The 1989 Revolutions in East-Central Europe: A Comparative Analysis

by

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Author's Declaration

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Abstract

There is a substantial amount of existing literature that focuses on the revolutionary events of 1989 in East-Central Europe. Yet, there are few comparisons which apply a comparative-historical approach to a small set of cases. A large body of existing literature provides the ideal situation for a comparative-historical study. This thesis will test the utility of applying a comparative-historical methodological approach to the events of 1989 in four countries in East-Central Europe. The four countries are paired into two cases. The case of Poland and Hungary is compared with the case of Bulgaria and Romania. A theoretical frame of reference is developed from previous comparative-historical studies of revolutionary events, criticisms of them, and the general theoretical debates which they generate. This frame of reference incorporates a broad range of variables, and is used to inform the application of the method. Differences (and similarities) between the cases are then investigated, and the utility of the method assessed. Additionally, the application of the method allows some current theoretical and conceptual debates concerning the East-Central European events to be confronted.

Part 1 of the thesis applies a comparative-historical method of analysis to the cases up to, and including some aspects of the 1989 events. In Part 2, patterns of difference between the cases are identified in terms of revolutionary forms and outcomes. Following the logic of the method common factors are identified as potential contributing factors to the collapse of communism, while patterns of difference suggest that the political, economic and social “nature” of the communist systems had an impact on the forms of change and their outcomes.

It is recognised that the comparative-historical approach utilised in this thesis has limitations. However, the method is shown to be useful for identifying common factors across cases, and significant variations between cases, which can generate potential explanation, and provide better understanding of such revolutionary phenomena as that which occurred in East-Central Europe in 1989.
Acknowledgement

An interest in East-Central Europe was stimulated by my undergraduate studies at the University of Plymouth. A desire to continue studying the region, its history and people led me to take on this project. Whether it is a form of madness or masochism to go on with such an undertaking for so long, I leave others to decide. Yet, I am still fascinated by all things East European. There is always more to learn about any subject, but the countries "cut off" from the rest of Europe by communism, and their subsequent "re-emergence", have unique historical and political appeal.

I would like to thank colleagues at the University, friends, and family for supporting - and suffering - my self interest. I am grateful to my supervisors, especially to John Wilton for reading drafts, making detailed comments, and for having an ever optimistic stance towards my laborious progress. My thanks to Karl Cordell for his assistance with contacts at Wroclaw University in Poland, especially Professor Andrzej Jablonski, who was so helpful in making my short visit such a successful research trip. Other contacts and interviewees in East-Central Europe, who I must mention for their assistance and expertise, include Professor Ryszard Herbut, Professor Andrzej Antoszewski, Dr. Kazimierz Dziubka, Dr. Adam Chmielewski, Dr. Tyszkiewicz, Dr. Jaroslaw Kundera, Dr. Marcelina Zuber, Dr. Elzbieta Stadtmutler, Dr. Janina Fras, Pawel Lyzna, Artur Wdowczyk, Artur Polenski, Robert Wiszniowski, Andrzej Dybczynski, Barbara Pabjan, Dr. Gheorghiu, Dr. George Voicu, Michael Shafir, Professor Pok, Ferenc Miszlivetz, Laszlo Borhi, Dr. Vladimira Dvorakova, Adelina Kostova and her colleagues from the New Bulgarian University in Sofia. In addition, I thank my friend Lorna White for bringing materials and contact addresses from Varna, Bulgaria. Last but not least, I thank all friends and family who financially and emotionally supported my endeavours. Even such comments as "haven't you finished that thing yet!" kept me motivated, and finally drove me to complete the task.
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Chapter 1 Explaining the 1989 Revolutions in Four Countries

The East-Central European revolutions of 1989 provide a unique opportunity for comparative analysis. Since 1989 a profusion of political science texts have emerged which seek to describe and explain the processes of change from so-called communism towards capitalism and democracy. Much of the comparative political analysis which now exists focuses on transition and processes of democratisation. A comparative-historical approach may yet have a contribution to make to this field of study.

The primary aim of this thesis will be to assess the utility of applying a comparative-historical methodological approach to the events of 1989 in four countries in East-Central Europe. In determining the strengths and weaknesses of such an approach, this thesis employs an original research design which has hitherto been omitted from the analytical literature on the countries chosen and phenomena that occurred. The method to be used is J.S. Mill’s method of agreement. A theoretical frame of reference will be established by discussing previous comparative studies of revolution, and criticisms of them, and building on the general theoretical debates which these studies generate. The method will then be applied to East-Central Europe using two sets of case studies. These two cases consist of Poland and Hungary on the one hand, and Bulgaria and Romania on the other. Through the method outlined above, the thesis will first, establish the usefulness of a comparative-

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1 East-Central Europe is a general term used here to describe the region between "Western Europe" and the former Soviet Union, and includes Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania. I acknowledge that many Poles and Hungarians may now prefer to distinguish "Central Europe" from the countries further East and South-East. The use of the concept "revolution" in the context of this thesis will be elaborated further in section 1.4 in this chapter on defining the 1989 events and processes, and in the concluding chapter section 8.2.

2 For the use of the term "transition" and more on these approaches see section 1.1 on existing comparative literature on the East-Central European revolutions.

3 It might be argued that this method generally underpins all comparative analysis. Similarity and difference is – in some form – inherent to comparison of any kind. However, the comparative-historical method utilised in this thesis pursues J.S. Mill’s method of agreement to its logical conclusion, drawing inferences from the similarities across the cases, and from the patterns of difference between them. More will be said explicitly about the method in section 1.2 on methodological issues.

4 The broad theoretical framework to be used in this thesis is potentially problematic, especially in terms of generating integrated theory. However the application of the method, informed by a broad theoretical frame of reference, allows some theoretical and conceptual
historical method of analysis as a means of identifying differences (and similarities) between the chosen cases; second, examine contributing factors to the revolutions, and seek to explain the differences in revolutionary forms and outcomes; and third, contribute to the literature on explanations of why such revolutionary phenomena occur. The main argument developed within this thesis is that in both cases similar factors contributed to similar revolutionary events, and that the differences in form and outcome emanated from the different (what is called here) “nature” of the communist systems.

This introductory chapter will address the issues involved in applying a comparative-historical method of analysis, building a theoretical frame of reference, and defining the 1989 phenomena. First, a review of existing political comparative literature on the East-Central European revolutions, and a discussion of the main approaches utilised in this literature will be undertaken. Second, methodological issues surrounding the comparative-historical approach, and the strengths and weaknesses of the method will be considered. The remaining sections will be concerned with developing and outlining a theoretical frame of reference, and the approach to be taken in this thesis; defining the events and processes within the context of East-Central Europe in 1989; the reasons for choosing the two sets of cases; and finally the main argument, and an outline of the chapters of the thesis will be set out.

1.1 Existing Comparative Literature on the Revolutions in East-Central Europe

Since the demise of communism there has been a profusion of published works which examine political change in East-Central Europe. Most early works were either journalistic, such as Glenny (1993) The Rebirth of History, or country by country accounts, for example East (1992) Revolutions in Eastern Europe. Analysts have examined the causes of the collapse of communism, and produced detailed accounts of post-communist issues to be confronted as they are met throughout the research inquiry. See also section 1.3 on theoretical debates.

"Revolutionary form" is used here to denote the type of political and economic change that occurred. For example the Polish and Hungarian "form" might be described as "negotiated". For more on this in terms of the cases presented here, see later in Part 2, especially Chapter 4. "Outcomes" refers to significant results or consequences of the
particular focus of attention. One of the main assumptions is that different modes of transition will have a particular impact on the consolidation of democracy. A number of variables have been identified as important to the democratisation process, and certain aspects of the relationship between the nature of the old regime, the mode of transition, and consequences of transition have been addressed.

Two main competing approaches have emerged from the existing literature; the "legacies of the past", and the "imperatives of liberalisation" approaches. The "legacies" explanation suggests that the unique historical inheritance of each communist system provide the main background for shaping the post-communist systems. Whereas the liberalisation perspective emphasises the immediate contextual circumstances - the post-communist reality of international pressures and new institutions - which will influence and temper negative influences from the past. The findings from this research suggest that the immediate context can provide conditions whereby past legacies may be blocked, but may also undermine liberalisers permitting old legacies to remain dominant. However, it isn’t always clear which legacies will become politically relevant, or why some immediate circumstances have undermined economic and political liberalisation.

There are criticisms of much of the democratisation literature. These criticisms include determinism, lack of explanation for the actual collapse of communism in 1989, and inadequacy of cross-regional comparison. In the past theories on transition have tended to

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10 For example, modes of transition and their impact on democratic outcomes have been examined by Karl, T.C., & Schmitter, P., "Modes of Transition in Latin America, Southern and Eastern Europe", *International Social Science Journal*, 128, May 1991, pp.269-284.

11 Mode of transition is used to describe the different processes whereby old regimes are replaced by new ones. See for example, Munck, G.L., & Leff, C.S., "Modes of Transition and Democratization", *Comparative Politics*, Vol.29, No.3, April 1997, pp.343-362. Generally differentiation is made between transition from above (transformation/transaction/reform), transitions from below (replacement/breakdown/rupture) and transition where regime and opposition play a roughly equal role (transplacement and extrication). For this and an alternative focus in terms of "mode", see Welsh, H.A., "Political Transition Processes in Central and Eastern Europe", *Comparative Politics*, July 1994 pp.379-394

12 For these terms and an overview of these approaches see Crawford, B., & Lijphart, A., "Explaining Political and Economic change in Post-communist Eastern Europe", *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol.28, No.2, July 1995, pp.171-199


14 See for example, Henderson, K., & Robinson, N., (1997) pp.32-33. A central debate emerged between cross-regional comparativists and area specialists as to whether cross-
overemphasis the role of political elites, and underplay international and historical dimensions. A confusion over terms - such as, when does the transition begin and end, or when is a democracy consolidated - complicate these studies. Different theoretical and methodological approaches produce disagreements concerning the effects of the pre-revolutionary regime upon outcomes.

Within this kind of literature the concentration on aspects of democratisation, and the use of models developed during the post-1945 (Cold War) period to describe the communist states has tended to create a conceptualisation of what happened in East-Central Europe before and after 1989 as "negative" to "positive" transition. The typologies initially used to describe the communist systems were often value-laden, and a successful outcome invariably equated to successful liberal democracy. The emphasis of such studies is on destination, rather than on processes of change. Many analysts now recognise that the totalitarian model is inadequate to describe East-Central European countries between 1948 and 1989, and that authoritarianism is too general a term. Some analysts have attempted to differentiate between regime type in a more discerning fashion. Many also recognise that the form of democracy evolving in East-Central Europe will be particular to the region. However, the often less than adequate concepts used to describe communist regimes, and the emphasis on measuring the extent of liberal democratic outcomes dominates this type of analysis. There is a tendency to focus on political system, or regime change and elite actions. Yet, such aspects as the role of the military are often not taken into account. Equally the internal and external conditions and contexts which help to create

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15 For an overview of three major studies and a discussion on these issues, see Munck, G. L., "Democratic Transition in Comparative Perspective", Comparative Politics, April 1994, Review Article, pp.355-375
the circumstances within which political decisions and actions take place are often not adequately incorporated into analysis. By focusing on conditions necessary for a democratic outcome—such as civil society (or the lack of it), institutional forms, or the norms and values present (or absent)—the actual changes in social, economic and political spheres are often understated. It is not just that political factors cannot be examined in isolation, but that inter-relationships between a broad range of variables require attention. East-Central European communist systems created not only particular types of political system, but also well educated societies and industrialised economies which had its effects for the 1989 events. The revolutionary events did not just involve regime change, changes to the economy and to society were also significant for the collapse of communism, and for processes of change and their outcomes. This thesis examines a broader range of variables, addresses inter-relationships between variables, and applies a comparative-historical method more systematically than has yet been attained in this existing literature.

