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PREFACE

1989, with its momentous changes in a recast Europe and despite the initial exhilaration shared by millions, concurrently led the people of Eastern Europe on a venture into the relative unknown. The rapid dismantling of the communist monopoly of power and its replacement with reformist policies and democratic institutions in Eastern Europe and, subsequently, in the Soviet Union posed numerous challenges and difficulties for the region's populations.

"The Problems of Transition: From Communism to Democracy" provided the theme for a one-day symposium on April 13, 1991, organized by the Lemnitzer Center for NATO and European Community Studies at Kent State University. A prime objective of the symposium was to have scholars from Eastern Europe present their interpretations of critical developments, and it is these contributions that are included in this volume. Ferenc Gazdag offers a historical perspective in "Nationalism, Regionalism, and Integration in Central and Eastern Europe," while Ludmila Dziewiecka-Bokun focuses on one of the outstanding problems confronting the new leaders in "Towards Democracy: Welfare State Versus Welfare Society." Michal Rozbicki, as a Pole based in America, comments on "Problems in Understanding and Interpreting Eastern Europe's Transition from Communism to Democracy: An Eastern European's View from America." Although much has happened in Eastern Europe since the papers were first delivered, the approaches of the three authors have lasting value in analyzing complex problems associated with transition.

Other speakers and their topics at the symposium were: Dick Combs (staff member, U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee), "The American View"; Georges Delcoigne (Free University of Brussels), "The Western European View"; Georgy Sviatov (Academy of Sciences, Moscow), "The Soviet View." William Bishop (Denison University), Barbara Clements (The University of Akron), and Klaus Gommlich (Kent State University) served as commentators. Dr. Fernand Welter, administrator of cultural relations and liaison with universities in the NATO Information Directorate in Brussels, arranged to have transportation costs from Europe covered for Delcoigne, Dziewiecka-Bokun, and Gazdag, three of NATO's research fellows.

Members of the Lemnitzer Center contributing to the success of the symposium were Lawrence S. Kaplan, then director and now emeritus director, Robert W. Clawson, then associate director (research), Mark R. Rubin, associate director (administration), and Sean Kay (graduate student assistant). Mark R. Rubin also played a critical role in the production of this publication. As always, the indispensable skills and services of Ruth V. Young, the Lemnitzer Center's administrative coordinator, guided us through many organizational problems.
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NATIONALISM, REGIONALISM, AND INTEGRATION IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

Ferenc Gazdag

Much has indeed been written and said about Eastern Europe since the dramatic developments of 1989. That year, "the phenomenon," as Timothy Garton Ash labels it, witnessed the swift collapse in six Central and Eastern European countries of systems variously called, depending on one's viewpoint, developed socialism, totalitarianism, Stalinism, and the dictatorship of poverty. Not even the most daring devotees of the domino theory would have thought that this concept would ever be implemented to the immediate west of the Soviet Union and with such unanticipated intensity and speed.

Future historians will long be preoccupied with providing detailed records of the downfall of the Communist regimes and with analyzing, individually or comparatively, the dramatic changes in these countries. By stating this, I do not wish to deny the necessity and usefulness of contemporary investigations. I merely want to express my reservation that contemporary historians simply cannot discern certain processes because of their own immediacy to the subject. It is possible, however, to relate the significant differences in how these changes came about: through negotiations in Hungary and Poland, with the so-called "velvet" revolution in Czechoslovakia, with a process heading toward unification in East Germany, through a party coup in Bulgaria, and from a bloody series of events in Romania, concluding with the overthrow of a reigning family clan.

Analysis of current political developments most frequently places emphasis on two elements characterizing the recent fall of Communist-led regimes: the rapidity of the process and the lack of violence. Changes in most instances, except in Romania, came about through talks. There are still other common elements, the most typical of which is the theme of negation. The first thing rejected by societies just freed from the clutches of Communist parties has been the distressing history of the previous decades. "Down with Communism!", "Never again Communism!", "No more Communist parties, socialism, Soviet model, Warsaw Pact, and Yalta system!"—all could be seen on the posters and headlines of the now uncensored press. People now proclaimed that they were through with the omnipotent party, godlike first secretaries, local potentates, and that they were fed up with Ceaucescu, Stalin, Lenin, Marx, historical materialism, and the populist system, under which the interests of the people actually counted the least.

Among the several factors contributing to the dramatic transition in regimes, two must be underscored. The first to be mentioned, because of its effects, is the policy of perestroika associated with Mikhail Gorbachev. The Soviet leader advised the Polish authorities that Solidarity should be allowed to share power. Gorbachev was again the one who warned Erich Honecker and Milos Jakes of the potential consequences for resisting the mainstream of history. Finally, it was only Moscow that could keep Soviet troops in their barracks during the critical hours. These situations provided the very rare moment when the peoples of Central and Eastern Europe witnessed benefits from the dependency of their top leaders on Moscow. Allowing former satellite countries to
determine their own course was a distinct departure from Leonid Brezhnev’s doctrine of limited sovereignty. Credit for this positive turn has to be given to Gorbachev. Having granted the green light, Moscow then observed events moving much faster and further than originally anticipated.3

The other factor significantly associated with the changes in Central and Eastern Europe is the Helsinki accords signed in 1975. The Gorbachev factor can only partially explain why the ruling Communist elites did not mobilize their still significant security forces to protect the system. It is not merely an assumption to state that it was impossible for the leaders to unleash their repressive forces, because in the Eastern European capitals, except in Bucharest, the 1975 Helsinki Treaty had been adopted and the leaders, shaken in their missionary zeal, were looking toward the West for acceptance. During the years since its signing, the human rights sections of the Helsinki accords became a part of general thinking, fundamentally impeding a Tienanmen-type counterstroke.

**Back to Europe**

One of the most frequently used slogans of the emergent political forces was “Back to Europe!” which, except to Eastern Europeans, themselves, is one of the most difficult things to explain to outsiders. Why do people already in Europe want to go back there? What can be the meaning of a demand containing a tautology? The most direct answer is to be found in the invasion of thousands of shoppers from behind the old iron curtain on department stores in Vienna and Berlin and in their craving for freezers, VCRs, satellite dishes, and other electronic equipment, which they fastened on roof racks of lumbering Trabants and Ladas, the latter representative of an outdated technological era. Eastern Europeans primarily associated Western Europe, now accessible through opened borders, with easily acquired consumer goods. The consumer society that Eastern Europeans had only learned about from newspapers up to that time now lay within their reach, but in this euphoric state they momentarily forgot that their income and convertible Eastern European currencies would not allow them to buy many of those goods.

Beyond the simplistic slogan “Back to Europe!” lies, in a general sense, the aspiration for a more appealing social system.4 The image of Europe in the programs of new political parties has concentrated on the feasibility of reproducing in Eastern Europe the results and technical achievements of Western European social and economic development. More concretely, it means the philosophy of liberalism, the introduction of a market economy, the assertion of human and personal rights, the securing of minority rights, and the implementation of parliamentary systems with multiparty and free elections. All these emphases seemed to be the ultimate objectives to be reached by societies emerging from the grip of single-party dictatorship. By now, however, even Eastern Europe has begun to recognize that most of them are only means. Yet, when these objectives were originally expressed and asserted as political demands, all we actually knew was that these policies could be associated with the economic accomplishments of welfare societies holding a firm legitimate basis and the social structure of social democracy (e.g., the Swedish model).

