1989. The result was a historic compromise. It included democratic socialism, pluralism, constitutional reform, and preparation for free elections. Everything was negotiable, except the people's will. In the June 1989 partial parliamentary election (which was part of the negotiated accord), the victory of the Solidarity/opposition side was so overwhelming (160 out of 161 contested seats in the Sejm and 99 out of 100 contested seats in the Senate) that it cast a serious doubt on the legitimacy of the Round Table agreements. In an unprecedented statement, the Politburo openly admitted defeat: 33 of 35 candidates of the communist establishment (whose seats in the Sejm were "guaranteed" under the Round Table agreements) failed to get elected. A major crisis was avoided when the Solidarity leadership (continuing to act in the spirit of corporatism and casting legal and political doubts aside) accepted that the vacancies be filled by communist nominees to maintain the agreed proportion of seats between the government and the opposition.

Jaruzelski's election as president (by a cleverly engineered parliamentary majority of one vote) was also accepted largely because of considerations of foreign policy and his key role in the army. In turn, the president was assigned reduced responsibilities and a lower profile,

and agreed not to interfere in the process of governance. In December 1989, Parliament adopted a number of constitutional amendments: the leading role of the communist party was abolished, political parties were recognized, free market economic activity was guaranteed, private property rights were protected, and all references in the constitution to socialist goals and ideals were deleted. These amendments required a 2/3 majority vote and were passed with the support of a large number of communist and aligned MPs who, thus, have also fulfilled the Round Table undertakings in the spirit of corporatism.

Corporatism develops only where large groups operate which have the capacity to control their members sufficiently in order to guarantee the acceptance of tripartite agreements. In Poland Solidarity had such power. Hungary, on the other hand, did not produce a well organized united counter-elite grouped in a single organization. Nevertheless, "defensive liberalization" was also successful in Hungary. Unlike Poland, the slow erosion of communist power was not aided and abetted by the attacks of a forceful opposition. However, vanishing popular support for the old regime became clearly evident, even when no major opposition party or group was ready to take power (Bruszt 1990).

The **regime collapse** model has a second variant. In the northern tier of the ex-communist countries (GDR, Czechoslovakia — Table 1), the old elite was toppled without a fight. One reason for this was the repudiation of the Brezhnev doctrine. As soon as it became clear that the Soviet Union was no longer willing to underwrite the communist regimes of her former allies and satellites, these systems collapsed. The communist elites had at their disposal huge and well organized secret services and police forces, but were not accustomed to acting on their own initiative. The 1968 repression in Czechoslovakia had taught them that Comecon countries must follow Moscow's orders when taking measures to fight the "counter-revolution." Romania was the only country which did not accept the Brezhnev doctrine and thus refused to participate in the repression. Consequently, Romanian governing elites had to organize their own security arrangements. Ceauçescu did this by creating the *Securitate.* His only mistake was that he made it too powerful which provoked a jealous reaction in the army. When the crunch came, the army, after some wavering, joined the forces of the opposition. In the 1990 Romanian election the Reform Communists won 66% of the votes paving the way to a considerable elite continuity which still prevails in Bucharest politics. (See Table 3, Founding Elections in the ex-Communist Countries.)

Similarly as in other countries of the Greek-orthodox tradition (such as Serbia, Russia and Romania), Bulgaria's communist elite, after the fall of Zhivkov, attempted to save parts of the regime and reorganize

itself into a "new" party with many of the same old faces. These reformed communists won 47% of the national vote in 1990. It took another year for Bulgaria to move more decisively in the liberal-democratic direction when the reformed communists received only one-third of the votes in the October 1991 election (Table 3). Thus, a change in the governmental elite became possible.

The last explanation offered by Przeworski of the breakdown of authoritarianism points to international or external support for the opposition. This certainly applies to East Germany. The inexperienced opposition could not have organized the enormous rallies without the help of Western TV stations which commented on the rallies and let people know where to go and what to avoid. The Western media did not cause the rebellious demonstrations, but they supported them. In comparison, however, external influence was a much more significant factor in the democratic transitions of Southern European countries which wanted to join the European Community quickly and to show Brussels that they possessed the neccessary democratic prerequisites. Eastern Europe in the years 1989–90 did not have the slightest hope of entering the EEC in the immediate future.