Although the existing literature may not fully address the processes of change that occurred, it does provide some insights and raises some useful theoretical issues that can be confronted as part of the approach taken in this thesis. Certain "legacies" of the communist systems had their consequences, just as the post-1989 conditions aided or constrained the new regimes. The form or "mode" of change also had an impact on outcomes. These studies do—in fact—provide a wealth of information. Along with historical literature, these works are essential for comparative-historical studies. Indeed "the work of a comparativist only becomes possible after a large primary literature has been built up by specialists." A systematic review of this literature alongside historic, economic and sociological works therefore provides the primary basis for an analysis of the kind to be undertaken in this thesis (more will be said about comparative-historical research methods in the following sections).

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1.2 Methodological Issues

In discussing methodological issues, it is not the intention to delve into the problems of comparative study as a whole, but to concentrate on comparative history. "Comparative method" is often used to refer to analyses of a small number of cases within comparative political studies. Lijphart's assessment of the comparative method defines and "collapses" comparative history and other "small number case" approaches into a single methodological logic. However, comparative history is a distinct approach which uses case-based methods. Like general historical investigations, comparative history has an interest in large-scale historical variation. It has, in common with historical studies, a necessary recourse to secondary sources, but is more focused and thematic in investigating historical variation. It is an empirical inquiry to discover what happened in a given set of circumstances, and why. Three major logics have been distinguished within the comparative-historical approach. These are parallel demonstrations of theory, contrasts of contexts and macro-causal analysis. These will be outlined in turn, before the strengths and weaknesses of comparative history are assessed.

Parallel Demonstrations of Theory

The parallel demonstration of theory is generally intended to convince the reader of the validity of certain theoretical arguments. Typically such works seek to demonstrate that a theory holds good from case to case, across a broad selection. Any differences amongst cases are primarily contextual particularities against which generalities can be highlighted. For example, Eisenstadt in The Political Systems of Empires (1963), derives his classification of social forms using Parsonian concepts. Working within, as well as in tension with structural-functional analysis, he tends to absorb situational factors, such as historical context, making them as much a result of his "configurational patterns" as factors

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which might influence the development of social forms. His chief interest is the identification and analysis of unified social wholes as posited by theoretical classification. The temptation is to then make the abstract concepts explain historical outcomes rather than seriously confronting the historical evidence.

**Contrast-Oriented Approaches**

The contrast-oriented comparativists do not aspire to generate new explanatory generalisations. Explanations are less ideas to be tested or applied, rather they are frames of reference with which to highlight contexts within which more detailed causal inferences can be drawn. The objective is almost exactly opposite to that of the parallel demonstration of theory. They seek to expose unique features between and among individual cases and show how these features affect general social processes. The concern is often to preserve a sense of historical particularity which leads to specific problems.

Reinhard Bendix's *Kings or People* (1978) is an example which provides self-imposed limitations. He is sceptical of systematic theoretical explanation. Yet, his use of common themes or assertions is not simply drawn from historical evidence. A theoretical perspective is implicit to the concepts and ideal types used. However, the presentation of themes and concepts as self-evident truths, or neutral tools, leaves an implied explanatory hypotheses open to challenge. In being critical of general theories Bendix tries to avoid developing propositions which pertain to theory. Yet, he not only misses the opportunities to draw out specific causal inferences, but he is also potentially theoretically misleading.

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The Macro-Causal Approach

Macro-causal analysts, of which Skocpol is an example, use comparative history for the purpose of making causal inferences about macro-level structures and processes.\textsuperscript{25} The method used is J.S. Mill's "method of agreement" and/or his indirect "method of difference."\textsuperscript{26} The method of agreement takes cases where similar events or processes occur and search for similarities (and differences) across the cases. There may be overall differences between the cases, but crucial similarities may be found that can imply causal argument. The method of difference takes cases where the chosen phenomenon has not occurred, and the hypothesised causes are not present, and compares them with positive cases. The method of difference is more powerful for establishing valid causal associations. The method of agreement is the simplest and most straightforward, whereby similar cases are studied and the search for differences can eliminate possible explanatory variables. However, on its own the method of agreement does not establish any necessary link between cause and effect. By incorporating the method of difference, suitable negative cases can be used as contrasts, reinforcing conclusions drawn from the method of agreement.

The main problem with this method is that perfectly controlled comparisons are never really feasible. Yet, skilfully used in conjunction with theoretical argument, it can be a powerful tool in providing explanation. In uncovering patterns of similarities and differences, probabilistic relationships are not accepted as demonstrations of cause. All deviating cases have to be accounted for in some way, forcing close investigation of factors and cases as whole entities.\textsuperscript{27} The relationship between variables is thus more likely to be investigated and explained within their historical and structural context.

\textsuperscript{25} Skocpol undertook a macro-causal analysis of the so-called classic French, Russian and Chinese revolutions, see Skocpol,T.. (1979) \textit{States & Social Revolutions}, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

\textsuperscript{26} See Nagel,E., (ed) (1950) \textit{John Stuart Mill’s Philosophy of Scientific Method}, Book 3, Chapter 8, Hafner, New York

The Strengths and Weaknesses of Comparative History

All comparative studies hold potential pitfalls. Such problems as conceptual stretching, selection bias, too many variables and too few cases, or interdependence of cases potentially arise.\(^{28}\) However as implied in the outlines above, there are particular issues within each comparative-historical “logic” which require attention when considering the application of a comparative-historical approach. On the positive side comparative-historical approaches encourage cases to be viewed as wholes, and put cases in context. They are essentially interpretive, can lead to the development of new typologies and often stimulate the development of new theories. Theory necessarily informs argument, but when cases do not “fit” theory, new interpretations are often developed.\(^{29}\) Skocpol suggests that comparative-historical analyses provide “a valuable check and anchor for theoretical speculation. Arguments supported by grand theoretical approaches need to be spelled out when illuminating the actual causal regularities across cases”. Similarly to Ragin, she suggests that comparative history is a strategy for “mediating between theory and history” which can prompt extensions and reformulations of theory, and new ways of looking at particular cases.\(^{30}\) Contrast-oriented approaches, in particular, can bring out rich detail and provide descriptive holism. While macro-analytical approaches can attempt to validate or invalidate theory.

Skocpol and Somers suggest that these three “logics” can create a complementary research cycle. Each logic can give rise to the next. When parallel demonstrations appear to make overly generalised claims, contrast-oriented approaches can limit the scope and suggest testable hypotheses. These hypotheses may then be validated or invalidated with macro-causal analyses. The generalisations generated can, in turn, be demonstrated by a parallel approach.\(^{31}\)

There are also weaknesses in these “logics”. Parallel demonstrations of theory can only illustrate, clarify and refine theory; theory predominates. Contrast-oriented approaches are

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\(^{29}\) See for example Ragin, who is referring to what he calls “case-oriented” methods which includes all three “logics”, Ragin, C., (1987) pp.48-49

\(^{30}\) Skocpol, T., (1979) pp.39-40

\(^{31}\) Skocpol, T., & Somers, M., (1980)
poor in generating theory through a refusal to recognise the role that theory is actually playing in examining cases. Macro-causal approaches can only draw inferences. The validity of causal hypotheses can never be perfectly established, nor can they necessarily provide generalisations beyond the cases studied. The method is no substitute for theory. On its own the method cannot select appropriate variables, or provide research questions.

This latter point highlights the need to recognise the role theory plays in the application of any method of analysis. In examining the events and processes of change in East-Central Europe in 1989 a simple research question might suffice. For example, why were there differences in the form and outcome of the 1989 revolutions in Poland and Hungary compared to those in Bulgaria and Romania? Yet, this question does not in itself determine which areas or details may be significant in explaining these differences. Whether implicitly or explicitly stated, theory informs the selection of cases and variables, and helps to define questions. This then leads us to the next section, where theory will be discussed, and a framework for analysis set out.

1.3 Theoretical Debates

Just as social science in general has gone through phases of theory development, so has comparative history. There is considerable diversity in theoretical approaches. Such issues as the autonomy or potential autonomy of the state, or the relationship of structure to agency, and culture to structure are ongoing debates.\(^{32}\) To illustrate these developments an overview of revolutionary theory, and criticisms of it, will be undertaken. Revolutionary theory and its development is chosen as a basis for discussion for two main reasons. First, revolutions are macro-phenomena which are rare. This type of event has been a major focus for comparative-historical research. Second, The East-Central European phenomena can be defined as revolutionary and as a unique historical event (more will be said about this in the section on defining the 1989 events and processes). Although it must be acknowledged that this may be a controversial starting point with which to develop a theoretical framework, and that it may cause some selection bias, it must also be

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acknowledged that such issues are not confined to applying a comparative-historical method; they are potential issues in any comparative study.

Theories of revolution are extensively reviewed by several political and sociological writers.\(^{33}\) Theories are categorised and analysed in a variety of ways. For instance Kimmel examines non-structural theories dividing these into natural history, social system, individual psychology and aggregate social-psychological explanatory approaches.\(^{34}\) He then contrasts these with structural approaches which include Marxist and historical-comparative analyses. Skocpol groups theories into four "families" of Marxist, aggregate-psychological, systems/value consensus and political conflict theories.\(^{35}\) Goldstone, perhaps crudely, classifies theories into "three generations" of historical-descriptive, behaviouralist, and comparative-historical.\(^{36}\)

No categorisation can successfully encompass the diversity of approaches. For instance, Charles Tilly's approach straddles both quantitative and qualitative methods. Theoretical bases also cut across the "generations." Tilly's theoretical base derives from political science rather than sociology and psychology which inform the majority of second generation theorists. Nevertheless, although Goldstone's categorisation is simplistic, it will serve adequately to present an overview of theories, and provide a basis for theoretical debate.


\(^{34}\) Kimmel, M.S., (1990) p.47.

\(^{35}\) Skocpol, T., (1979) p.6&9.


Motyl challenges Goldstone on the use of the term "generations", and suggests that "schools" would be more appropriate to describe the "multiplicity of theories" which Goldstone includes in his categorisation. see Motyl, A.J., (1992) p.111
Historical-Descriptive Approaches

The historical-descriptive approaches include works such as Crane Brinton's *The Anatomy of Revolution* (1938), Lyford Edwards' *The Natural History of Revolution* (1927) and George Pettee's *The Process of Revolution* (1938). There is general agreement amongst political scientists that despite rich descriptions their approach contributed little to theoretical debate. Although offering some hypotheses - mainly of a social-psychological nature - little attempt is made to validate them through comparisons of historical cases.

In general, these approaches assume that revolutions pass through a number of successive stages. There is agreement over the transfer of allegiance of the intellectuals from support to criticism of the old regime as the crucial event which "tips the scales." However, there are differences in suggesting the causes of alienation. Some, such as Edwards, emphasise lower class discontent, while others, such as Brinton and Pettee, suggest that ideology plays a more important role in creating revolutionary forces. These are fruitful issues in considering causes of revolution, as will be seen below. It is also worth noting that Brinton is attributed with making an important methodological contribution to studying revolutions in terms of using qualitative comparisons to the benefit of scientific historical research. However, these approaches also face serious criticisms. Kimmel suggests an overemphasis on the role of intellectuals, an overemphasis of the French case as analogous to all revolutions and that the outcome must include restoration and consolidation of a new regime. Finally, as already mentioned, the narrative quality does not provide theoretical explanation.37

37 Kimmel, M.S., (1990) p.52
**Behaviouralist Approaches**

The behaviouralists can be divided into structural-functionalists such as Chalmers Johnson or Neil Smelser and aggregate social-psychological theorists such as James Davies and Ted Gurr. Approaches which can be seen to connect behaviouralists to comparative-historical analyses are the approaches based on political science. These include Charles Tilly, Samuel Huntington, Amman, and Stinchcombe.

Although behaviouralists are often sophisticated in their approach and detail the links between certain patterns of events and the situation of potential revolution in a complex manner, they contain a structural similarity. The development of the revolutionary situations is considered as basically a two-step process. First a pattern of events arises that somehow marks a break or change from previous patterns. Second, this change then affects some critical variable, which if it is of sufficient magnitude will precipitate a potentially revolutionary situation.

Johnson for instance, grounding his analysis in Parsonian theory, both defines and explains revolutions in terms of "dysfunctioning" society. A social system comes into crisis whenever values and environment become "dysynchronized", due to internal or external intrusions such as new values or technologies. Society becomes disoriented and open to conversion by a revolutionary movement. Almost any kind of social change could then be seen to give rise to a potentially revolutionary situation. Yet why these variables should lead to revolution in some cases and to gradual decline and decay in others is not adequately explained.