Such an image of Europe indirectly nourished the hope that their mere realization would cure all of the problems of Eastern Europe. This same feeling was reinforced by such arguments as: the communist systems were doomed to death in Eastern Europe from the beginning, the countries involved had only put up with the political structure because it had been forced upon them by Moscow, and communism was simply incompatible with the political culture of Central and Eastern Europe. There has been much less said about why this culture ended right at the western borders, however deliberately drawn, of the Soviet Union. Even less thought has been given to the fact that, if according to the logic of a bipolar world order, Eastern Europe, having digressed from its normal historic route, returns to the mainstream of development, where exactly will that entry point be?5 The “Back to Europe!” supporters suggest it will be somewhere at the level of welfare societies at present. According to the rules of history, though, even in the best case, it would be at development levels at some point after World War II, or, in the worst case, even earlier.

The “Back to Europe!” slogan, however, has some other facets, as well. In 1975 when the Helsinki Final Act was signed, the future, it seemed, would unfold symmetrically: everybody thought that the presence of the two superpowers on the continent would slowly decrease at basically the same pace. But more recent developments indicate that this process evolved asymmetrically.6 One superpower is yielding its strategic positions while the other is maintaining them. George Bush in 1990 pledged his NATO allies that American troops would stay in Europe as long as the allies wanted them. At the same time he assured Gorbachev that the United States would not take advantage of the situation against the Soviets. This, however, is only one side of the coin, since German unification alone, which occurred as a result of the changes, has fundamentally altered the balance of power in Europe. With the signing of the Paris Charter in November 1990, the former World War II allies lost their right to limit the sovereignty of Germany. Consequently, the center of gravity on the continent has shifted toward Germany, and German interests will play a bigger role when decisions are made concerning Europe.7

It can be argued that change in Eastern Europe has probably happened at the most inconvenient moment for Western Europe. Nineteen ninety-two is intended to be an qualitative turning point in terms of creating the internal common market and Western European integrity. The momentum of the integration process, debated even among the European Community’s members (e.g., Britain’s critical positions), is distinctly disturbed by German unification and Eastern Europe’s knocking on the door. Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Poland openly express their ambitions to become members of the European Community. The response they have been receiving is that the EC is presently preoccupied with the challenge of completing the 1992 process and that only associated membership may be considered for these three states.8

Francis Fukuyama’s controversial article, “The End of History?”, introduced a strongly argued, new element into the far-reaching debate on Europeanism.9 Fukuyama states that this century, one that started with boundless confidence in the final victory of Western liberal democracy, has, after running full circle, returned to its origins—not to the end of ideology or to the convergence of socialism and capitalism, as we had earlier thought, but to the unequivocal triumph of economic and political liberalism.
Understandably, as is often the case with such provocative positions, there have been differing reactions to it in America and in Europe. For American political thinkers, Fukuyama’s article has diverted discussion from “the fall of America,” represented in Paul Kennedy’s analysis, by introducing a new theory, the so-called “end theory,” in debates about international politics. In Eastern Europe, however, attention has focused on other aspects of Fukuyama’s article. Fukuyama writes that the other great contradiction is nationalism and other forms of racial or ethnic awareness which cannot be resolved by liberalism. Many conflicts have certainly had their origins in nationalism since the battle of Jena in 1806. In this century two disastrous wars began among the more prosperous countries as outbursts of nationalism. Though developments after 1945 indicated, to a certain extent, calmed nationalistic sentiments in Europe, these passions remained very strong in the Third World. Nationalism historically posed a great threat to liberalism in Germany, and it is still a threat in certain parts of postwar Europe. Eastern Europe belongs to those parts and that is the main reason why the attention of analysts there is on other themes in Fukuyama’s article. Even Fukuyama admits that his critics are right in saying that democratic revolution has by no means been triumphant in the whole world. Much hard work and effort are required for consolidating democracy in Eastern Europe. But before drawing any conclusions, it is worth noting Gertrude Himmelfarb’s warning that we may even in the best case only know what has already happened and not what will happen.

If one applies Fukuyama’s article to Eastern European conditions, the most important question to ask is: Where is Eastern Europe now in terms of development compared to its closer and broader environment? All the newly born Eastern European democracies must resolve the two issues of self-definition and legitimation. It is a historical paradox that, while they are pursuing these objectives, they must all go back to the recent past, to the model that had existed before the Communists took power. After the cold war political division of Eastern and Western Europe, the original geographical practice of North, South, Central, and East Europe is being used again by analysts. The same applies to the internal borders of European development. The artificial East-West division of the bipolar world order is replaced again by borders based on the diversity of historical development and on religious and cultural differences. Thus Eastern Europe consists of the republics of the European parts of the former Soviet Union (Russia, Belarus, Ukraine), Romania, Bulgaria and the eastern region of the former Yugoslavia, while Central Europe includes, following the route of Western Christianity, the three Baltic Republics, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Austria, Germany, Croatia, and Slovenia. After the fall of the Soviet-imposed system, these nations have returned to the region of their former organic development and, in a broader sense, to the capitalist world system. Each country is thus finding its own place and own level. The definition of this level will probably provide the key to several unresolved questions.

One can note that there is an obvious revival of nationalist ideas in Central and Eastern Europe. Fukuyama also states that there are now only two rivals in the world for liberalism that have won over communism and fascism: religious fundamentalism and nationalism. The region for the former is the Near East and for the latter is Central and Eastern Europe. It is not exclusively Fukuyama’s ideas that are interesting here, because he intends to prove that nationalism is not irreconcilable with liberalism. He argues that the majority of the nationalist movements in the world do not have political programs that demand more than the independence of one ethnic group from another group or people.

Immanuel Wallerstein, in his description of the world capitalist system, notes that while the division of state and economy is real—which means that politics does not rule over economy—the state nevertheless has always played a role in the development and protection of the economy. It follows that economy functions above nations with no political forces capable of completely controlling it. Political forces, however, are organized in states. The starting point of Wallerstein’s typology is the nation-state, but he says that only the states in the developed center are real nation-states. States in the peripheries are necessarily weak, and their national character is not clear-cut. This very weakness of their state and national identity poses one of the obstacles for breaking out of the periphery. These countries understandably try by every means to strengthen their statehood, which usually leads to two typical distortions. It is no mere chance that the two key slogans of their development ideologies are industrialism and nationalism. And this is the point where we can return to Eastern Europe again. The four and one-half decades of sovietization and standardized Central and Eastern Europe were characterized by a massive campaign for development and modernization, primarily based on one of the essential elements of Stalinism, “socialism in one country.” Nationalism was simply obscured by the global idea of proletarian internationalism serving the interests of the Soviet Union.

Yet national diversity in Eastern Europe did not disappear under Soviet domination. The changes that took place in 1989 and the structural shifts that have developed since then clearly indicate that the fresh political forces in Central and Eastern Europe, without any exception, recreated these nations. Demonstrators marched under national banners throughout the region. They sang national songs and celebrated the reemergence of their nations. Wherever one goes the idea of nation and the nation-state has come to the fore, especially after German unification. The question can therefore be asked: What is the proper meaning of nation and nation-state at the end of the twentieth century?

**Paths of Nation Development in Europe**

The category of nation is one of the most challenging notions for a contemporary observer. Experts disagree on the accurate content of the notion, and it has a different meaning in the eastern and western areas of Europe. It has been in Europe, the birthplace of nations, that this historical category has reached its highest stage of development. Its most horrible aberrations have also occurred in Europe.