In Poland participation in electoral campaigns by such prominent international figures as Yves Montand and Zbigniew Brzezinski had only a slight impact. In Czechoslovakia few people were willing to listen to the advocates of the "third road," such as Ota Šik and Zdenek Mlynař who returned to their homeland after the collapse of the communist regime.

As far as we can determine, foreign support for new democratic political parties in Eastern Europe was not as significant as the impact of German foundations on the formation of Spanish parties in the 1970s. This may change in the longer run if Christian Democratic and Social Democratic parties become stronger in Eastern Europe. In short, only in the GDR did support from abroad play a decisive role in the process of transition.

The success of peaceful revolutions in Eastern Europe depended also on a unique constellation of various domestic elite sectors. Support on the part of non-political elites varied from country to country. In Poland, Slovakia, and Croatia, for instance, religious elites played an important role in regime transitions. *Solidarnošč*, however, has failed to transform itself into a mass Christian Democratic party largely because its leaders represented a wide range of political opinions from the democratic left to the democratic right, and also because it was too close to the Catholic church. Western Christian Democracy grew out of a more secular tradition. In the 1989 electoral campaign in Poland, many signatures for Solidarity candidates were collected in churches after Sunday mass.

Christian Democratic parties emerged from the October 1991 election with just over 12% of the popular vote and about 14% of the seats in the Sejm (Table 3). These figures, however, may be misleading because many politicians who share Christian (Catholic) Democratic ideology are members of other political parties. If a strong and united Christian Democratic party does become a reality in Poland, it will have to include elites from many presently distinct parties and groups, not all of which trace their origins to the disintegrated *Solidarnošč* movement.

In Protestant GDR the church played a major role as a training ground for the peaceful revolution. But, Lutheran protestantism has a tradition of staying out of politics. Many protestant ministers have withdrawn from political life after unification. Stolpe, the SPD prime minister of Brandenburg in the heart of former Prussia, is the only leading church figure to have survived reunification. Others were simply worn out by heavy work-loads and responsibilities during the early phases of the transition process. The existence of an interdenominational Christian party (CDU) has facilitated a huge increase in CDU votes in the Eastern parts of the country.

In Poland and to a greater extent in Hungary (the **erosion of power** model), a small capitalist class was permitted to grow and thrive even before 1989. This may explain the unusual strength of the Liberals in Hungary. On the whole, however, the relative lack of an established and well-to-do bourgeoisie and the inadequacy of a professional middle class still constitute major obstacles to a rapid and effective development of a market economy and liberal democracy. During recent electoral campaigns, business oriented interest groups ran as political parties in Bulgaria and in Poland, where the so called "friends of beer" received nearly 4% of the popular vote and elected 16 deputies to the *Sejm* (Table 3).

In the initial stages of the transition, Western orientation of the new elites was fairly solid only in Czechoslovakia and Hungary. In many other countries of the former communist world, the cleavage between the radicals and the conservatives is complicated by a rift between nationalists and pro-Westerners. With the appropriate caution, we can distinguish four categories of countries according to their elites' predispositions toward radicalism or conservatism and perceptions of political goals (Table 2).

During transitions to democracy in Southern Europe the military exercised an important function. With the exception of Romania, this has not been the case in Eastern Europe where, until now, the armed forces remained neutral. The Romanian military's appetite for political interference was not, apparently, quelled by its victory over the *securitate*. It would appear that Romania is in serious danger of sliding into

TABLE 2
Attitudes Toward Political Change in Eastern Europe

		Radicalism	Conservatism
Political goals	Indigenous nationalism	Croatia Poland Slovakia Pamyat in Russia	Romania Bulgaria Serbia Former party cadres in CIS
	Western pluralism	Hungary Czech Republic Yeltsin's course	Gorbachev's course

a Latin American style populist authoritarianism. In most other countries the military continued to follow the rule of subservience established under the communist regime. Clearly, the collapse of communist regimes in Eastern Europe was made possible because of the passive attitude of the military which may have been paralyzed by the Brezhnev doctrine.

CLEAVAGE STRUCTURE AND ELITE FORMATION

The considerable differences in the composition of national elites and their relative strengths are the key factors which explain the variance of party systems in Eastern Europe. In many respects, these fledgling party systems appear to resemble those of Third World countries. "Every ism is a somebody-ism" (Blanksten). Party programs written for electoral campaigns were eloquent but resembled each other like eggs. Nevertheless, these post-communist party systems do exhibit certain characteristic features of their own which may be unique in the history of political parties.