For social-psychological theorists, such as Gurr, a precondition for revolution is the development of discontent followed by the politicisation of that discontent and finally its

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"actualisation in violent action against political objects and actors."\textsuperscript{40} This implies that no regime could survive for long if the masses are consciously discontented which again provides little explanation, particularly when considering the long term survival of oppressive regimes.

What becomes evident is that these studies are restricted in their ability to observe and measure the critical variables which purport to cause the revolutionary situation. Social change, strain or disequilibrium within a social system, the magnitude of goal conflict over resources or the state of mind of the masses are not readily open to empirical testing. The indicators which have been chosen to represent the changes in the frustration variable, such as education, economic stress and religious cleavages, are not necessarily proved to have a relationship with the actual extent of relative deprivation. In fact attempts to measure directly the correlation between personal cognitive states and social changes in America, Nigeria and Uganda, using interviews and questionnaires, failed to find any correlation between cognitive dissatisfaction and either prior dislocation and modernisation or a revolutionary, anti-regime orientation.\textsuperscript{41}

What these points highlight is that the grounding of these studies in behaviouralism produced methods of analysis which suffered severe inadequacies in the operationalisation of adequate indicators to serve their empirical requirements. The testing of hypotheses which incorporated such diverse critical variables as the cognitive state of the masses, the equilibrium of the system or the magnitude of conflict and resource control of competing interest groups tended to lead to contradictory results.

In Goldstone's view, what was particularly lacking was attention to the structural details or specific government programs of different states. The state was generally seen as an arena or as the means for coercion of certain elements of society by others. Goldstone highlights five major points which were omitted from most second generation theories, with the partial exception of Tilly and Huntington: the goals and structures of states, international economic and political pressures exacted on the internal elements of the state, the structure of peasant communities, the strength or weakness of the military and factors affecting elite

\textsuperscript{41} Goldstone, J., (1980) p.432.
behaviour.\textsuperscript{42} What these points reflect is the general nature of theoretical debate within comparative politics as a whole, whereby a diversity of approaches and perspectives began to challenge behaviouralists and structural-functionalists, and brought new focus to such aspects as the state, the structure of societies and the effects of the international dimension upon states.

**Comparative-History**

A wide range of theories have been developed within the comparative-historical approach incorporating issues identified by Goldstone as necessary for a more complete analysis. Early contributors notably include Barrington Moore and Eric Wolf.\textsuperscript{43} A major input from these theorists is to note that social change is often triggered by international political conflicts or by the impingement of international capitalist markets on pre-industrial agriculture and trade systems. Third generation theorists also emphasise that the state is not merely an arena for conflict or a means of coercion. The state is regarded as an autonomous or "potentially autonomous organisation."\textsuperscript{44}

For example, Barrington Moore isolates structural and historical factors which are likely to result in political systems of either an authoritarian or democratic nature. He focuses on economic classes, their interaction with each other and with the state. He uses historical case studies to determine three major routes to modern society. These are first, bourgeois revolutions leading to capitalism and democracy, such as Britain, France or the United States; second, capitalism reached through authoritarian regimes, such as occurred in Germany or Japan; and third, peasant revolt leading to an industrial, non-democratic society as in Russia or China.

\textsuperscript{42} ibid. p.435.
\textsuperscript{44} Skocpol.T..(1979) p.33.
Much of the proof of conditions necessary for democratic type political systems to emerge has been criticised as inadequate and vague.\textsuperscript{45} In particular Britain and the United States are pinpointed as not meeting Barrington Moore's structural conditions in a convincing manner. Revolutions are not necessarily demonstrated to be caused by certain historical changes, they could just as well be the result of institutional upheaval. Similarly the change of system to fascist, democratic or communist may have come about without revolution. Finally, Moore generally dismisses ideas and cultural values as independent causes of change or instability.

However, leaving these criticisms aside for the moment, his approach is taken up and effectively used and refined in Skocpol's study of the classic French, Russian and Chinese revolutions, establishing an analytical framework which provides new insights.\textsuperscript{46} She uses a comparative-historical method of analysis. She rejects any notions of voluntarism espoused by the behaviouralists and builds on Barrington Moore's comparative-structural approach, more adequately combining history and theory and emphasising the need to incorporate the exogenous frame into domestic analysis. She sees a particular combination of structural conditions as conducive to social revolutions: first, well organised and autonomous peasant communities; second, a dominant class of absentee agricultural landowners who are highly dependent on the state; and third, a semibureaucratised state that falls behind in military competition with rival states. Although regarded as increasing understanding of the detailed historical conditions under which states become vulnerable to international pressures, popular opposition potential and elite conflict, she equally received intense criticisms of her work.\textsuperscript{47}

\textsuperscript{46} Skocpol, T., (1979)
For example, Motyl accuses Skocpol of being ambiguous and vague in her application of concepts. The use of "potentially autonomous state" is inconsistent and confused. The state as structure and the state as political actor being used in terms which provide a conceptual gap. The "international relations state" is used in a way which suggests that the state is a single political actor; a country at war acting as if it were an international relations elite. Yet, within the "structural" domestic state, only one component - the military - is responsible for defeat in that war. Similarly her use of "revolution" apparently varies between signifying such diverse notions as popular upheaval, crisis and transformations. Motyl suggests that Skocpol's lack of conceptual rigour is potentially detrimental to identifying causal factors and subversive to theory building. 48

In the light of the 1979 Iranian revolution Skocpol's non-voluntarist viewpoint in particular, became hard to sustain. She admits to three main problems: her rejection of rapid modernisation as a factor which may have contributed to discontent amongst groups in society, the army and police being rendered ineffective without defeat in a foreign war, and ideology and the role of political actors being significant. 49 Despite these and other severe criticisms, and perhaps because of her innovative approach, her work has been viewed as path breaking. 50 She has been praised for her ability to solve the problems of dealing with multiple causation, 51 and at the very least, for capturing the social science imagination. 52

A "Fourth Generation?"

The 1980s and early 1990s witnessed a resurgence of interest in themes that third generation theorists are seen to have neglected. These include areas concerning agency, social structure and the roles of culture and ideology. In particular Goldstone provides an example which attempts to integrate culture and ideology.

From Skocpol's work and that of Charles Tilly, Goldstone identifies the critical conjuncture of three crises as preconditions for the breakdown of existing state structures: state fiscal crisis, elite divisions and popular mass mobilisation potential. He incorporates elements and critiques of previous approaches, providing a framework in which several key variables can be identified and studied. To some extent he combines comparative-historical analysis with quantitative testing of particular arguments; a partial merger of qualitative-historical and quantitative approaches. Goldstone's "synthesis" has enlarged the scope of analysis from Skocpol's framework by incorporating demographic forces, urban as well as rural revolt and shifts in ideology. His method combines comparative-historical analysis with quantitative testing of particular arguments. Moshiri suggests that this is a considerable advance over "either purely historical or purely quantitative analyses, which are too often isolated."

Although such a framework encompasses wide ranging factors, there are problems within this synthesis. There are criticisms, particularly with regard to the building of theory. Goldstone's emphasis is on multiple conjunctural causation. In other words, there is no simple answer to the question of whether any single factor produces instability. Yet, there is a tendency to fall back on a single concept to finally explain state breakdown.

Despite taking an essentially structuralist approach, the use of legitimation crisis as a distinct empirical "cause" for state breakdown takes us back to social-psychological

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54 Tilly, C., (1978) From Mobilisation to Revolution, Addison-Wesley, Reading & Massachusetts

explanations for state incapacitation.\textsuperscript{56} Charles Tilly is also criticised on a similar basis.\textsuperscript{57} Social psychological variables, particularly discontent, re-emerge as central explanatory factors, resurrecting the problem of accounting for the continuance of some illegitimate states to successfully repress revolutionary situations. Legitimation crisis is seen as too broad a concept to explain state incapacitation. It also may be unnecessary if elite alienation and mass mobilisation already imply the existence of such a crisis.

The crushing of the Hungarian revolt of 1956, or the events in Poland in 1980 to 1981, and Tiananmen in 1989 are examples where movements against states which are perceived as illegitimate did not result in the overthrow of the existing political system. In these cases the state was not incapacitated. In Hungary and Poland external forces played their part despite internal political regime crises. In China internal structures remained sufficiently strong to suppress any democratic forces.

There are pitfalls within Goldstone's approach both in terms of over-generalisation and of reductionism. The recent efforts to incorporate states and culture into theoretical models have tended to attach further levels or variables to a catalogue of conditions without fully theorising components of processes. For Goodwin, government effectiveness rests on cultural and moral assumptions of state managers in pursuing goals and their methods of achieving them. He argues that Goldstone fails to adequately analyse the cultural sources of state practices that might lead to legitimation crises and only concentrates on these aspects with regard to outcomes.\textsuperscript{58} However, as Tilly points out it is unclear what this "culture" is "that Goodwin urges us to take more seriously".\textsuperscript{59} Yet, Tilly tells us little more about what culture is in this context. Instead he suggests that theorists need to examine how state and civil society interact and how culture enters into the very constitution of political institutions. Nevertheless, problems remain. Culture is difficult to perceive independently of the action political scientists are trying to explain. Culture, state and action are incessantly interacting. For Tilly, integration of this aspect into analysis requires

\textsuperscript{57} Kimmel, M. S., (1990) p.215
\textsuperscript{58} Goodwin, J., (1994) p.748
\textsuperscript{59} Tilly, C., "In search of revolution." \textit{Theory and Society}, Vol.23, No.6, December 1994, p.801
either abandoning the search for general explanations or breaking phenomena into separate theoretically coherent components. 60

Farhi suggests that many recent studies of modern revolutions lack acknowledgment to cultural context and its relationship to ideology, especially within the state and emerging civil society. 61 Skocpol urges us to separately conceptualise ideology and - what she terms - "cultural idioms". "Cultural idioms have a longer-term, more anonymous, and less partisan existence than ideologies. .....both phenomena must be studied in relation to the central drama of the breakdown and rebuilding of state organizations". 62 Multiple cultural idioms coexist, and are drawn upon by actors as they seek to make sense of their situation. In other words individuals and groups may manipulate ideological symbols and images in relation to the cultural context that exists.

The discussions above highlight the ongoing debates within comparative analysis which centre around issues of structure and agency, culture and ideology. No single theoretical model can provide all the tools necessary to explain all cases. A general framework may try to incorporate variables without fully theorising processes and inter-relationships. A macro-analytical approach must necessarily attend to macro-level structures and contexts. It cannot deal with micro-level processes in detail. In any case it can be argued that comparative history is not the application of social theory to history, “it is the investigation of the degree of difference between non-identical, but possibly similar selections or sequences of events.” Additionally “identifying similar sequences of events is not the same as identifying general [predictive or determinate] laws independent of their historical context”. 63 However, theoretical discussion does suggest factors which may need to be examined in order to understand complex phenomena such as revolutionary situations. These include the role and structure of states, the international dimension, the role of political actors, as well as economic and social factors.

60 Tilly, C., (1994) p.801
A Framework for Analysis

The methodological and theoretical discussions above highlight some of the difficulties in applying a comparative-historical method to the East-Central European cases, and the problems of developing theoretical frameworks within a comparative study of this kind. Most comparative political scholars pursue – what has been described as – an “eclectic messy centre” in terms of theoretical approach.64 Equally, works of comparative history often combine at least two of the major “logics” in their method of inquiry.65 In applying a comparative-historical method to the East-Central European cases it is therefore important to set out the method to be used and to outline the theoretical frame of reference which informs the application of the method.

The method to be used in this thesis is essentially J.S. Mill’s method of agreement – a partial application of a macro-analytical approach. Similarities and differences between (and within) the cases will be searched out to establish whether (or not) there is a causal pattern that may explain the collapse of communism in the four states. Additionally, differences between the cases will be investigated in order to understand why the cases varied in their form and outcome. This requires drawing on a broad body of knowledge. A comparative historian has neither the time nor the necessary resources to undertake the primary research that is required for a broadly conceived project such as the one to be undertaken here. A large body of existing literature is necessary to enable such an investigation. The comparative historian’s task is not necessarily to reveal new data about particular aspects of an event, but to investigate historical variation, and offer explanation. Therefore, a systematic survey of historical and area specialist texts provides the primary means of obtaining sufficient relevant material for a comparative-historical analysis of this kind. In this thesis interviews with leading academics in the field provide a supplement to what is the primary means of obtaining information – searching out and surveying secondary text-based sources.