Professor I. Dioszegi writes that the first step along the long road for Europe to rise to the level of nation was ideology. At the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century, successive theories emerged defining nation as the communal mode of existence, in fact, one dominant over all the other modes (e.g., estates, classes of society). These theories provided answers as to how this community should realize itself. Although these theories represented many differing views, their differences are relatively easy to explain from a historical perspective.
The first level, the category of the "classical nation," is typical for Western Europe. In France and England it was not difficult to define an ethnic existence. The state, as a future framework for nation, had already existed. Additionally, the Enlightenment's concept of the nation did not have an ethnic content. The nation was the ultimate realization of democracy, thereby countering the exclusiveness of the nation of nobility from feudal times. French philosophers, such as Voltaire, Rousseau, and Montesquieu, had simply defined nation as the people who acquired political sovereignty.

This classical model of the Enlightenment, however, could not be applied in Central Europe, since many small states existed within empires there. Fichte and Herder, the great German classical philosophers, overcame this difficulty by developing the concept of "nation-state," which rendered a completely different interpretation of the French concept. They contended that the nation is identical with the state and that the members of a nation are the citizens living within the state. When the concept of nation-state was created, it was still to be realized, but very soon the ideas were transferred into political slogans. The theoretical basis for action ultimately led to the establishment of a unified Germany and Italy.

In Eastern Europe there were too many obstacles for the realization of nation-states, since both the framework of the state and the requisite homogeneous linguistic communities were missing. The third concept of nation, the "culture-nation," was born here in the writings of Frantisek Palacky and Vuk Karadzic.

In the concept of the culture-nation, categories such as language, common history and spirit acquired importance. In compliance with these norms, a nation lives through its language, history, and customs. Of course, typically for the Romantic period, a great part of the theories associated with the above categories tended to serve up distorted accounts (e.g., the Hun origin of the Hungarians, the Dacian origin of the Romans, Slav Illyrianism). Nevertheless, we may say that the concept of culture-nation was practically an accurate reflection of Eastern European conditions, which were two historical steps behind Western Europe. At the same time, these theories provided the basis for mobilizing these peoples to become national communities and to work out the political programs for self-determination, as well.

The historical-political implementation of the three great conceptual models took very different forms. It did not lack internal shocks and external conflicts characteristic of great historical changes—and produced dissimilar results. In Western Europe, where nothing really impeded the accomplishment of national self-determination, the transformation was part of an organic development and resulted in a sound, relatively balanced national identity. In Central Europe the process of the development of nations and nation-states did not advance smoothly. National feeling did not develop fully and assumed somewhat distorted forms. To demonstrate the results of this distortion, it is enough to mention Germany, which, in the course of its historical development as a nation, played the main role in launching two world wars. ¹⁷

Even further to the east the practical realization of the idea of nation met with additional difficulties. The programs of the theocrats for culture-nations could in large part be understood by the people since both the German and Italian states had already been founded. However, in Eastern Europe the development of statehood almost everywhere came to an impasse. In the Habsburg Empire, for example, the Hungarians obtained independence within the context of internal politics after the Compromise of 1867 but the Czechs and Croats did not. As a result of the great historical and political changes stemming from World War I, a structure emerged in Eastern Europe in which culture-nation theories approached realization: a number of small communities that called themselves nation-states came about after the falls of the Ottoman Turkish Empire and the Habsburg Empire, and the temporary recession of the Russian Empire. This structure happened to be rather flawed, though, and could not resolve geographical problems arising from the complicated ethnic relations and the conflicting interests of the powers in the region. The result, if it is a result at all, was that the whole Central-Eastern European region remained such a seedbed of conflicting security interests that the national identity of the peoples living there became distorted. ¹⁸

Because of the imperfectly drawn borders of the states, the region's small nations became embroiled in territorial disputes. The nation concept focused on the flawed demand for nation based on language. The imposed judgments of the Yalta system could only change so much, and Marxist internationalism temporarily covered open conflicts. Some individuals believed that these unresolved historical problems could actually be eliminated forever. By now, we are well aware that it cannot be done. After removing the communist cover, it suddenly became clear that old national prejudices had been preserved almost intact under Stalinism and post-Stalinism and that today they have opened the old, half-healed sores, one after the other. While the fortunate states of Western Europe are preparing for 1992, the Central and Eastern European countries, belonging to the semi-periphery, hopelessly struggle with the restored historical challenges of becoming nations and confronting the requirements of modernization and democratization. And success in surmounting obstacles caused by a historical time lag and different development does not depend exclusively on their own efforts.

The horizontal and vertical integration of a modern nation-state can be used for explaining this situation. A modern nation-state is considered horizontally integrated when it does not threaten the territorial integrity of its neighbors, and, conversely, when this state is not the object and subject of territorial demands by neighboring countries—in short, when the frontiers of the state are stable. We know from experience that countries in a region must work together to achieve this status. This process ended in Western Europe during the nineteenth century, but, because of Germany, which belongs to both Western and Central Europe, it became final only recently after World War II. In the case of Central European states, horizontal integration has become more stable during the last forty years. Only certain sections of the borders in Central Europe are still disputed. In Eastern Europe, though, especially in the Balkans, the process continues.

The horizontal integration of modern nation-states cannot be separated from their vertical integration. A modern nation can be regarded as vertically integrated when its institutions are designed to handle, without resorting to violence, such conflicts that derive from internal societal divisions and that occur or are produced due to existing clashes of interest. European history demonstrates that the societies most successful in this respect were those experienced in multiparty, parliamentary democracy, free elections, free press, trade unions, the right to strike, etc. It is also assumed that the state in these cases is a tool for maintaining legal order and serving democracy and is not an autonomous political force.¹⁹ The process of vertical integration in Western Europe was basically completed after World War II with the establishment of democratic institutions in Italy and West Germany. In the Southern European states of Greece,
Portugal, and Spain it only happened by the end of the 1970s. This extraordinary historical process has only now occurred in Central Europe, whose peoples have divested themselves of Communist power. Yet it must be stated that it is still to be carried out completely in areas of the Balkans.

Opinions are also divided on what alternatives the nation-state in Central and Eastern Europe has under the present circumstances. One argument maintains that the process of achieving national sovereignty in the region is basically positive. Thus, R. Dahrendorf, in writing about the unification of Germany, one of the most controversial nation-states, contends that those peoples who would abandon the framework of the national-state would give up the only effective guarantee of their own basic rights. Those who assert that the nation-state is dispensable, actually regard, however unintentionally, civic rights as dispensable. Others write that the institution of the nation-state is outdated and that the direction of developments in our age simply makes this nineteenth-century category anachronistic.

According to Peter Glotz, there are two main tendencies in our era: we are inclined, culturally, toward small communities but, economically, toward supranational structures. Dahrendorf, on the other hand, points out that the above two tendencies do not affect arguments concerning the positive nature of the nation-state. Human rights are based on the premise that politically we go beyond small communities and establish institutions that provide the framework for western bourgeois democracy. We may therefore say that constitutionalism has become a patriotic virtue in Germany and in Central Europe, as well. Constitutionalism implies a constitution usually associated with a specific place and the people living there. It relates to such people who form a community and are proud of their institutions. The strength of patriotism based on constitutionalism lies in the fact that it relates to the rules of coexistence as opposed to the size of the territory, the strength of the economy, or the superiority of a race.

One can object to Dahrendorf's arguments by pointing out that it is not assured that what is true in Germany, in the euphoric moment of unification, is in the same way valid for the whole of Central and Eastern Europe. The emphasis is on "how" here. Though acquiring complete sovereignty carries the possibility for Eastern European nations to become "normal," there is also a great danger, as well, that by enforcing self-determination they will get caught up in the wrong historical patterns which hinder internal democratization through an inability to leave behind territorial debates in foreign relations.