Whereas in Southern Europe's new democracies (especially Spain) the consolidation of democracy was quickly apparent in terms of reductions in the number of parties, this has not happened in Eastern Europe. Bulgaria, however, may be an exception. In the second election of 1991, the number of parties represented in the Bulgarian Parliament was reduced to three. In Slovakia, five out of seven existing parties reached the 3% threshold necessary for entry into the national assembly. In the Czech republic the number of parties doubled from four to eight, despite a 5% threshold. The Polish electoral legislation passed in the summer of 1991 after a lengthy and bitter debate did not contain a threshold clause. Nearly twenty parties were accredited as parliamentary clubs sharing seating arrangements in the Sejm, the largest of which

represented barely 13%. With endless bargaining sessions seeking a viable coalition, the result was close to ungovernability. The most important common factor in the evolution of Eastern European parties and elections was the disintegration of forum-type political movements (such as Solidarity in Poland), which have been the instigators and executors of peaceful revolutions. In general, the remaining elites of the *anciens regimes* play a greater role in East European transitions than they did in previous breakdowns of authoritarian systems.

Among the cleavages in post-communist societies, the traditional cleavage between workers and employers is not fully or adequately expressed at the political level. Social Democratic parties are still extremely weak. In the second Bulgarian election in 1991, they lost further ground. In Romania in 1992, they gained about three percentage points in the popular vote. In the two Czechoslovak legislative chambers (prior to separation), Social Democrats held 10 out of 150 seats and 6 out of 75 seats, respectively. Slovak Social Democrats who were led by the late Alexander Dubcek gained only 5 out of 75 seats in the national chamber.

Consequently, workers' interests remain grossly under-represented in the legislatures of Eastern Europe. The beneficiaries of this situation are the reformed communists who now prefer to be called by such sweeter sounding names as "democratic left" or "democratic socialists." They gained 11.9% of the popular vote in Poland in 1991, moved into opposition with 33.1% in Bulgaria, remain the strongest party with 27.7% of the vote in Romania, and hold 35 out of 200 seats in the Czech national assembly and 29 out of 150 seats in the Slovak national chambers (prior to separation). Hungary, which appears to have developed the most mature party system, will hold its next general election in 1994. The same trend of revitalization of the former communist elites and their *nomenklatura* friends became obvious during the recent municipal elections in that country.

A dismal opportunity structure in most ex-communist countries accounts for the resuscitation of old elites. In Hungary about 70% of the population expects a decline in their standard of living, and about 60% has already suffered a real loss in income. Some of the workers who voted for the major new parties or the forum-type movements in the first free elections have returned to the reformed communists. Only in East Germany do public opinion polls indicate that Social Democrats will benefit from the workers' defections from the Christian Democrats. Former *nomenklatura* elites experience better opportunities than many others in the new market-oriented economies. Some East European countries encourage manager buyouts as a privatization strategy which plays into the hands of former nomenklatura elites. Also, some nation-

TABLE 3
Founding elections in the ex-communist countries

	Bulgaria		Czech		Slovak		GDR	Poland		Rumania		Hungary
Parties	1990	1991	1990	1992[x]	1990	1992[x]	1990	1989	1991	1990	1992	1990
Forum	36.2	34.3	53.1	38.0	32.5	49.0	2.9	39.5→UD Solid→POC	12.3 8.7		20.0	42.7
Christ. D	0.02 0.06	0.01	8.6	7.0	18.9	12.0	40.5 6.2	5.6→WAK CD PCD	8.7 2.3 1.1			5.4 KDNP
Liberals	0.02 0.01	2.8 3.2	0.9	7.0	4.4		5.2	5.0 KLD SD KPR	7.4 1.4 2.3	6.4		23.8 SZDSZ 5.4 FIDESZ
Soc. Dem.	0.3 0.2	0.1	3.8	8.0	1.9		21.7	10.0→RDS →SP	0.4 2.1	1.0 0.5	3.0	
Reform Commun.	47.1	33.1	13.4	19.0	18.8	19.0	16.3	31.5 SLD	11.9	66.3	27.7	8.5 MSZP
Ecolog.			3.1		3.2		1.9			2.6 1.4		
National	0.6	1.1			10.0	10.0		KPN	7.5	2.1	10.1 7.7 3.0	
Ethnic & Region	6.0	7.5	7.7		8.5	9.0 0.6		Siles	1.1 0.3	7.2 0.2 0.2	7.4	
function groups	8.3	3.8 0.9	4.7	(beer friends)	2.5		2.2	1.7 PSL → beer f.	8.6 5.4 5.0 3.8	2.5 1.8		11.1 FKgP 0.2 ASZ