It must be acknowledged that the method is essentially inductive, and that this alone cannot provide complete explanation. Inferences can be drawn, but not fully tested. It must also be

65 Skocpol, T., & Somers, M., (1980)
acknowledged that a theoretical frame of reference is required to inform the application of the method. Theoretical discussion shows that macro-analytical comparative-historical approaches are not completely satisfactory. No framework can incorporate all the variables or hope to be totally adequate in explanation. This is part of the reason for a movement away from "grand theory". There are always exceptions to be accounted for. In particular, macro-analytical comparative-historical approaches have rarely, if ever, purported to provide "universal" theories. The very nature of their approach, which is grounded in specific historical contexts, prevents generalisations to all situations. Yet this approach is "distinctly appropriate for developing explanations of macro-historical phenomena where there are inherently few cases."66 There may be assumptions that units of comparison are independent of one another and yet inter-relationships are often addressed when considering the historical and international context of cases under study. The problems of the comparative method and assumptions about what contextual features or variables should be included in analysis is not solely confined to comparative-historical approaches. Informed analyses are dependent on the theoretical debates of the day. Through building on previous approaches and their critiques, a model can be established which can attempt explanation within the world historical context of the phenomena to be studied.

As the previous discussion on Goldstone's work indicates, there is no doubt that there are still problems to be addressed within a synthesis of approaches. All revolutionary phenomena are likely to have unique features and it might well be argued that there is no point in developing a theoretical basis for the analysis of such phenomena. In the case of East-Central Europe, the movement from communism and centralised economies towards democracy and capitalism provides a unique form of change that may not be comparable to any other. However, any analysis requires some kind of framework with which to make sense of the events being studied. The best that can be achieved is to develop a frame of reference which builds and expands on previous studies through application of differing methods and approaches. Conjunctural models can provide new theoretical leads. Each incorporation of new or different variables cannot in itself provide an integrated theory. Yet, greater exploration of factors and inter-relationships through the testing of different methods of analysis can attempt to add to knowledge and explanation, and contribute to shaping new theoretical perspectives. The intention in this analysis is to do just that. Whilst

66 Skocpol, T. (1979) p. 36
remaining sensitive to theoretical concepts and current debates, this study will employ a comparative-historical analytical approach in order to investigate differences (and similarities) within and between cases, and draw inferences from the patterns of difference which become apparent. In addition, the approach taken in this thesis enables some current theoretical issues to be confronted as they are met within existing East-Central European literature. Theories encountered in existing texts are not automatically accepted as explaining events or processes. For example, legitimacy crisis is explored as an explanation for the collapse of communism (see Chapter 3, section 4), and the “circulation” and “reproduction” of elites theses are addressed as part of the examination of social outcomes (in Chapter 6, section 2). As a result of this latter debate some implications for defining and conceptualising the East-Central European changes can be made (see Chapter 8, section 2).

The comparative frame of reference to be utilised in this thesis will attempt to incorporate a range of variables including significant external influences; political, economic and social structural factors internal to each country; and the role of political actors. Theoretical discussion suggests that external factors such as political, economic and military dependence on Soviet direction or the effects of Soviet hegemony and consequent elite behaviour, and internal factors such as top-down government and bureaucracy, mass mobilisation potential or social structural constraints are potential foci of investigation when considering what contributed to the revolutionary situations. Within Part 1 of this thesis contributing factors of this nature will be drawn out. The international context, the structure of states, economic and social conditions, social and political groups, and certain political actors also require attention in investigating the form and outcome of change.

Whilst acknowledging that there are difficulties in incorporating culture and ideology into any analysis, this thesis will also attempt to include some cultural and ideological elements. If – as the theoretical discussions above suggest – culture is difficult to perceive independently, and it is the interweaving of culture, structure and human agency that

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67 It must be acknowledged that all potential theoretical issues encountered in such a broad investigation as the one to be undertaken here cannot be addressed or confronted in depth. There are numerous sociological, economic, political and cultural arguments which are passed over or omitted purely because they are beyond the scope of this thesis to include, not because they are unimportant or might not have significance for explaining events and processes.
shapes processes, culture and ideology cannot be treated as separate variables. Cultural and ideological factors will therefore be incorporated into discussions where they appear to be most significant. For example, the penetration of Western cultural influences will be discussed as part of the international context; ideological representation will be included in developments of post-1989 political parties; and values included in relating attitudes of society to political and economic change. In addition the role of ideology and social values will be included within a discussion surrounding legitimacy.

Although it is difficult to isolate variables, some compartmentalisation is necessary. Whilst acknowledging the interplay of variables, each chapter will focus on particular sets of factors in turn. This frame of reference will not only provide a basis for applying and testing the utility of the method, it also provides a basis for assessing contributing factors to the 1989 revolutions, examining why there were differences in revolutionary forms and outcomes, and addressing some theoretical and conceptual issues in existing East-Central European literature.

1.4 Defining the 1989 Events and Processes: The Concept of Revolution

Many would deny that the events of 1989 in East-Central Europe constitute a "revolution". The changes that occurred have been more commonly described as transitions or transformations. 68 Nevertheless, the East-Central European events are often referred to as revolutions. 69 However, the 1989 phenomena do not neatly fit classical definitions of either term. 70 In Hungary "rendszerváltás" is a colourless, uninspiring label used to describe the

68 For reviews and discussions on the subject, see the section on existing literature on East-Central Europe, and for example, Munck,G.L., & Leff,C.S., "Modes of Transition and Democratization", Comparative Politics, Vol.29, No.3, April 1997, pp.343-362; Welsh,H.A., "Political Transition Processes in Central and Eastern Europe", Comparative Politics, July 1994, pp.379-394; and Munck,G.L., "Democratic Transitions in Comparative Perspective". Comparative Politics, April 1994, pp.355-375. The terms "transition" or "transformation" will be used when appropriate in this work in reference to other author's use of the terms.
69 See for example several articles in East European Politics and Societies, Vol. 13, No.2. Spring 1999
70 For a discussion on this see for example, Henderson,K.. and Robinson,N., (1997) Post-Communist Politics: an Introduction, Prentice Hall, Europe, pp.25-33
changes, literally meaning "exchange of systems." When the term revolution is used, it is often qualified by adjectives such as peaceful, bloodless or negotiated.

Garton Ash refers to "refolution", a term he uses to describe the negotiated political transitions which took place in Poland and Hungary. He refers to a mixture of reform and revolution. There were changes from above led by "an enlightened minority in the still ruling communist party. But .... also a vital element of popular pressure from below". Kis also argues that the East-Central European events of 1989-1990 shared the properties of both reform and revolution. However, he suggests that including certain elements of both concepts directs attention to a paradox. A process cannot preserve historical continuity (be reforming) and break continuity (be revolutionary) at the same time. Kis argues for a third concept – what he calls "coordinated transition". However, as with many other analyses of the East-Central European events, Kis falls back on legitimation crisis as a central cause of communist collapse. He provides a complex analysis of the "form" of political and legal change. He concentrates on "modality of change", and focuses on political elite actions. He describes the process as an "open-ended game whose final result depends on how skilfully and responsibly it is played by the major actors". The concept he uses then merely describes the changeover of political elites, and the negotiation process involved in that changeover. He falls short of explaining differences between cases, especially with regard to outcomes.

Revolution is a controversial concept and, as with any concept, there is no definitive answer to the question "What is revolution"? Meanings attached to the term have ranged from "defiance of authority," through "overthrow of rulers," to an "inevitable stage of

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74 Ibid. p.371
development." The former is criticised for encompassing too wide a range of change of government by violence which makes it hard to distinguish between such events as civil wars and social revolution. The latter is berated for including explanation which pertains to proposition, rather than definition.

When considering what factors "revolution" should include there is some agreement on violence (except for Tilly and Goldstone), popular involvement, and a change of governing body as necessary characteristics. However, when it comes to including political or social structural change there is considerable divergence. There is disagreement over what political structural change entails. Some, such as Skocpol, focus on the transformation of state structures, while Easton or Chalmers Johnson propose regime change, or changes in “the rules of the game”, as elements of political structural change. Only Marxists clearly expect a change in social stratification. In other words most definitions are about political revolutions. They suggest that involvement of the masses or popular uprisings are integral to political change, but do not necessarily anticipate changes in social structure as a result. This is what Kotowski describes as “extension”, or the boundary problem in defining revolution. There is also the “intention” problem: whether revolutions are seen as regressive breakdowns of a system, or progressive transformations. When considering the meaning of the term such factors as value inclinations, theoretical and conceptual frameworks are bound to come into play. Definitions are often then chosen to fit the relevant circumstances and theoretical confines. This may not be entirely satisfactory, but equally there is little alternative when there is no consensus on what exactly constitutes a

76 Cited in Stone, L., "Theories of Revolution," World Politics (1966), Vol.18 No.2, p.159
77 Skocpol, T., (1979) States & Social Revolutions, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, p.4
revolution. What can, and should be achieved is a consistent definition for the phenomenon within the context of the events being studied.

From the range of existing definitions, aspects which relate specifically to the East-Central European experience can be identified. In this context, "revolution" can be distinguished in terms associated with three main theoretical constructs. First, it can be broadly defined in terms associated with Tilly and Goldstone as not necessarily including violence. Second, with Huntington and Chalmers Johnson as breakdowns of political and/or social systems; and third, with Marx, Moore or Skocpol, as "progressive" transformations of political, economic and/or social structure. Although there is an apparent contradiction in including both breakdown and progression, to include the former acknowledges that revolution may not produce radical social change and may incur a high cost to a particular society. The latter acknowledges a transformation of political, economic and social structures that is not necessarily a regressive form of change.

The use of violence is central to the majority of definitions of revolution. However, the more recent examples of revolution suggest that this emphasis is misplaced. The international context and shifts in foreign power policies have resulted in regimes choosing not to fight revolutionary movements when they know, or assume, they will be unable to command allied support. Revolution in East-Central Europe has included breakdown and rebuilding of political and economic systems, which had consequences for society. Although the basic state structures did not completely collapse, and there were no "class based revolts from below", in each country the old communist regime and the party-state was - at least - radically changed. In Poland and Hungary the old regime completely collapsed, and the party-state apparatus was quickly dismantled. Reform of these systems was already in progress - albeit in different ways - before 1989. In Bulgaria and Romania the collapse of the old system was partial, and in some respects incomplete. Yet, considering the pre-1989 conditions in these two countries, there was at least an agenda for system change, and in many respects radical and rapid change did occur.

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82 These aspects relate to the "classic" French, Russian and Chinese revolutions. see Skocpol, T., (1979) p.4
These points will be elaborated further later in the text, but a preliminary characterisation of revolution in the East-Central European context can be stated as (at least attempted) radical change of the political, economic and social system which does not necessarily include violence. It must be acknowledged that this may be seen as a definition which is "all encompassing" and defined in a manner which fulfills the present research needs. However, when there is no consensus over what revolution as a concept means, nor a consensus on how to describe the East-Central European events, the term can be used as a consistent means to describe the overall process of political, economic and social change that occurred in the region. They may not - as yet - be classified as social revolutions, and may indeed be unique events. Ultimately, no matter how they are defined, what cannot be denied is that the events in East-Central Europe in the second half of 1989 constituted rare political phenomena. As such, they provide useful cases for the testing of a comparative-historical method, and the consequent assessment of its utility in analysis of such phenomena. This is the primary aim and focus of the thesis.

1.5 Why Analyse Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania

All four countries have some general similarities. They were all "satellites" of the Soviet Union; were dominated for forty years by communist regimes; and were all subject to rapid political and economic change during 1989 and the early 1990s. These countries also provide two sets of case studies with which to apply the method and analyse the revolutions within a comparative framework. Poland and Hungary on the one hand, and Romania and Bulgaria on the other, are invariably placed within equivalent groupings. There are notable historical and cultural differences between the cases. For example, Poland and Hungary were historically strongly influenced by the enlightenment and Western European culture, whereas Bulgaria remained largely dominated by Eastern orthodoxy and was directed by patterns of Ottoman rule. Culturally and ideologically.