Is it possible to break with the nation-state under the present circumstances? This question is of importance not only because of the chaotic conditions surrounding these nations, but also because the Soviet Union is now no more directly present in Eastern Europe. Suddenly, a lot of things have become possible. For example, sociologist Peter Kende offers an alternative by adapting the concept of "political-nation" for Central-Eastern European conditions. He notes that in this region there are no equivalents to the Western European form of nations regarding permanent territories, homogeneous communities, and national identity. In Central-Eastern Europe there are ethnic communities connected by a common language and culture and partly by common history; additionally, there are states whose borders were determined by the treaties at the end of the two world wars. These treaties obviously referred to the historical, geographical, ethnic, and economical features of the region but applied them rather unsatisfactorily. It has to be observed that neither the ethnic communities nor the states there constitute Western European-style forms. Since it is virtually impossible on the European continent to change state borders or to adjust them to ethnic communities (according to the Helsinki process and Paris Charter), ethnic communities have to accept that their separation and broken national unity will remain unchanged.

These communities have to be prepared to maintain relationships with their people living in other states within the existing international framework. On the other hand, these states should also note that they are only partially nation-states. The ethnic, linguistic, and religious divisions of the region under their control place limits on their cultural and linguistic unity. These two theoretical possibilities are obviously possibilities only. What the nations of Central-Eastern Europe will choose, if they choose at all, will for the most part now depend on the peoples who live there and less on outside forces that have had influence in the region in the past.

Prospects for Self-Organization in Central and Eastern Europe

Soviet influence in Central and Eastern Europe diminished at the same time that Communist leaders were driven out of power, mechanisms of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance ended for economic relations (e.g., by the use of convertible currencies in trade accounting instead of rubles), and Soviet troops were withdrawn. While many observers contend that there is a power vacuum now that the Soviets have been forced into the background, others argue that it is not a power vacuum but rather a so-called grey area. Whichever opinion one accepts, the question arises over what role Eastern Europe will play on the continent at the turn of the century and under what circumstances. More generally, will Central and Eastern Europe be capable of self-organization?

Historical analogies do not provide useful guidance. The first broad-based attempt to resolve the diverse and complicated problems of Central and Eastern Europe in our century came after World War I when the victorious powers imposed treaties on the defeated states. The second opportunity offered itself after World War II, but similar mistakes were made. Decision makers could not put an end to the situations that had caused conflicts, nor could they eliminate antagonisms perpetuating the division of nations then or later. The thaw now may cause a flood. The current enthusiasm for democratization and greater independence that binds the several nations together can very soon be replaced by attitudes of jealousy and rivalry. A positive outcome will result only if there is a concurrent transition to a liberal bourgeois democracy by the various states.

Yet the historical patterns of national development in Central and Eastern Europe appear up to now regrettably project the potential for discord and conflict. For example, one has only to reflect on the Czech-Slovak discord, Slovak-Hungarian disputes, Romanian-Hungarian conflicts, and Serb-Croat, Serb-Slovene, and Serb-Albanian clashes. In all fairness, one can also cite some factors inspiring regional unity. The withdrawal of the Soviets offers a unique historical opportunity for the people of the region to determine their own destinies.

There is, however, a paradox. At the same time that these nations are more sovereign than at any time during their modern development, they are also quite
despondent and in miserable straits. Economic backwardness, the general lack of capital, the great extent of indebtedness (in some cases as great as for Latin American countries), and the devastation of the environment are all burdens which could be borne better if the nations were regionally united. Historians may propose the confederation of states as the most feasible arrangement, but politicians ask whether it can be realized and whether such solutions are indeed successful elsewhere. They also ask if it is at all possible to approach the developed countries in economic and social terms.

Europe does offer some successful examples during the last half-century. Finland before World War II reflected an average level of economic development for Central and Eastern Europe. Now it has reached prosperous levels, although no one can deny that Finland accomplished this advance despite Soviet influence. Less developed European countries that joined the European Community are also making good economic progress, and it is anticipated that they will reach the upper levels within one or two decades. Spain is a good example because it had also gone through the painful process of eliminating an autocratic system without falling into civil war. From these examples it is therefore possible to conclude that countries can catch up with the development centers. However, it seems almost certain that such progress cannot be achieved on a narrow national basis.

The evolution of Western Europe after World War II can be cited as another model for regional integration. National developments there cannot be compared with Eastern Europe because of the center-periphery relation, but an analogy can nonetheless be applied since Western Europe was unable to overcome the difficulties of national conflicts. Although one may generally speak about a common European civilization, history has produced numerous national and regional conflicts in this region—including such deep conflicts as those between the French and Germans. Yet Western Europe has overcome the stage of national conflicts, albeit with considerable American support, and open conflict over territories is most improbable there. A number of reasons for this situation in the post-1945 era can be mentioned: the radical decrease in the relative power of the states, the demand for external economic assistance, no more sources of strife from colonial sources, and the progress of internal democratization. Perhaps the two most important reasons, however, were the willingness of a superpower, the United States, to extend economic, political, and military assistance, and the external threat earlier posed—but no longer valid—by the Soviet Union and the Communist movement.

Two factors proved decisive in setting Western European integration on the right road. The first came in the form of the $17 billion capital injection of the Marshall Plan. The second was the operation of organizations and institutions established for implementation of the Marshall Plan, which protected participant states from pauperization and enabled them to achieve remarkable growth. Concurrently, the fear of communism prevented old political forces from becoming strong. The possibility of a Marshall Plan for Eastern Europe has often been mentioned in recent years. Some analysts believe economic levels in the region cannot be improved without enormous aid, but still others reason that it is unwise to grant additional billions in loans to a region already swimming in debt.

If we want to apply the analogy of Western Europe to Eastern Europe, we can notice that, in the case of the latter, two elements are missing for repeating the postwar politics of "offering gingerbread and threatening with a cudgel." There is no new policy similar to the concept of the Marshall Plan, and the Central and Eastern European countries do not seem adequately afraid of the specter of economic collapse. The only source of some faint hope for improvement is that some countries in the European Community continue to emphasize the European Community's responsibility for the eastern part of the continent.
NOTES


2 J. Rupnik, The Other Europe (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1988); for a political survey of changes in the six Central and Eastern European states, see Current History 89, no.551 (December 1990).


10 Hungarians were in the position to read much about this debate. The Hungarian review, Világosság, nos. 2-3 (1990), devoted a special issue to this topic with a number of prominent contributors, including Allan Bloom, Pierre Hassner, Irving Kristol, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, and Samuel Huntington.


TOWARDS DEMOCRACY: WELFARE STATE VERSUS WELFARE SOCIETY

Ludmila Dziewiecka-Bokun

The welfare state, a major domestic peace formula of developed capitalist democracies during the 1960s and 1970s, involves the explicit obligation of the state apparatus to provide assistance and support, either in money or in kind, to those citizens who have specific needs and are exposed to the risks of the market economy.