→ successor organization of the Solidarity movement
x percent of the seats in the national councils

alist-oriented party elites prefer management ownership programs to sales of public enterprises to foreign investors. Meciar's HZDSm in Slovakia and Moczulski's KPN in Poland represent such policy preferences.

The disintegration of the national forum movements and the increasing conflicts among the democratic party elites add fuel to the concerted attempts by the reformed communists to speak at every opportunity for the unemployed and the underprivileged. In most Eastern European countries, the fledgling entrepreneurial class and the intelligentsia are in sharp conflict. The latter group is grossly over-represented in the governing and competing political elites. Some members of the intelligentsia oppose comprehensive privatization and faster transition to market economy and favor protectionist measures. Some, also, dream of an ideal "third way" between Western capitalism and bureaucratic socialism.

Gradually, the bourgeois elites are beginning to realign themselves into a more program-oriented system of party cleavages. Some combine welfare state ideas of reformed communists with domestic-centered nationalism; others are becoming socio-economic liberals or moderate conservatives. By 1991 it became clear in all those countries where a forum-type movement was the major force in regime transition (Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary) that political elites had to professionalize. As Calfa, former prime minister of Czechoslovakia, put it, "We will have to return to the old established institutions, such as parties. Even in this respect no third road is feasible" (Kohler 1990, 6).

The cleavage between clericalism and secularism is still a part of the political scene. In Poland some opposition has developed recently against the highly politicized Roman Catholicism which once dominated the Solidarity movement and some of its successor groups. In Czechoslovakia and Hungary strong Protestant minorities saw little need to join forces with the Catholics in a Christian Democratic Party. Not by chance, Catholic forces remained weak, except in Slovakia. Christian democracy had no roots in countries with a Greek orthodox tradition, mainly because the church was not prepared to accept the necessary concept of a separation of church and state which underlies a Western non-clerical tradition of Christian democracy. The GDR seems to be an exception. The strength of the CDU in East Germany can be best explained by Western "colonization" of the political system with the approval of the masses. In reality they voted for the Deutschmark instead of a Christian idea of politics.

The cleavage between countryside and metropolitan areas has also retained its strong salience in Eastern Europe in spite of the communist rule. Traditionally, agrarian parties held a very important position in

the party systems of Eastern Europe (von Beyme 1985, 112ff). Except in Poland, where private ownership of farms remained largely undisturbed, the social bases of agrarian parties were destroyed by communism. In Hungary and Bulgaria, however, peasant parties did play a role. In the first democratic elections, some marginalized rural areas voted for the reformed communists. Contrary to liberal expectations, not all collective farmers were in a hurry to embrace individual agrarian ownership with all its risks in the marketplace.

The cleavage between materialists and post-materialists in the area of economic and industrial policy is still of minor importance in Eastern Europe with its enormous economic problems. Green parties remain marginalized. Initially, ecologists felt that their interests were represented by the forum-type movements. These movements later gave up the ecological rhetoric as they modernized and became capitalist-minded. However, as a major restructuring of the old and inefficient industrial base takes shape and eventually economic conditions begin to improve, the cleavage between materialists and post-materialists will undoubtedly gain momentum.

Most countries face problems with the quick enactment of the necessary laws to transform and privatize the economy. Vested interests playing the "socialism under market conditions" game are retarding change from Poland to Bulgaria. Inertia plays into the hands of the reformed communists, as was shown in the October 1990 local elections in Hungary. There is, however, a strong case to be made for the proposition that the fledgling party systems are doomed to succeed. Nearly all post-communist states cherish the hope that they will qualify eventually for admission into the European Community and will reap the benefits of a single European economic market. Consequently, they will make every effort to sustain the basic attributes of democracy, which are a precondition for entering the club.