84 There are many implicit, if not explicit references to a division between what is now often termed Central Europe (which includes Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic) and the more Southern or Eastern countries of Eastern Europe. See for example, Bideleux, R., & Jeffries, I., (1998) A History of Eastern Europe: Crisis and Change, Routledge, London & New York, especially pp.x-xi
Romania might have served as a bridge between these "Eastern" and "Western" orientations. Certain Eastern aspects were overlaid with strong attachments to the West - particularly France. However, the intermediate geographical and historical/cultural position of Romania, alongside the effects of communist rule has since placed this country closer to the "East" than to the "West".

These cases have also been "paired" in terms of their "mode of transition" from communist rule. Poland and Hungary have been labelled as "negotiated" or "party competition/election transitions", while Bulgaria and Romania have been described as "compromise transitions". A more complex pairing includes other factors, such as per capita industrial production before 1989 (intermediate versus low), the predominant mode of social integration (national versus repressive), and geostrategic location (intermediate versus remote from Western Europe). This more detailed classification acknowledges some of the political and socio-economic differences between the cases which are important for understanding the divergence of the communist and post-communist systems.

There are also differences within the cases which can highlight the particular uniqueness of each country's revolution. Both Poland and Hungary might be classed as negotiated revolutions, yet in Poland Solidarity was unique in terms of its success as an opposition movement. Hungary might be described as experiencing a more "top down" revolutionary process. Romania stands apart in many respects. There was a complete lack of organised autonomous opposition which could counter communist dominance by the late 1980s. This country also provides the only case of extreme violence during the change of regime. Bulgaria was in many ways an interim case where there was some late opposition development and involvement in the 1989 events. Yet in both Bulgaria and Romania former communists were initially reinstated after the collapse of the old regimes while in Poland and Hungary former communists were overthrown.

These examples of similarities and differences need to be explored in order to highlight common factors and interpret differences, which might provide explanation for the events and consequences of the revolutions. Although it must be acknowledged that without introducing similar cases where the indirect method of difference can be utilised some
aspects cannot be fully tested, these cases do provide useful comparisons for analysis. There are also many detailed arguments which this analysis cannot hope to explore. For example, why Polish Solidarity failed to reach a "historic compromise" with the Polish communist party in 1980 to 1981, thereby precipitating the 1989 negotiated process. A much broader approach which examines a wide range of variables will be taken here.

One of the foremost merits in applying a comparative-historical method will be shown to be the demonstration of significant differences between the cases. In relation to these differences an argument is developed. It will be argued that the political, economic and social "nature" of the communist systems had significance for the differing forms and outcomes of the revolutions. In Poland and Hungary established and influential opposition groups took part in negotiations with communist parties within communist systems that were already partially reformed and restructured. This resulted in complete regime change; the marginalisation of communists from politics; further decentralisation of political and economic systems; and relatively rapid post-1989 liberalisation and marketisation.

In Bulgaria and Romania some elements within the communist party-state were far more successful in manipulating revolutionary events; events which occurred within very different internal contexts. Communists lost their monopoly of power, but maintained political dominance over post-1989 processes. The post-1989 regimes initiated "stop-go" liberalisation and marketisation of stagnated, unrestructured economies, and appeared to be less able or willing to reform political processes.

The application of a comparative-historical method shows that the responses of communist regimes to external influences and the internal crises they faced, alongside the presence or absence of organised opposition movements within revolutionary processes, are a focus for examining different forms of revolutionary phenomena. Additionally, the application of the

86 For the details of whether it was the strength of Soviet opposition or the failure of Solidarity to hold a firm line which resulted in the introduction of martial law rather than forcing a similar compromise to that promoted by social confrontation in 1956, see Sanford, G., "Communism's weakest link - democratic capitalism's greatest challenge: Poland", in Pridham, G., Herring, E., & Sanford, G., (eds) (1997) Building Democracy? The International dimension of Democratisation in Eastern Europe, Leicester University Press, London & Washington. p.174-5
method can facilitate identification of the fact that the type of regime and party-state apparatus, and particular socio-economic conditions which existed by the late 1980s were equally significant in creating differences within and between the cases. The political, economic and social "nature" of the communist systems provided the conditions within which revolutionary processes took place, and provided the bases on which the post-1989 systems were rebuilt. These bases contributed to the conditions that the post-communist regimes faced, and along with international influences were integral to shaping outcomes.

The Structure of the Thesis

The following chapters will apply the method, and utilise the frame of reference, already outlined in this first chapter, to examine significant factors which contributed to the revolutions and establish the "nature" of the communist systems, drawing out differences between the cases. The differing revolutionary forms and outcomes will then be described and discussed in order to draw out potential explanation for variation between the cases.

An examination of cultural and ideological influences, which helped to shape the modern nation-state, might be the logical place to begin a comparative-historical analysis of the region. These influences permeate the historical context within which twentieth century states and social structures were established and communist systems developed. There are a considerable number of descriptive studies that address these issues. Although these historical preconditions are relevant to explaining some of the variance in communist and post-communist political systems, they are not explicitly addressed here. World War II and subsequent communist take-overs eradicated much of the pre-war structures of these states and societies. Each country's historical symbols and myths were no less important for that. In fact they probably became more important under repressive conditions. However, rather than addressing these historical aspects in a separate chapter, they will be incorporated within the discussion of developments of communist and post-communist systems. Whilst

referring to pre-World War II historical aspects where necessary throughout the text, the following chapters begin with developments in the communist states.

Part 1 of the thesis will focus on significant factors which contributed to the 1989 revolutions, drawing out the differing "nature" of the communist systems. Chapter 2 examines international influences and internal structural factors that provided the context for the revolutionary processes which took place in 1989. Chapter 3 addresses developments in opposition movements, the role of significant political actors, the role of the military, and their contribution to the form of revolution. Legitimacy will also be discussed in order to evaluate the importance of this concept in explaining the collapse of the communist systems. Part 2 will then examine the forms and outcomes of the revolutions in order to identify the relationship between the "nature" of the communist systems, forms of revolution and outcomes. Chapter 4 begins by briefly identifying the forms of revolution, and then goes on to examine the post-communist states. Chapter 5 discusses the development of post-1989 political parties, party systems and associated ideological representation. Chapter 6 is concerned with economic and social outcomes, and will address some aspects of the elite "reproduction" and "circulation" theses. Chapter 7 addresses significant international economic and political influences, and their effects on the post-communist systems. Finally, Chapter 8 will conclude the analysis by first, drawing together patterns of difference between the cases; second, by addressing theoretical and conceptual issues highlighted within the investigation; and finally, by assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the method employed, and evaluating its utility in analysing and understanding such political phenomena as the 1989 events in East-Central Europe.
Part 1

Contributing Factors to the 1989 Revolutions
and The Nature of the Communist Systems

Part 1 will apply the comparative-historical method outlined in Chapter 1 to the two chosen cases up to, and including, some aspects of the 1989 events. In examining similarities and differences between the cases common contributing factors to the revolutions will be identified, and the differing nature of the communist systems will be established. Particular structural, cultural and ideological conditions were apparent in each country by the late 1980s. Conditions within which political actors, regimes and social movements acted or reacted in different ways to internal and external influences. Part 1 will examine these features by looking at each state's inter-relationship with the international context; the political, economic and social conditions within each communist system; and the action or reaction of significant actors and groups, drawing out similarities and differences within and between the two cases. Although there are some differences within the cases and similarities across the cases which require interpretation, by 1989 the communist systems of Poland and Hungary were very different from those of Bulgaria and Romania. All four countries faced some form of political, economic and social crises by 1989, but there were differences in the penetration and effects of external influences, and different regime action or reaction to those influences. The patterns of difference identified suggest that the nature of the communist systems was crucial, not only for contributing to significant variance in the forms of revolution, but also in providing contrasting bases for post-1989 developments.

It is important to understand the inter-relationship of variables which created the contexts and conditions for the 1989 events. However, it is difficult to isolate variables. Structure inevitably overlaps and interacts with culture, ideology and agency. Yet, some compartmentalisation is necessary in order to discuss relevant factors. The interplay of variables will be recognised within a framework which examines sets of significant factors in turn. In addition, relevant historical details will be integrated into the discussion where it appears to be most relevant. Chapter 2 begins by looking at significant external factors which affected the East-Central European states, and the mainly structural features of the communist systems. This provides the context within which the role of political and state
actors, and social groups can be examined. Chapter 3 will address these latter issues by examining developments in opposition movements, and presenting examples of certain political actors, and their influence on processes. This chapter will also look at the role of the military, and finally discuss legitimacy in relation to the collapse of communism.

Chapter 2 The International Context and the Structure of Communist Systems

This chapter will focus on significant international influences and internal structural factors which created the context for the 1989 revolutions. Throughout the communist period external influences had their effects for East-Central European states. The application of the comparative-historical method will show that these influences became inextricably linked to internal developments by the late 1980s, especially for Poland and Hungary. The interplay of external influences with internal conditions created a context where reform communists within the Polish and Hungarian regimes were willing to negotiate with established opposition groups to try and resolve the acute political, economic and social crises which emerged. In contrast the Bulgarian and Romanian regimes - despite suffering similar internal structural crises - chose to virtually disregard the external context and maintain their centralised structures until the old regime leaders were finally forced from their positions.

To examine the effects of the international context on East-Central Europe two main areas will be explored: first, Soviet influences and their effect on East-Central European states; second, other world pressures. There are two strands within the first area; the effect on East-Central Europe of policy changes within the Soviet Union, and changes in Soviet policy towards East-Central Europe. The second international element can be divided into the changes within the world economy and the effects of Western cultural penetration. Examples of the effects of international factors on each country will be incorporated into each subsection.

88 In this chapter "international influences" relates specifically to the effects on East-Central Europe of changes in Soviet policy and Western economic, cultural and ideological penetration. It is acknowledged that these influences were essentially part of the wider globalisation process. However, it is not the intention here to address globalisation issues, nor does this fall within the remit of this thesis. Significant external factors will be examined in terms of their effects for the internal context.
Significant internal structural factors which contributed to the nature of the communist systems include economic and social structural developments within East-Central European states, the structure of the communist states, and the ruling party elite. Economic developments within East-Central European states have certain general features and interlink with the international context. These general developments will be examined before going on to look at economic factors within the two cases; contrasting Poland and Hungary on the one hand with Romania and Bulgaria on the other. Social structural development will be examined by discussing the changes in social structure and education during the communist period, and the slow down in social mobility that occurred across all the cases. When examining the structural and political aspects of the communist states the two cases can be contrasted; after discussion of the general features of the states, the two cases will be compared. Due to the top down nature of the states, the ruling party elites are an important feature. This factor involves two main themes that will be examined together; first the reactions of party leaders to reform measures in the Soviet Union and second, the resulting splits within each party elite. Again the two cases can be compared and differences between the cases drawn out.

2.1 **The International Context**

External influences had significant effects for East-Central Europe in the 1980s. Both the reform process within the Soviet Union begun in the mid 1980s, and the advances in Western technology alongside increasing world economic interdependence, put strains on all Soviet-type systems. By the 1980s the pressures of the world economy could no longer be ignored by socialist bloc countries. The relative economic backwardness and isolation from the West resulted in economic and political stagnation. Although there were some indications that reform would take place under Andropov, it was the ascendancy of Gorbachev to the Soviet leadership in 1985 which heralded a new approach to the problems facing the bloc. Changes in policy within the Soviet Union and a change of attitude towards East-Central Europe were key factors in the political changes of 1989 and 1990. As satellites of the Soviet Union, East-Central European states were inevitably affected by Soviet internal reforms and revisions of policy, and these elements will be examined first.
The Soviet Influence

The leading role of the Soviet communist party meant that any revisions to policy or ideology within the Soviet Union had to be at least acknowledged by the satellite parties. Each state had taken its own road to communism since 1956. For example, departure from the strict command economy had been tolerated, particularly in Hungary. However, the limits of deviation from the Soviet path were prescribed by what became known as the Brezhnev doctrine; there were limits to political reform, as the experience of Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968 showed. Economic reform was tolerated by the Soviet Union as long as the indigenous communist party did not lose political control. As Gorbachev began to attempt to reform the Soviet system these limits became less clearly defined. Two interactive areas of Soviet influence can be discerned as important in the 1980s; first the reforms of perestroika and glasnost within the Soviet Union and second, the change in Soviet policy towards East-Central Europe which gradually moved away from the Brezhnev doctrine towards the so-called Sinatra doctrine. Both these factors potentially reduced constraints on each East-Central European country's internal and external policy options.