Among advanced capitalist democracies, states vary considerably in their emphasis on welfare which, together with other determinants of welfare state development, affects the level of social integration. With its multifunctional and heterogeneous set of political and administrative institutions, the state is expected to limit and mitigate social conflicts as well as to balance the power relations of labor and capital. Claus Offe aptly concludes, "The welfare state has been celebrated throughout the postwar period as the political solution to societal contradictions." 1

Analyzing the welfare function of the state in Eastern Europe's present period of transition is risky in several respects. The topic is fraught with pitfalls everywhere. It is conditioned by the totalitarian burden, whose main elements are the economy and a post-totalitarian mentality. It is strongly connected with social emotions and attitudes, especially with a form of mild resignation termed "learned helplessness" by social psychologists. One must also acknowledge that the transition to democracy in postcommunist countries has no precedents, a situation summed up by the observation: "The sudden collapse of the socialist regimes was not anticipated even by experts." 2 No theory or models for the transition from communism existed, and the context for functioning of the state has been in flux. Moreover, the transition process toward democracy in Eastern European countries is occurring simultaneously with the construction of the new European order. This topic can, consequently, be understood only within a historical perspective.

The new shaping of the state's welfare function during this period of radical economic and political changes in Eastern European countries indicates two mainstreams of activity. First, there is a rejection of the state monopoly in the social sphere and the creation of new opportunities for activity in other bodies and organizations, especially at the level of regional administration and including programs for self-assistance and social charity. Second, there is a privatization of social policy, that is, a commercialization of the process of satisfying the majority of social needs.

Actually, one can notice the gradual withdrawal of the state from responsibility in support of particular welfare policy subsystems, such as housing, culture, medical care, and education. A sharp drop in state expenditures for the socio-cultural sphere and a reduction in the social functions of state enterprises are evident. It has been accompanied by a noticeable decrease in the real income of individuals, increased unemployment, decapitalization of the social infrastructure, and a slowing down of its modernization. Concurrently, the inflow of foreign capital and the projected pace of the
privatization trend are not occurring at anticipated levels. Instead, there is increased emigration, particularly among younger people. Also, in an unequal struggle, the work individuals seems more and more to be directed at exploiting loopholes and inefficiencies in new laws and the economic system for individual short-term benefits.

The declared or demonstrated indifference of postcommunist governments toward have resulted in many conflicts between state and society. The increasingly evident in gaining popular acceptance, a necessary precondition for legitimizing the rules on which political power would like to be based.

Economic and political reforms are supposed to change the existing social and economic order in such a way as to guarantee social progress. Comparing the welfare function of states in the several world regions indicates that modern, developed societies require a welfare state of some sort for reasons of political and economic efficiency. This is so because the state—in reality the government—has to channel and resolve conflicts and to process citizen and group demands.

Objectively and independently of the political system's conditioning, social life is characterized by many contradictions that threaten the preservation of a particular social order. In light of this fact, the state, which is the special organization within modern societies, the ability to preserve law and order, with the objective of creating social peace, has become a prerequisite in the process of extending state activities to dangers of preserving social order occur. Moreover, the series of state activities leading to become a worldwide phenomenon, and is considered a universal aspect of modernization.

Citizens in Western democracies expect their governments to protect them from falling below a certain standard of living. Generally speaking, regimes that make redistributions in the form of social rights secure legitimacy, while those which reduce large to the citizenry, any manner, falter in this area.

Postcommunist countries have to create democratic systems that are effective and secure. They also need to construct modern, economically developed, active, and responsible societies. The first task requires new outlooks on the state's role in society, the state's functions, and state-citizen relations. The new regimes must also determine the fields of the state's exclusive competence and responsibility, while establishing new guidelines for sharing these responsibilities with other social forces and their new ability to assume part of the responsibility for social welfare. The state has no monopoly in welfare production, nor is welfare the primary concern of the state. Comparative analysis guards against the facile assumption that there is one best way to secure welfare and shows that the state's role in maintaining welfare in responsibility to provide welfare for all of its citizens. By contrast, neither the Americans nor the British have a strong sense of the state as an active agent in society. In the United States, the individual, supplemented by the family, community, ethnic, and other communal groups, is still regarded as having primary responsibility for personal welfare. In Britain, the tendency is to meddle distinctions between state and society. The Japanese share with Europeans the concept of the state as an overarching institution, responsible for the good and ill of society. But in Japan the family and, for those working in large organizations, the employer, undertake responsibilities that supplement the individual effort and substitute for the state provision of welfare. As Gosta Esping-Andersen writes, "the logic of any welfare state can only become clear when we examine the interplay of public and private provision."

State, market, and household recognize the existence of a mixture of resources by shifting welfare from one sector to another. From an overall societal perspective, the existence of interdependencies blurs distinctions between the state, the market, and the household. Interdependencies occur because of differences between the parties involved.

To sum up, welfare is the product of the whole of society. Total welfare in the society is likely to be greater if there are multiple sources rather than a single monopoly supplier. Historically, households, the market, and the state are the main providers of welfare. An understanding of their conjoint importance involves thinking in terms of the contribution that each of these very different social institutions makes toward total welfare in society. Consequently, to understand welfare in society, one must understand what the state does and does not contribute to the welfare-mix. One therefore has to examine how it interacts with the market and other alternative structures, such as, for example, the family, church, and charitable organizations.

For the newly born, weak Eastern European democracies, this problem is important in political as well as in social terms. First of all, one has to refute the myth that either the market or the state is more naturally equipped to dispense welfare. In that part of the world, those who had chosen the state as the almost unique provider of social welfare failed. Their present opponents try to implement the opposite option, based on the nineteenth-century liberal idea, that, without the intervention of political authority, an "invisible hand" would automatically allocate society's goods and services among a specific aggregate of individual actors. Free men and free money are considered to be prerequisites of democracy and a market economy. Moreover, the welfare activity of the state has come to be viewed, once again, as a burden imposed upon the economy. After decades of experience with the hypertrophic totalitarian state, the value premise of new Eastern European political elites is expressed by an old liberal maxim: "That government which governs least, governs best."

A government's declared indifference to social issues raises many doubts for two basic reasons. First, it proves that the thinking of present-day reformers is tainted by the old sin of a one-sided, narrow-minded perception of the socioeconomic system, in which satisfying social needs is mainly perceived in cost categories, understood as economic loss. Second, its advocates reveal a surprising affinity with yesterday's Communists on social issues. They are strongly bound by trust in the omnipotence of the economy.

Nearly fifty years ago the most important objective for the Communists was the creation of a new socialist economy, regardless of the social costs. At present a similar determination is displayed in reviving capitalism. Nothing is mentioned of the social costs involved in this undertaking. The only thing widely known is that the costs are high and will become higher.
The idea of an economic recession, the size of which nobody can estimate, for damaging. Socially, recession as a program is discouraging and, in practice, can even become a destructive force. It is always accompanied by many social pathologies and by phenomena known as the "vicious circle of poverty," the consequences of which are generally unknown and ignored by politicians in Eastern European countries. Politically, the results of recession threatened social peace, the most precious political attribute in a time of transition. Under socialism it was always disturbed when the discrepancy between economic efficiency and consumer expectations outstretched social patience.

One cannot forget that Eastern Europeans rose up against socialism not because they could no longer stand the lack of democracy in the "socialist welfare state," but because the communist system was incapable of creating such a welfare state. In other words, they revolted when the gap between the expected and actual degree of satisfying their needs and interests had broken the barrier of social tolerance.

In Poland one noticed increasingly powerful state control over various areas of a society fatigued by years of stagnation, is, in my opinion, socially and politically damaging. Socially, recession as a program is discouraging and, in practice, can even become a destructive force. It is always accompanied by many social pathologies and by phenomena known as the "vicious circle of poverty," the consequences of which are generally unknown and ignored by politicians in Eastern European countries. Politically, the results of recession threatened social peace, the most precious political attribute in a time of transition. Under socialism it was always disturbed when the discrepancy between economic efficiency and consumer expectations outstretched social patience.