CONCLUSION: THE PREDICAMENTS OF DEMOCRACY AND MARKET SOCIETY

Research on transitions to democracy won a new dimension through the peaceful revolutions of 1989. The double transformation of a political system and an economic order create special problems which make the prospects for success in Eastern Europe quite uncertain. In four respects, the breakdown of communism has created problems different from those experienced in the breakdown of authoritarianism in the 1970s.

First, the elites of the *anciens régimes* exhibit greater resilience and continuity in the post-communist systems than they did in the post-

fascist states. The political ideas and practices of the old fascist regimes were totally discredited; this is not the case to the same degree with the ex-communist regimes. The reformed communist elites reject the authoritarian/non-democratic practices of the past and, at the same time, call for the continuation and modernization of the national welfare state and the policy of full employment. These ideas appeal to those who do not see themselves, at this stage, as beneficiaries of transition. In the economic sphere, the reformed ex-communist elites attempt to distance themselves from the disastrous command-economy model of the past and to embrace, instead, the idea of a limited free market which, they claim, is not inconsistent with a protectionist state in the social sphere. Again, this approach carries some credibility with the general public.

Second, unlike the post-fascist regimes in Southern Europe, the East European countries must create entirely new economic systems. Spain and Portugal abandoned the quasi-fascist economic *autarky* long before the collapse of their political regimes. The economic growth of Western Europe in the 1960s and 1970s spilled over to the ex-fascist states and blew up the remnants of the old-fashioned structures of the authoritarian political system. Eastern Europe, on the other hand, is facing a unique dilemma: access to political power was relatively easy but establishing a free market economy and society from above by government action may prove to be an insurmountable contradiction.

Third, the Southern European countries were offered a powerful incentive for overthrowing authoritarianism with the very real opportunity of entering the EEC as soon as they satisfied the essential prerequisites of liberal democracy. With the exception of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech and Slovak republics, a similar opportunity does not exist for the other new East European regimes which, in consequence, are not likely to receive from the West the same degree of economic, financial, and technical assistance for the reconstruction of their economies. The "closed-shop mentality" of the Southern European latecomers to democracy willing to veto the accession of new members to the EC has been broken only with respect to Poland, Hungary and the former Czechoslovakia — under pressure from Germany and in exchange for a more generous EC budget for regional aid which has been adopted at the EC summit in Edinburgh.

Fourth, in the former fascist states of Southern Europe transitions to democracy became irreversible, but a backlash in Eastern Europe still cannot be excluded largely because of an absence of synchronization between the process of democratization and the process of transition to a stable market economy. Recent surveys reveal that a large percentage of the populations (CSFR 73%, Poland 59%, Hungary 43%) believe that democracy functions only in rich countries. Distrust of the governing

elites and disbelief in their capacities to handle an economic crisis or even manage economic affairs are widespread. Many advocate stronger government (Hungary 68%, CSFR 37%, Poland 33%). Anxieties about slow political change are spreading in some countries (Hungary 70%, Poland 63%). In CSFR, on the other hand, 40% feel that political change proceeds too fast. Only in Czechoslovakia does there appear to be a degree of trust in the good intentions of the rulers, but disbelief in their governing abilities is even higher than in Hungary and Poland (*Ostmitteleuropa* 1991, 334). It is not inconceivable that, after the brutal experiment with communism, the current wave of rapid and threatening modernization may, in some countries, release strong indigenous nationalist tendencies which will endanger democracy.

In Table 2, we suggest four categories of post-communist states grouped according to popular attitudes towards political change. A classification such as this offers no more than a snapshot of reality. Some countries have already moved (for instance Croatia) from one category to another. It is impossible to tell at this stage which of the four basic tendencies will eventually prevail in any of the successor states of the former Soviet Union. Authoritarian tendencies are latent in a number of countries. Without them, neither Yeltsin nor Walesa could have credibly threatened to resolve governmental or economic crises by a personal takeover of all executive powers.

Bertolt Brecht in his poem "The Praise of Communism" defined communism "as a simple matter which is difficult to implement." For the transition to liberal democracy and market economy, one is tempted to turn the argument around: market economy and liberal democracy are difficult matters which are easily implemented — under the condition, however, that the "invisible hand" and authentic pluralism get a chance.

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