Internal Soviet Reform: Perestroika and Glasnost

The effects of perestroika and glasnost cut across several areas within this chapter and will also be mentioned in later sections. Here it is important to point out that perestroika and glasnost were as much about new ways of thinking, exchanges of ideas and freedom of expression as about structural change. Gorbachev's call for perestroika was to provide impetus for political reform which coupled with glasnost eventually led to the addition of

89 The Soviet leadership justified Soviet armed intervention in Czechoslovakia, to crush the 1968 Prague Spring, by arguing that it was necessary to protect the gains of socialism. The Soviet policy of limited sovereignty, and the idea that an attack on socialism in one East European state was an attack on all socialist states, was dubbed the Brezhnev doctrine in the West.

90 A phrase first used by Gorbachev's Foreign Affairs spokesman, Genadii Gerasimov in 1987. It signalled the abandonment of the Brezhnev doctrine by the Soviet leadership, and suggested a willingness to allow the East-Central European states to do things their way - a reference to Frank Sinatra's popular song "My Way".
demokratizatsiya to the list of political watchwords. It was less the practical implications of restructuring which effected the East-Central Europeans, as the opening up of public debate on the possibilities of reform, not only in the economy but also within political and social areas. The admission that the Soviet system had failed where previously it had claimed to be superior to capitalism, alongside the renunciation of traditional orthodox ideology, promoted open discussion on a scale previously not tolerated. By opening debate within the Soviet Union, the Soviet communist party was implicitly giving the East-Central Europeans a signal that they too could participate in similar debates and experiments. This created a dilemma for the East-Central European communist parties, especially for some hard-line leaders.

In Hungary, economic restructuring was certainly not new. It might even be argued that Hungary had been practicing a form of perestroika for the previous twenty years. The New Economic Mechanism (NEM) was introduced in 1968 and commitment to a strict command economy was already a thing of the past. Political reform was minimal, but within Hungary's relatively liberalized system debates within the party and intellectual elite grew as Gorbachev attempted to implement perestroika and glasnost in the Soviet Union. Reformist party members in Hungary could look to the Soviets as potential supporters for further changes to the system. In Poland the changes in the Soviet Union had similar effects, not only giving reformists within the regime an opportunity to respond to economic and social crisis in a way previously not open to them, but also providing motivation for opposition groups outside the party apparatus - such as Solidarity - to renew their efforts in pushing for reform.

Any practical steps to implement reform by the more orthodox regimes of Bulgaria and Romania was minimal. Both Zhivkov and Ceausescu claimed to have been practicing perestroika and glasnost for a number of years, but neither leader put any real reform into effect. However, the people in these countries were to become more aware of the

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91 It was argued that Poland had also been practicing a form of perestroika for years. The result of these reforms was termed "catastroika", and the lesson both Poland and Hungary had drawn from this failure was not evident to Gorbachev when he introduced his own reform to the Soviet Union. It was suggested that Gorbachev offered these countries no intellectual inspiration, merely a greater margin for manoeuvre. See Puprink, J., in Gathy, V., & Jensen, J., (eds) (1992) Citizenship in Europe?, Institute of Sociology, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Berzsenyi College, Szombathely, p.15
possibility of change. Glasnost opened the door to wider communications between states. It became more difficult for the leaders of these countries to isolate their populations from the wider world as the jamming of radio signals became less effective and video cassette recordings became more widely available. Both countries received Soviet media, which by the late 1980s was extolling the virtues of glasnost.

Even in Romania, where there were strict controls on transmissions, some people could see the events unfolding in the rest of East-Central Europe via other media networks, such as Yugoslav television. For the Hungarian minority in Transylvania, knowledge of the changes taking place in their homeland had considerable effect. The popularisation of the outspoken pastor Laszlo Tokes became an important factor in December 1989 when his eviction by the Securitate sparked the revolutionary demonstrations in Timisoara. Similarly in Bulgaria, the Turkish minority could gather information from Turkish television. Despite the jamming of foreign radio stations such as the BBC and Voice of America, the Bulgarian leadership could not prevent Soviet media from infiltrating the country. Relayed Soviet television and Soviet publications became increasingly critical of the Zhivkov regime after 1987, undermining the personality cult he had developed over the years. Bulgarians would have been able to watch the televised Soviet Congress of Peoples Deputies in May 1989. The open criticism of politburo members was a new experience, bringing political and ideological debates into the public domain.

The effects of perestroika and glasnost created dilemmas for East-Central European leaders. The hard-liners were perplexed and resistant, while reformists were initially uncertain how far they could go with reform. The effects on each state will be discussed further when internal structural variables are examined. Acknowledged here is that Gorbachev's commitment to democratisation represented an ideological revision which could not be ignored. Not only had Gorbachev opened up the systems to the possibility of economic and political change, but he had transformed the dominant thinking on four ideological concepts significant within Moscow's policy towards East-Central Europe: the class basis for rule; democratic centralism; peaceful coexistence and socialist internationalism. The last of these concepts was to provide the greatest impact for East-Central Europe and is examined next.
Changes in Soviet Policy towards East-Central Europe

The changes in Soviet Union foreign policy and the effects of foreign policy signals for the East-Central European regimes were equally, if not more significant than the internal reforms initiated in the Soviet Union. Gorbachev did not initially suggest that East-Central Europe should be free to choose its own destiny. His early speeches and meetings with East-Central European leaders consolidated Soviet-East-Central European links within the Warsaw Treaty Organisation (WTO) and the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA or Comecon). Gorbachev did not advocate any move away from Soviet hegemony in terms of ideology and stressed democratisation within socialist confines.

However, as Gorbachev's term of office proceeded, structural changes were initiated which suggested a reorientation of attitude towards East-Central Europe. In 1986 three "new generation" party secretaries: Aleksandr Yakovlev, Anetolu Dobrinin and Vadim Medvedev, replaced "old guard" officials within East-Central European policy formulation bodies. There were also changes in the Central Committee apparatus whereby the East-Central European Department's role was reduced; it became a subsection within the International Department rather than a separate entity.

Implicit signs of ideological erosion of the Brezhnev doctrine gradually increased. Gorbachev's speeches became notable for what was not mentioned as much as for what was said. For example, Gorbachev's speech delivered at the 70th anniversary of the October Revolution on November 2nd 1987 reaffirmed Khrushchev's formula of different roads to socialism. Gorbachev stressed the importance of mutual relations between socialist states, but no mention was made of principles of socialist internationalism as expected on such occasions.

Other implications also came indirectly within international military doctrine changes. The reversal of Warsaw Treaty Organisation (WTO) capability towards the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), from offensive to defensive, meant negotiations for the withdrawal of intermediate range nuclear missiles and Soviet troops from Europe. The Conference on Disarmament in Europe in September 1986, whereby challenge inspections...
by Western observers could take place, potentially prevented any build up of Soviet troops on East-Central European borders as a threat in times of crisis (as had happened in Poland in 1980-81). The announcement that troops were to be withdrawn from Afghanistan was also interpreted as a signal that the Soviets would no longer use force to impose a Soviet-type system on another country.

By 1988 more direct signals began to emanate from Moscow indicating that the Soviet Union would no longer adhere to socialist internationalism as a principle governing its relations with other parties. Pragmatic responses to Eastern bloc political dilemmas and indeed positive interventions towards change in certain circumstances increasingly suggested that the Brezhnev doctrine's "limited sovereignty" principle was being eroded. For example, the removal of Kadar from his position as first secretary at the May 1988 Hungarian Communist party conference was accepted by the Soviets. Also there are suggestions that Gorbachev discussed the legalisation of Solidarity with Jaruzelski in the autumn of 1988 and indicated that there was no Soviet objection.93

The repudiation of the Brezhnev doctrine became more explicit with Gorbachev's announcement at the United Nations General Assembly in December 1988 and Shevardnadze's speech at the Helsinki Review Conference in January 1989, that the Soviet Union would withdraw 50,000 Soviet troops and 5,000 tanks from East-Central Europe. These were additional indications that the Soviets would not have the capability to intervene militarily in internal affairs. Also after Solidarity's surprising success in the semi-free elections of June 1989, a forty minute phone call between Gorbachev and the Polish party leader Rakowski in August 1989 reputedly reversed the party's opposition to communist participation in a new coalition government.94

In some countries the Soviets may have been more directly involved in the reform process and removal of "old guard" leaders. It is reputed that Mladenov (the Bulgarian Foreign Minister), discussed the deposing of Zhivkov (which took place in November 1989) with

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92 See for example, Kusin, V., "Gorbachev and Eastern Europe," Problems of Communism, Jan-Feb 1986, pp.39-53.
94 Clines, F., "Gorbachev calls, then Polish party drops its demands," New York Times, 23 August 1989, p.1A
Gorbachev in Moscow while en route to China in October 1989.\textsuperscript{95} Zhivkov's appeal for Soviet backing in November 1989 was apparently refused.\textsuperscript{96} However, there are counter suggestions that there was no coup conspiracy in Bulgaria, despite conflict between Mladenov and Zhivkov.\textsuperscript{97}

There is also evidence to suggest that there may have been covert interference by the KGB in attempts to replace hard-line party leaders with Moscow approved reformist replacements.\textsuperscript{98} It is unclear whether Gorbachev was personally involved in such cases, or how much of the events of 1989 were unintended effects of Soviet policy. Yet there is no doubt that in the growing momentum of change in 1989, the Soviet veto of military suppression removed the ultimate constraint of the Brezhnev doctrine. What became known as the Sinatra doctrine was a key factor in transforming the East-Central European states.

\textbf{The World Economy and the West}

Two other external influences were significant for East-Central Europe in the 1980s; world economic pressures and Western cultural penetration. World economic pressures not only had consequences for the internal economies of each state, but also played a major role in changing Soviet policy. Gorbachev's realisation that the communist world could no longer compete with the industrial and technological advances in the West was a motivating force behind reforming and restructuring the Soviet system. Brezhnev's commitment to the arms race had created an overburdening commitment to military expenditure which could no longer be sustained. The reported advances in strategic defence by the United States in the early 1980s finally called the Soviet's bluff. Foreign policy reorientations and internal

\textsuperscript{95} see for example East,R., (1992) \textit{Revolutions in Eastern Europe}, Pinter, London, p.35
\textsuperscript{96} Schopflin,G., (1993) p.235
\textsuperscript{97} see Tchakarov,K., (1991) \textit{The Second Floor}, MacDonald & Co Ltd, London, pp.192 & 193
reformist measures were based on the necessity to revive economic fortunes and counter relative decline. Alongside this, advances in technology were affecting the capability of Soviet bloc leaders to isolate communist countries from the West. As already mentioned, the communications and information revolution made it increasingly difficult for leaders to hide the discrepancies between propaganda and reality.

World Economic Pressures

Although the Soviet Bloc was to some extent an internally interdependent system of command economies, East-Central Europe was increasingly subject and sensitive to world economic circumstances. As world economic interdependence increased, so East-Central Europe's problems became more acute. A rise in world energy prices in the 1970s, when Soviet oil production was slowing down, only added to the problems of coping with declining economic growth.