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In Poland one noticed increasingly powerful state control over various areas of life accompanied by a dearth of formal solutions which would enable delineation of areas under control. In practice, the state hindered any initiatives aimed at improving the system by increasing its adaptability and by preventing petrifying tendencies in its structures. This situation also impeded the development of self-government in the area of social policy. State omnipotence in the social sphere resulted in the increased incapacity of the citizen and in the development of passive anticipation for services from the state. One can assume that this attitude did not result from accepting the alleged omnipotence of the state but from the collapse of formal and open opportunities to express another attitude. The state monopoly in this area served the purpose of keeping social expenditures at the lowest possible level. It also allowed a centralized administration to express general social interests and permitted the bureaucracy to impose its own interest as a general one. Blocking social initiative decreased efficiency in utilizing already limited resources and led to negative results. Under the past system of Polish social policy, the state gave too little and blocked too much. It resulted in undercutting faith in the possibilities and effectiveness of society's control, self-organization, and self-defense. Among the consequences of this decision-making monopoly in political and state institutions are a drop in social initiative and activity, the spread of socially passive attitudes, a decline in civic responsibility for national affairs, a rise in social feelings of incapacity, and the presence of an attitude in society described by social psychologists as "attributing responsibility to the outside."

In light of all these negative elements, Poles are quick to observe the ills that government can inflict but slow to perceive the good things that a responsible state can do for and with citizens. Perhaps this is a natural response to totalitarian rule, whose alleged omnipotence is widely perceived as one of the main causes of societal misery then and now. Thus, any proposed solutions should take into account the condition of social awareness and sociopolitical attitudes and behavior shaped over almost half a century.

Totalitarian state structures were not interested in developing universal systems of public social welfare. Instead, socialist political arrangements recurrently facilitated political efforts to provide generous social policies for those in their societies who could help themselves and heavy doses of rhetoric emphasizing totalitarian equality for those who could not. The basic goal was to preserve the existing power structure with total state control over all social life. That social discrepancies existed became evident in the conflict between society or its special groups and the state. Together with stronger state control over social life, the frequency of disputes increased and became the main, if not the only, form of information about the incorrectness of the system's functioning. The state also became the prime mechanism for blocking and suppressing conflicts, which caused their accumulation. Unsolved, these differences deepened the frustration of society. The state was no longer a mediator in these disputes. With its inherent advantages the state blocked and suppressed them. Consequently, it was perceived by society as an especially dangerous enemy. In addition, since the state formed one of the sides in the conflicts, it developed its means of defense, including an intensified control of social and political life. All these activities involved more and more energies of the state, which weakened its effectiveness in other fields.

I cite the above in order to explain the roots of the present reluctant attitude of Eastern European citizens towards the state's supervision of social affairs. Obviously, this reluctance cannot be reduced to a single cause. On the contrary, its explanation needs to take into account several factors, among which are the lack of experience in running state affairs on the part of the new Eastern European political elites and the absence of programs beyond the completion of the transition to pluralist democracy and a market economy.

In Eastern European countries some individuals fear that the welfare state has the potential to become politically repressive through its administration of an omnipotent bureaucracy, transforming citizens into dependents, whose behavior can then be manipulated by the state's own principles. Because they know the consequences of an omnipotent administration and its impact in the form of societal welfare, they prefer having a less active state to having too much involvement in social affairs.

In my opinion, governments cannot wilfully evade responsibility for social development in the weaker areas of social life, because such a policy would ignore emergent conflicts. The ability to solve conflicts and to manage them before they intensify and endanger social, economic, and political stability has become in modern democracies the main evidence of their political vitality. The economy, although important and basic, is not by itself a sufficient precondition for effective social welfare programs. But a coherent social reform strategy is a necessary prerequisite for success in rebuilding the economic and political system. Governments in postcommunist countries, however, do not yet have a strategy for social reforms. Instead, there is an implicit hope that the free market and democracy, once achieved, will automatically bring about the proper results reflecting the true needs of society.

How does one explain this phenomenon? For years the main thrust of opposition politics criticized the communist system in its entirety. Leaders and followers concentrated on the fundamental rules of politics rather than on specific programs, on democracy as a common goal rather than on differing, democratically arrived at solutions. "There was an underlying belief that all genuine values—as opposed to the counter-values of the truly existing socialism—were fully compatible and convergent."10

Quite obviously, one has to conclude that the transition from a communist system to a pluralist democracy is neither swift nor smooth. A condition sine qua non for functional changes is a radical restructuring of social bonds, understood as interdependence among members of a given societal group based on the community of
interests of its members. A crucial weakness of “real socialism” reflected itself in the establishment of social ties almost solely on the vertical axis. These ties, proclaimed by administrative acts, were extended systematically by daily decisions of the economic, civil, and party apparatus. Associative ties, based on the rules of a horizontal, cooperative system, comprised only a small fraction of the many regulators of social life. This situation resulted in the destruction of community spirit and encouraged societal apathy. Additionally, a lack of tradition concerning democratic local self-government and a minimal understanding of how it would actually function combine to create an unbearable burden for reform efforts.

The fundamental premise lying behind current changes is to make it easier for citizens to participate in public life. Great importance should be attached to having democracy understood as a competitive political system in which rival leaders and organizations define the alternatives of public policy in such a way that the populace can participate in the decision-making process. But the path from communism, labeled as “socialist democracy” and understood as paternal power yielding in the name and in the interest of the people, to real democracy, conceived as a partnership with universal participation of the citizens in decision-making and joint responsibility for their realization, is very difficult.

In the first place, such a redirection requires modernization of the civil administration’s organizational structure and a definition of the individual’s status within the state. Civil rights and duties must be reformulated and reconceived in such a way that they comprise two sides of the same coin. The attention of planners must also be directed at determining the means by which group interests can express themselves, a task that involves, in addition, a general reassessment of the principles upon which organizations and social associations function. Such an ambitious and desirable program to institutionalize a pluralistic political system and to create a free-market economic system requires hard preparatory thought. It also demands looking beyond slogans in order to confront harsh realities.

But the presentation of prescriptions is not enough. It is also necessary to present the assumptions upon which the individual recommendations are made and to point out the different alternatives and their respective costs. Additionally, it is important to take into special consideration that social rights require complex programs, policies, implementation procedures, coordination, and eligibility criteria for them to be utilized by citizens. The main empirical problem of how to construct a universal system of social welfare provision, however, is still open.

It must be made clear that what postcommunist societies in Eastern Europe view as the alternative to socialism or, in common parlance, communism, is not necessarily capitalism. The alternative one sees is a modern society with an indispensable mollifying and stabilizing role for the state.

Societal majorities in Eastern Europe are interested in the revival of capitalism to the extent that its national version can ensure a material progress in society as a whole or, at the least, for its majority in a relatively short time. Proposals for which this progress is offered only to a few cannot count on broad support. And this is the great difficulty confronting Eastern European governments at present. In general, a rebuilding of capitalism is a proposal for the benefit of the still nonexistent capitalist middle class. This is the Achilles’ heel of such a strategy, because farmers, workers, intellectuals, and artists feel ignored and humiliated. An efficient strategy cannot disregard the real expectations of such social groups.

In my opinion the state should create conditions for organizing social solidarity and assuming the responsibility of the stronger for the weaker. The undertaking of collective tasks by sections of the community is an alternative to the demonstrated low efficiency and huge costs of state-organized help. State guarantees in the sphere of material assistance to the weakest individuals ought to be maintained. It can be done by a directly applied social policy, which would extend help where it is needed and not where it is expected.