Adjustments were required in order to compete with the rest of the world. The commitment to heavy industry and central planning brought the system under increasing strain. Continued use of material and energy intensive industrial structures, alongside a slow down in raw material and fuel production (except natural gas in the Soviet Union), was exacerbated by the inability of central plans to take account of necessary changes in demand and supply. These factors, alongside technological backwardness in relation to the West, all raised questions about the future of East-West trade and the financing of 1986-90 growth ambitions.99

The political rhetoric of "imperialism" had always hidden an economic agenda which required Western trade relations. Co-operation ventures initiated by individual companies gathered pace from the 1950s, political co-operation and agreements being as much a response to economic relations as to any political considerations.100 The need for new

100 Levinson argues that the economic reality of Vodka-Colanisation had been the driving force for political and ideological détente on both sides of the Cold War front. See Levinson,C., (1980) Vodka-Cola, Gordon & Cremonesi
technology and provision of improved consumption standards for the population drove East-Central European countries to trade with the West and avail themselves of cheap foreign loans which allowed governments to push for economic growth. However, from the late 1970s East-West trade ventures led to greater susceptibility to world economic crises as markets between East and West became more interdependent. This in turn constrained internal economic policy.

All the countries increasingly relied on foreign credit to service and develop their economies during the 1970s. Problems arose when Western governments were faced with inflation and recession after the increase in world oil prices. By the early 1980s Western enthusiasm to expand loans and credit decreased. The Soviet Union was no longer seen as providing a safety net for defaulting countries. This was also a time of increased hostility from the United States especially after the imposition of martial law in Poland.

At this time Poland was hardest hit by the lack of Western support. The Polish regime had opted for massive imports of Western technology and equipment to modernise its economy. In other countries East-West economic relations were assigned a relatively modest role in development plans, but servicing hard currency debts became a major problem for all the regimes, and remained a difficulty for all post-communist governments apart from Romania. Ceausescu's extreme response to the withdrawal of Western credits by attempting to pay off foreign debt had severe effects on Romanian society, but left the country more isolated from Western economic and political pressures. Bulgaria was to some extent shielded by its dependence on Soviet support, but by the late 1980s, with the increasing unwillingness and inability of the Soviets to prop up ailing economies, coupled with the removal of Soviet subsidies on oil imports, Bulgaria found itself saddled with a foreign debt it could no longer service. The world market had the greatest impact on Hungary and Poland, not only in terms of internal economic crises, but also in terms of greater susceptibility to other external pressures. For Hungary this even went to the point of incentives; heavily dependent on foreign borrowing, Hungarian reformists were eventually encouraged by offers of loan packages from the West German government.

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102 The West Germans offered loans to the Hungarians to encourage reform and indirectly pressurise the East German regime. The United States also put pressure on the Hungarians,
Western Cultural Influence

Although there was continuous contact with the West during the communist period, especially through émigrés and exiled intellectuals, it was not until the late 1960s that the infiltration of Western culture began in earnest for many East-Central European citizens. Especially for those in the more liberalised states, the impact of popular music and particularly American culture helped create alternative youth subcultures. By the 1980s, the advance of modern technology played its part in promoting a Western image which was often unrealistic. It appeared that only one aspect of capitalism - consumerism - was absorbed by the majority. By this time the most important channels of infiltration were through radio and television, written publications and travel.

Broadcasts from foreign radio stations, such as DeutscheWelle, Radio Vatican, Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty could be heard by most East-Central Europeans. Although attempts at jamming some radio stations continued in Bulgaria, as already indicated Bulgarian citizens were at least informed of the changes taking place within the Soviet Union by the direct relay of Soviet television. People were well aware of Soviet domestic issues and the fact that other communist leaders could no longer suppress the reporting of significant events. For example, Gorbachev could not cover up the potentially devastating effects of the Chernobyl disaster in 1986, the earthquake in Armenia or the crisis in Ngorno-Karabakh. Despite initial delays and sparse commentary by the official press in the immediate aftermath of such incidents (suggested as a return to the "old ways") in the end there was no option but to respond openly in the atmosphere of glasnost. 103 Ironically, by the very nature of their link with the Soviet Union, even if East-Central European regimes attempted to control internal information, they could not prevent the affects of Soviet glasnost penetrating the public domain in their own countries.

suggesting that expansion in trade relations would discontinue if East German "refugees" were not allowed to cross the Austro-Hungarian border in the summer of 1989. See also Szelenyi.I.,& Szelenyi,B., "Why socialism failed: Towards a theory of system breakdown - Causes of disintegration of East European state socialism," Theory and Society, Vol.23/2, April 1994. p.211-233

Television became a primary source of news and information in East-Central European societies and a major means of obtaining an often unrealistic impression of the West. In Romania, despite strict controls and the use of television to build Ceausescu's cult of personality, false visions of the West could be found. The United States was portrayed in terms of the lunar landing in 1969 and such programmes as Dallas. Even in Bulgaria where Soviet influence was supposed to be greatest, Western culture was popular for the masses and intellectuals alike. "Soviet movies played to empty houses, while even third-rate Western films attract[ed] huge crowds. The backlash against the Zhivkhov regime's efforts at Russification through regular broadcasting of Soviet programmes on Sofia television and mandatory Russian language classes in education was an intense fetishism for all things Western, particularly American, from jeans to jazz". Ironically in Poland, it was popularisation by Western mass media of Walesa's charismatic image which helped to convince many of Poland's middle class sceptics to embrace his opposition leadership.

Western media was most freely accessible in Poland and Hungary and along with internal underground publications led to higher cultural penetration. The proximity to the West and a relatively liberalised political atmosphere allowed greater freedom of information to the whole population. In Poland, particularly from the 1970s, samizdat publications filled in gaps in the news and debates covered in the official press. In Hungary, key documents from opposition groups were published and widely available. For example, the democratic opposition produced a special issue of the Beszelo journal, the "Social Contract", which called for political pluralism and a free press.

It is difficult to assess the impact of samizdat and foreign broadcasts since reliable survey data is hard to come by. It was argued that new communication technologies could undermine the controlled Soviet system. Although new technology was important in

104 Showing the television series "Dallas" on Romanian television in the 1980s may have stimulated a desire for the consumer lifestyle rather than exposing the decadence of American capitalism as was apparently intended. See Belk,R.W., "Romanian Consumer Desires and Feelings of Deservingness," in Stan,L., (ed) (1997) Romania in Transition, Dartmouth, UK & USA, p.192
106 Zubek,V., "Walesa's Leadership and Poland's Transition," Problems of Communism, Jan-April 1991, p.70
influencing the situation, this case was probably overstated as was the counter argument that new technology would strengthen the system. Glasnost had great effects for East-Central Europe in allowing public airing of what previously might have been classed as ideological heresy. However, the argument that the newspapers and broadcast media within the Soviet Union and East-Central Europe were agents of change has been challenged; their role and influence being seen as too slight.\textsuperscript{108} Ordinary people did at least gain impressions of the West which potentially highlighted the inadequacies of their own systems.

Those with more freedom to travel were also able to see the relative decline in Eastern economies and the lack of consumer goods available through official channels. Hungarians in particular were able to move more freely into and out of the West during the 1980s. Apart from political freedom, the proximity to Austria made it easier to bring goods back home to the black market or "second economy" trade. Many Hungarian students of the 1980s also studied abroad, bringing Western ideas of civil society, pluralism and new right economic thinking back to the academies and universities. An expansion in Western tourists also brought increased cultural influence along with hard currency earnings.

By 1988 there were few restrictions on travel other than financial constraints. A relatively smaller proportion of Bulgarians and Romanians were permitted visits outside East-Central Europe, but only Romanians found it a continuing problem. This was due to the increasingly difficult internal conditions in Romania. Although all four countries were potentially influenced by external forces, the effects of these influences were partially dependent on internal conditions. Internal conditions varied considerably, as we shall see in the following sections. In the more liberalised and open atmosphere of Poland and Hungary Soviet policy changes, economic interdependence with the West, and Western cultural penetration affected regimes, opposition movements and wider society alike. External influences acted as catalysts for political and economic change; change already partially in progress. In the relatively closed, centralised Bulgarian and Romanian systems regime and society were far more reactionary and spontaneous in response to external

changes. Gorbachev's policies were misunderstood or ignored. Hierarchical leaderships attempted to isolate themselves from change, but as we shall see external events and internal political, economic and social crises could not ultimately be ignored.

2.2 Developments in East-Central European Economies

Innovations in economic development came to East-Central Europe with the Stalinist conception of modernisation. This conception tied the economic to the political. Improvements in the economy and standard of living became part of ideological legitimation. Socialist countries were pronounced to be superior to Western capitalist systems in both social and economic conditions. Although starting from a much lower base than the West, in the early years the reality often lived up to the rhetoric (and official figures) in terms of advancement and improvements. In later years the economy was to prove one of the most difficult and potentially destructive elements for the regimes. The imposition of the Stalinist model of economic development provided the seeds of economic stagnation. Centralised planning, forced industrialisation and attempts at collectivisation eventually led to inefficiency, wasted resources and poor or ineffectual investment.

The drive towards industrialisation and urbanisation through central planning was initially quite successful, raising industrial production significantly. In the Balkans, Soviet reconstruction after the war affected initial development, draining resources at a time when these countries needed to concentrate on their own reconstruction. Nevertheless these countries were brought firmly into the twentieth century. However, the rapid expansion of industrial production without adequate investment in agriculture soon exhausted internal natural resources and a reliance on heavy industry was to create future problems for the communists. Attempts at forced collectivisation did not ease the situation and although partially successful in Romania and Bulgaria, largely failed.

Traditional peasant habits, such as subsistence farming, also caused problems for socialist economies. Industrial managers did not tend to define a firm's success in terms of competitiveness and entrepreneurship. Following their predecessors techniques of survival, they tended to channel subsidies into bottomless pits of outdated technology and excessive reserves. Industrial workers, used to survival under exploitation, beat the system by go-slows and refusals to work for low wages. By the 1960s, the centrally planned system was coming under strain and reappraisals of policy took place throughout East-Central Europe. Decline in annual growth rates, poor agricultural production, shortages of skilled labour, poor technological development, even unemployment in some countries, contributed to varying reforms with equally varying results.

Most attempts to reform the economies were unsuccessful in the longer term. All four countries suffered relative economic decline, problems of foreign debt and a resulting decline in technological advancement in comparison to the West from the 1970s onwards. Despite supposed attention by policy makers to the issue of technical development in the mid 1980s, investment practice still concentrated on securing raw materials and energy supplies from domestic sources and attempts to be self-reliant in agriculture.

The regimes suffered from increasing strains on state budgets when there was a pressing need to renew infrastructure and counter environmental decay. As already mentioned the burgeoning debt repayment to Western governments was one factor that increased the difficulties in maintaining economic growth (see tables 2.1 and 2.2). Secondly, they were tied to the Soviet Union through the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA). Dependence on the Soviet economy in terms of imports and exports softened the East-Central Europeans from the impacts of the second oil shock, but isolated them from the competitiveness they needed in order to produce quality goods and update their industry. Despite some economic recovery through regaining international creditworthiness and less stringent CMEA terms, the regimes failed to initiate the structural adjustment needed to adapt to developments in the world economy. These general conditions affected all four countries in different ways. Each country's attempt to deal with these difficulties depended

to a great extent on their relationship with external influences and differing internal contexts. To highlight these differences the countries will be examined as two cases.

Table 2.1 Hard-Currency Debt 1971-1989
selected years (billions US dollars)

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<td>2.8</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>2.9</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>-1.3</td>
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Table 2.2 Annual Rates of Growth of Gross National Product (GNP), 1970-1984
(selected figures; constant prices; percent)

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<tbody>
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<td>-5.3</td>
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<tr>
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<td>6.2</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>-1.7</td>
<td>0.5</td>
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The Economies of Poland and Hungary

Although there are arguments over the more intricate details of differences between Poland and Hungary, these two countries were broadly similarly situated with regard to economic conditions. Both countries had a history of unsuccessful attempts to introduce a

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111 For these arguments see Kozminski, A.J., "Transition from Planned to Market Economy: Hungary and Poland Compared," Studies in Comparative Communism, Vol.XXX. No.4,
compromise between planned and market economies and had developed close links with the West through cultural influences, expatriate communities and relative freedom of movement for citizens. Their proximity to, and dependence on, financial, technological and economic links with the West promoted greater contact and in turn, considerable leverage by Western governments and businesses in their dealings with the two communist governments. Although Western institutions may not have had a direct role in the political democratisation process, their indirect encouragement of neo-liberal economic policies certainly aided the influence of certain groups, particularly within Hungarian political processes.\textsuperscript{112}

The economic differences between Poland and Hungary to some extent reflected variations within state structures and the particular path chosen by respective leaderships (as we shall see below). Hungary was to prove the most enterprising in economic development, whereas Poland suffered continuous economic crises.