Societies trained in passivity are unable to carry the burden of the system’s rebuilding at its grass roots without state assistance. On the other hand, economic crisis—an Eastern European reality—and the sense of economic insecurity that it engenders have reinforced the sense of social solidarity. This desire for more solidarity in everyday affairs is on a par with a certain “neo-liberal” renaissance with its greater emphasis on self-determination, self-responsibility, and freedom of choice.

A universal principle of democracy is freedom of choice. But to be effective and irreversible, it has to be institutionalized. Only when freedom of choice is institutionalized does it become an enduring reality. The state, therefore, has to be responsible for creating institutional conditions for society’s organization and self-organization. The civic society hypothesis implies a transfer of ownership and functions from the state to the people by privatizing some of the prevailing economic and social functions of the state. This is not an easy task and requires time to prove that the changes are for the better. The first possible stage in the path towards a pluralist democracy can offer a mixed economy and welfare system, partly private and partly public.

For the immediate future, state activities directed at providing societies with some kind of welfare are indispensable. We Eastern Europeans cannot ignore the fact that contemporary democratic societies are almost by definition also welfare-state societies. The welfare state’s multifunctional character, its ability to serve many conflicting ends and strategies simultaneously, which made the political arrangement of the welfare state so attractive to a broad alliance of different forces in noncommunist countries, is not very well known to us.

In order to prevent the developmental contradictions from pushing postcommunist societies away from the democratically-oriented camp, solutions are required that can reconcile what is possible—a rapid improvement in economic efficiency and productivity—with what is imperative—the introduction of a market economy. I agree with John Kenneth Galbraith that “adaptation, and not a dramatic descent to primitive capitalism, is now the need.”

Changes in postcommunist countries are occurring in the wider European context of building a common European home, a concept which requires Western democracies to confront the difficult realities challenging Europe in its entirety. Among the many difficulties, I would like to take particular note of one: the widening gap between existing conditions and developmental levels in what is called the West and in what is called the East. Zbigniew Brzezinski stated in an October 1989 public lecture in Moscow:
There is no doubt that the West—the United States, Western Europe, and Japan—are plunging headlong into a new age, the post-industrial age, the technetronic age, the age that not only in terms of economic indices but also in terms of the style of life and the quality of life is fundamentally different from the industrial age.13

Eastern European countries are still essentially struggling with the legacies of the industrial age and an unsuccessfully completed process of industrialization. Thus, the existing internal conditions of postcommunist countries are complicated by objective external conditions which provide additional obstacles in the difficult process of transition to democracy in Eastern Europe.

NOTES

4 See the articles in Rose and Shiratori, eds., The Welfare State East and West.
Distance often offers a precious perspective on events taking place in one's country. We are all immersed in our own particular cultures with their accompanying values and assumptions, which often make it both difficult to grasp the experiences of other nations and to judge objectively the processes of change within our own countries. I wish to make a few comments here on issues that pose—on these grounds—particular problems in understanding and interpreting the present transitional phase in Eastern Europe, both for outsiders and for Eastern Europeans themselves.

One of the major obstacles obscuring the view of Eastern Europe from the United States is the fact that there simply is no such thing as Eastern Europe anymore. At an American university recently, I was amazed to receive an invitation to a reading by "X, an East European poet." This thinking of the region as one bloc is a carryover from old times, but it is no longer functional. A supposedly monolithic Eastern Europe under communism and Soviet domination was indeed a useful concept in the past for political and diplomatic purposes. Even then, it was a great oversimplification, as is apparent now, when the imperial bonds are gone. It is suddenly becoming clear that every country in this region has its own peculiar identity, different historical experience, culture, social structure, economic traditions, and types of links to the West. Unlearning this simplistic concept of Eastern Europe seems to be a sine qua non for the West to understand that postcommunist developments will be very different in each of the region's countries. Looking only at the economic changes, there are enormous differences between, for example, Poland and Hungary, on the one hand, and Romania, Bulgaria, and the republics of the former Soviet Union, on the other. It is by no means obvious that the scenarios will in all cases be such as are implicit in the optimistic subtitle of this symposium, "From Communism to Democracy."

A second major problem in perceiving the transformation of Eastern Europe by the West is the widespread ahistoricism in the treatment of this subject. It has two aspects. One is that 1989 is seen as a breakthrough, a sudden, qualitative change. The program's description of this conference cites "dramatic Soviet initiatives of the late 1980s" and "popular upheavals of 1989." But in reality these events were only the end of a long process. Politically, it was marked by a series of protests and upheavals: 1956

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*I am indebted to Professor Mira Marody of Warsaw University's Institute of Sociology and to Professor Andrzej Rychard of the Institute of Sociology of the Polish Academy of Sciences for their ideas on some of the points raised in my paper.
In Hungary, when an independentist movement emerged, the 10 million-strong Solidarity was created in 1989. By 1990, the simultaneous collapse of the Eastern Bloc had an important impact on the political landscape of Eastern Europe. The fall of communism, which had been a broad movement across different countries, had repercussions on the economic systems of those countries. The transition from communism to capitalism was fraught with challenges and uncertainty, leading to a period of economic instability and social transition. The process of transition involved significant economic changes, including the privatization of state-owned enterprises and the introduction of market-oriented policies. These changes were not without their costs, as the transition to a market economy led to widespread unemployment and social unrest. The process of transition was also marked by political instability, with frequent changes in government and the rise of new political movements. The transition to a market economy was not without its challenges, and the experience of Eastern Europe has provided valuable lessons for other countries undergoing similar transitions. The path to economic stability and prosperity required a combination of measures, including macroeconomic policy, structural reforms, and effective governance. In conclusion, the transition from communism to capitalism in Eastern Europe was a complex process that had far-reaching implications for the region and beyond.
1. Instead of respecting the rules of law, positive moral value came to be placed on the rejection of laws, because they were culturally and politically classified as unjust, oppressive, and imposed by a foreign power.

2. Public participation on the political scene (unacceptable because it was reserved to party members) was replaced by contacts within closed groups (in-groups) and private loyalties which defined one’s social and moral position. We must note, however, that these loyalties were restricted to the in-groups, while larger links within society were disintegrating.

3. The above, in turn, lead to the emergence in Eastern Europe of a widespread system of dual ethics. One attitude was presented in school and in public, another at home. Private property was respected, but state property was treated as masterless. Loyalty was applied to in-group members but indifference to outsiders.

4. Instead of businesslike relationships, the class character of the Communist nomenklatura has produced patron-client relationships in society. The party elite had uncontrolled power to allocate scarce goods and services, and clientage was a part of everyday life in Eastern Europe for half a century. It is therefore not surprising that these patterns are often reproduced now in the newly democratic context.

5. Because of the deep alienation of the work force from its labor and from government, a massive loss of the work ethic became evident. Frequently, Western observers are only vaguely aware that in communism labor is not a commodity, and the right to a real income is not proportional to the market value of the claimant (it is arbitrarily defined by the center), but job security is strong. The result of this combination of factors is twofold. The workers have become traditionally oriented toward claims rather than productivity, efficiency, etc. These claims are directed to the state and government but not to employers. Such deeply embedded attitudes persist and now create problems for the privatization process. In many cases, workers present their claims to the government instead of negotiating them with their employers. One must note here that the claims previously made to earlier government were objectively justified because the value of labor was terribly degraded in communism and amounted only to a small percentage of the average production costs. At the same time, in the present difficult transformation of the economy, wages cannot rise substantially, so new tensions are inevitable.

6. Life in the Communist countries assumed a peculiarly atomized, provisional character instead of a long-term social development. All energy was directed at individual survival, personal links, and struggles for privileges that could make life a little easier. Historical links with the past were discontinued by the Communists, while their own policies often changed, characteristically rejecting and condemning previous policy in favor of the new ideas embraced by current leaders; typically, Khrushchev rejected Stalin, Brezhnev rejected Khrushchev, Gorbachev rejected Brezhnev.

In sum, the process of adaptation and survival under communism has deeply fragmented society, with perhaps the only exception being the unity of protest against the system. But resistance in itself does not create a civil society. The fact remains that all have become the children of communism. All have gone to communist schools, read the communist press, watched communist TV, and worked in communist institutions. This has left a deep mark on their way of thinking, requiring greater effort to erase than to introduce a democratic government.

Unfortunately, people in postcommunist countries often seem dimly aware of this legacy and believe that society will simply replace the old state and create a democratic
system ("we will take matters into our own hands"). Such a rationale is misguided. The creation of democratic institutions in a disintegrated society poses numerous difficulties. To mention only one, the new non-Communist governments have often assumed an excessively statist position. In Poland, for example, the government of Tadeusz Mazowiecki behaved in this way, moving very slowly to reduce the bloated bureaucracy. At the same time, he proclaimed to have all the right solutions, appealed to the masses for trust and patience in awaiting results, but made no attempts to inform broadly, consult, discuss, and explain the radical and objectively necessary changes taking place.

The demise of the totalitarian state has left an enormous vacuum. Communists had taken away the "burden of freedom" and shifted it to the state, which organized life and offered minimal subsistence. People are not used to taking life into their own hands, and they have lost the sense of the real. It is widely expected that "they" (as governments were called before) will do something. Societies have no base from which to negotiate conflicts, and the new state fills this vacuum, whether it wants to or not.

People in postcommunist countries now face a paradoxical reversal of their situation. Rapid change is urgently needed, but it is often culturally difficult or impossible to implement. Under Communist direction it was a virtue to be uncompromising. Now democracy demands something quite opposite, the ability to negotiate differences. Before, government was "them," illegitimate and without mandate from society; public and political life was perceived in terms of the "we-they" dichotomy. Now the government is "ours." People realize it is not the old, totalitarian government, but they still bring their claims to it in the old fashion. In turn, the government runs the danger of considering itself, because it is elected and legitimate, as representing the right views. Recent political debates in Poland and elsewhere in Eastern Europe have placed this problem into sharp focus. Pluralism and negotiating positions must still be learned.

Before, it was the Communist party versus society. Now, new parties are needed, but there is a general distrust of parties, as such. There is great disillusionment in Poland that, after the great unity shown with the formation of Solidarity, society is now dividing itself into numerous political orientations. In actuality, it was the unity of Solidarity that was artificial and temporary. Solidarity had fused people with different positions out of their shared opposition to totalitarian rule.

The Poles have long struggled for freedoms, but the important fact defining today's situation is that they have had few opportunities to use them within a democratic context. When the interest of the individual and the totalitarian government were mutually contradictory, the individual had to adapt to survive. Contradiction was a part of life. Clearly, to unlearn the old contradiction between government and society, the state and the individual, will take quite some time.

There are two further tendencies in Eastern Europe that blur the image of change for many observers. Both concern attitudes toward the past. On the one hand, newly freed societies desperately search for models and precedents for political organization, usually from their own past. For instance, in Poland several pre-World War II parties "revived" with programs very similar to those of their predecessors. But over half a century has passed since their former life and enormous changes have taken place in society, making their revived ideologies obsolete. Furthermore, the complex process of the present transformation from communism to democracy demands innovative concepts and programs tailored specifically for today's challenging problems, a task that political dinosaurs are not prepared to confront.

On the other hand, there is in Eastern Europe an opposite tendency—at least in terms of attitudes toward history—and that is to break radically with the communist past. It is often manifested in the destruction of the past's symbols, such as cutting out fragments of flags, changing street names, tearing down statues, and changing official uniforms. All this is fully understandable, but it carries a certain danger, namely the impression that the past can be thus erased. In reality, generations have grown up and lived in the communist system. They carry the homo sovieticus in them. For Eastern Europe's transition to democracy to be successful, it is absolutely necessary to raise in its societies an awareness of this legacy, to identify its destructive elements, and to attempt consciously and systematically to eliminate them. This can probably only be done successfully through responsible and democratic mass media. So far, I have not yet seen any such campaigns. The rule of the first non-Communist cabinet in Poland under Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki was a disaster in terms of public relations, media information about government policies, and generally explaining the complexity of the situation to the society. In turn, few would dare organize any consciousness-raising campaigns in a skeptical society strongly sensitive, if not allergic, to media manipulation.

Two more points must be made here about the complexity of a situation which might puzzle outside observers. One is that, after a half-century of nonparticipation in the political process, there is a drift in the direction of political instability in Eastern Europe. New alliances emerge, but most are not strong enough to stabilize the political scene. In Poland several dozen parties vied for office, but their very number and constant divisions have only added to the confusion. There are no strong political structures. The old political machinery is gone (or, as in the Soviet Union, is very weak), but no new major, stabilizing forces have crystallized. Therefore, any comparisons between, for example, Polish and French Socialist parties would be quite misleading.

The second point I wish to make is that one of the reasons for this lack of stability, not often immediately apparent to outsiders, is the absence of political elites, of a competent managerial class, and of a middle class, in general. In Poland the middle class was not numerous even before World War II and was practically exterminated during the war. After the war its role was replaced by the intelligentsia, but there are still no interest groups comparable to those in the West. This situation hinders the effective articulation of interests and the resolution of conflicts. As mentioned earlier, there are groups with claims, but that is a qualitatively different matter.

Finally, a comment about the economic transition is in order. A huge subject by itself, this process involves sailing on uncharted waters since there have been no precedents or theory for passing from communism to a market economy. Who is to create the market economy, if the class of "capitalists" is so small? Where is capital to be taken from, when there is so little in the country? How is it possible to learn about marketing and selling, when thus far the trick was only to produce while everything sold itself? Without getting into strictly economic details, I only wish to mention some problems in appreciating the complexities of this transition, and I will again use the example of Poland as it is most advanced in the radicalism of its economic reforms.
Many Poles believed that the collapse of Communist rule and the elimination of restrictions on the freedom of economic behavior would be synonymous with the emergence of a market economy. What actually happened was the emergence of a transitional system still strongly dominated by old structures rather than new market elements. The inertia of old structures and old mentalities emanates from the fact that more is known about what is to be eliminated from economic life than about what new solutions are to be created and how they are to be introduced. It seems that at the heart of the problem are certain contradictions built into the transition that we are talking about: the market economy cannot be created as a result of some mutation of communist structures (as had been the hope of Gorbachev), because the two are mutually exclusive and antagonistic. Concurrently, because of the social costs and the enormous scale of change required, the market economy must be introduced and coordinated from above by the government. In other words, it must be centrally controlled but it must, at the same time, lead away from central control.

The result is a mixed and, at times, confused situation where changes are partially controlled and partially spontaneous and unpredictable. The same, we may add, concerns the political sphere. The entirely unexpected large voter turnout in the late 1990 elections for presidential candidate Stanislaw Tyminski, a virtual unknown from Canada, was not predicted by anyone, and reflected the same disequilibrium as in the economy, the same lack of social consensus about the reforms, and the same wide gap between high expectations raised by the revolution and the harsh realities of transition to a new system.