In Hungary there were problems with industrialisation in the early years due to poor raw material resources (lost with break up of the Hapsburg Empire). Rakosi's attempt to make Hungary industrially self-sufficient was unsuccessful and left later leaders with a need to acknowledge consumer demands and develop foreign trade. The necessity to import raw materials and to export goods left the country vulnerable to external economic influences.

However, the Hungarian attempt to solve the economic difficulties of the 1960s was to some extent successful. Within the New Economic Mechanism of 1968, enterprises were freed from petty plan tutelage and proved successful for the first three years. The strict command economy was removed. Bargaining of subsidies and credits replaced plans, but the system remained monitored from above and centred round large state monopolies. Service, commercial and agricultural sectors were officially run outside the state sector.

\textsuperscript{112} see Andor.L., "The Role of the Debt Crisis in Hungary's Transition", \textit{Labour focus on Eastern Europe}, No.52. Autumn 1995 pp 84-99
although it was not until 1981 that small private production units were legalised in industry.

The government linked the domestic economy to world markets in order to import Western technology and supply extra energy needs. Hungary joined the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in 1973 and became a World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) member in 1982. "Between 1973 and 1980 Hungary lost 80% of a year's national income" because of unfavourable terms of trade, due to the rise in oil prices, recession in the West and a fall in the export price of goods.\textsuperscript{113} There was a deliberate policy to expose domestic markets to international competition in an attempt to strengthen export capacity whatever the social and political costs. From the end of the 1970s private production and service trades received encouragement. Western technology, imported to mechanise farming, also led to self-sufficiency in agricultural production.

Despite many attempts at economic reform in Poland, none were particularly successful. Decollectivisation of farming from 1956 aided peasant income, but productivity remained relatively low. There was some encouragement of private enterprise in other sectors, particularly from the 1960s, but the failure to deliver sustained and sufficient improvements in living standards was to hound the leadership throughout the communist period. Poland's economic problems were partially obscured by massive subsidies. Whenever the government attempted to correct economic imbalances it invariably led to price increases provoking riots, strikes and popular resistance.

In a similar way to Hungary, industrial development in the 1970s was financed by borrowing resulting in the rapid accumulation of foreign debt. The attempts at investment in new machinery to improve industry and export capacity were hindered by centralisation, bureaucratic interests and distortions. Coupled with the global recession from 1974, Polish products became more difficult to sell abroad. Serious balance of payments problems and consumer shortages followed. By the end of the 1970s economic growth had halted (see table 2.2). Yet again proposed price increases led to strike action in 1976. The deterioration of the economy and discontent - especially amongst workers in state industry - was to prove the downfall of the Gierek government in 1980. As we shall see (in Chapter 3) the

\textsuperscript{113} Heinrich,H.. (1986) p.143
Solidarity opposition movement was partially born out of this discontent and continuing economic crises.

In both countries the inefficiencies of the official command economy were partially counteracted by "second economies," "black markets" or "moonlighting". However, this "mixed economy" had mixed results. On the one hand many workers were appeased and technocrats acquiesced by supplementing their incomes. On the other hand it promoted higher expectations and a false picture of what a market economy actually involved. For example, in Poland small farmers could cultivate private plots, were never wealthy, but were cushioned from market economy "risk" by state subsidies. Small private enterprises in urban areas had difficulty in obtaining licences and suppliers, but once established could make considerable profits with little effort. Where the second economy gained ground, as it did most significantly in Hungary, the state sector could not compete with the wages that workers could gain in their spare time. This was especially relevant when the state sector work could be used as a rest from labours in outside activities. For ordinary Hungarians it gave a boost to earnings and relatively satisfactory socio-economic conditions for a large percentage of the population. In Hungary the "black" economy was recognised as lucrative and although not officially acknowledged in statistics, allowing legal private enterprise was an attempt to paint the black economy white. The black economy supplied an estimated 50% of home construction, and a possible 80% of national income was derived by "unofficial means". In both countries second economies were at least tolerated by the regimes as a means to counter socialist economic inefficiencies, but also altered social and political relationships within the systems. As we shall see (in Chapter 3) this had unforeseen consequences for the regimes as opposition movements developed and became established within the political space partly created by these economic conditions.

The Economies of Bulgaria and Romania

In contrast to Poland and Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania maintained highly centralised economies with little or no opportunities for private enterprise or any other alternative economic or social development. Both countries were also far more isolated from Western

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influences due to their geographical position and the nature of the regimes. They had lower levels of hard-currency debt to Western institutions by the end of the 1980s (see table 2.1). Partly as a result, Western institutions had less influence on these regimes. Bulgaria's close liaison with the Soviet Union contrasted with Romania's internationally independent stance. Each system was also maintained differently, yet both systems remained more comparatively more centralised economically and under closer political control.

Bulgaria's economic system was slightly less centralised than Romania's, but Soviet-type planning institutions were maintained throughout Zhivkov's rule. In agriculture the collectivisation process was relatively successful. Pragmatic introduction of this process alongside an integration of private plot cultivation - similar to that of Hungary - provided the rural population with a reasonable standard of living. It was the industrial sector which witnessed the most radical change during the communist period. Pre-war modern industry accounted for only 5.6% of national income. Communist methods of rapid industrialisation and urbanisation transformed an economy "dependent mainly on agriculture and light industry, to one in which the share of agriculture [was a mere] 11.2%" by 1989. By the 1960s labour shortages and the growing role of foreign trade brought some streamlining of state planning and decentralisation of control. In 1982 a New Economic Mechanism was introduced ostensibly aimed at further decentralisation. However, the rhetoric espoused was not often matched by any substantial structural change.

Zhivkov often made statements which apparently supported innovative economic ideas, such as those surrounding the Prague Spring. He later compared perestroika with Czech reforms, openly blaming the Soviet government for failing to realise what socialism needed. Zhivkov also apparently supported the introduction of market economy reforms with real prices, taxes and wages. He had visited Japan in the early 1970s and "was mesmerised by the advances in technology compared to the East." Yet despite some material concessions made to the population in terms of raising some welfare provision

and benefits (such as old age pensions) little real economic reform ever took place. Paradoxically as a result of aiding the Soviet clamp down on the Czech innovations of 1968, Bulgaria received favourable terms of trade and raw materials from the Soviets in excess of their needs. Zhivkov's relations with the Soviets, which were particularly good between 1971 and 1974, paid dividends. Bulgaria kept its economy afloat by simply re-exporting Soviet goods, such as petrochemicals, at Western price levels.

However, excessive reliance on Soviet subsidies and CMEA trade also proved to be a contributing factor to Bulgaria's economic downfall. By 1984, partly because of these close ties, Bulgaria was beginning to suffer acute economic crisis. Gross National Product growth had slowed to 3% and agricultural production had actually gone down by 7% in the previous year.\(^{118}\) Zhivkov attempted to play a game of double alliance with the Federal Republic of Germany and the Soviet Union and met with Western businessmen promising to follow principles of Western market economies and ownership. Despite this rhetoric, and co-operative agreements with Japanese firms, which resulted in a relatively successful computer industry, Bulgaria's dependence on Soviet trade (around 60% in 1985) was its major structural economic weakness.\(^{119}\) The general result was uncompetitive goods for Western consumption, particularly in terms of quality. There was still a dependence on imports from the West for technological development which resulted in foreign debt of 8 billion dollars by 1988, but this was less of an influence on Zhivkov than his relations with Moscow.

There is conflicting evidence over Bulgarian standards of living and economic growth rates during the communist period, probably due to discrepancies between "official" and "real" statistics.\(^{120}\) However, there is no doubt that the 1980s brought an increase in economic problems including shortages of consumer goods and energy, coupled with hidden inflation. Although the cultivation of private plots meant many could maintain a reasonable standard of living, the Bulgarian "private economy" did not thrive as it did in Hungary.


\(^{119}\) Alexeiv,A., (1985) p.91

In Romania the regime ascribed a major importance to nationalisation of industry. Collectivisation was carried out in earnest between 1948 and 1950 and rapid industrialisation in the early post-war years reduced rural overpopulation. Romania took an independent stance in terms of relations with the Moscow party from the early 1960s under Gheorgiu-Dej. Ceausescu continued to defy direction from the Soviets and favoured a policy of rapid industrial development, which included forced urbanisation. Between 1965-1979 Romania had relatively high growth rates. However, there was a cost for agriculture and society; as population growth slowed so investment of human capital slowed. After 1965 industrial production expanded faster than in any other East-Central European country, mainly due to Ceausescu's determination, but with no consideration for social consequences. Economic priorities and goals were set arbitrarily and based on personal inclinations. A fixation with heavy industry led to the development of steel and metallurgical industries. Elena Ceaucesu's scientific pretensions as a chemist called for a vast petrochemical industry which disregarded the lack of raw materials and energy resources. Oil reserves were insufficient and imports of raw materials made up the majority of consumption. In 1984 a policy to increase the population at a time when food and housing was in short supply proved disastrous. It led to increased infant mortality, a rise in the number of orphans, alongside an increase in poverty and suffering for the general population. Corruption and soul-selling for survival, through such channels as informers to the Securitate, became a way of life.

Ceausescu frittered away any advantages of early economic progress and by the end of the 1980s Romania ranked lowest among European countries on virtually all living standard indicators. In addition Romania took the most extreme course of action to avoid the possible dictates of Western creditors such as the IMF and World Bank. When Western credit dried up at the end of the 1970s, Ceausescu was determined to repay external debt through the export of goods diverted from the domestic economy. The attempt to offset economic imbalances by exporting agricultural products and consumer goods in return for hard currency or energy exacerbated the austere conditions. There were severe domestic consumer shortages; basic commodities were rationed, even to restrictions on the availability of electricity. There was little or no independent economic activity outside of

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the supposed "command economy" to give the population the opportunity to supplement their "official" incomes. This is not to say that there was no corruption or privilege, but that it went on within the state apparatus to the advantage of an elite, rather than to the advantage of the population at large.

In all four countries the economic pressures of the 1970s and 1980s, coupled with Western cultural penetration, had the potential to modify the "social-compact norms" which had helped to maintain stability from the 1960s. Pravda argues that the "social compact" was primarily an economic, but later also a political and social bargain, see Alex Pravda in Bornstein, M. Gitelman, Z., & Zimmerman, W. (eds) (1981) East-West Relations and the Future of Eastern Europe, Allen & Unwin, London

Higher consumer demands not only stimulated an increase in imports on credit from the West, but also potentially heightened awareness for consumers of the poorer quality and lack of variety obtainable from domestic suppliers. The growth in Western dealings, particularly for Poland and Hungary, during times of unfavourable terms of trade and increasing international competition put added pressure on these regimes. Yet, despite economic conditions being partly responsible for promoting radical change, Poland and Hungary were - in the longer term - advantaged by their Western associations and partially restructured economies. As will be emphasised later (in Chapters 6 and 7) Bulgaria and Romania were comparatively disadvantaged, not only in terms of their relative economic isolation from the West, but also in terms of their economic structural bases. The type of industry - large numbers of state-owned heavy industrial enterprises - and centralised systems were far more difficult to dismantle or restructure when radical reforms were finally introduced after 1989. All four countries suffered economic crises during the late 1980s, but the outcomes of these pressures were to some extent dependent on political, economic and social conditions, and the ability and political will of elites. However, before examining political aspects we must turn to the general changes in social structure which contributed to the context within which developments took place.

Pravda argues that the "social compact" was primarily an economic, but later also a political and social bargain, see Alex Pravda in Bornstein, M. Gitelman, Z., & Zimmerman, W. (eds) (1981) East-West Relations and the Future of Eastern Europe, Allen & Unwin, London
2.3 Social Structural Change

World War II and Sovietisation radically changed society. Much of the pre-war political and economic elite lost their status either as a result of the war or Stalinisation. Rapid industrialisation and urbanisation in the early post-war period created distinct changes in society. Peasants and workers were often catapulted into high office through the party ranks. However, after the first generational change there was a tendency for previous patterns of social configuration to be replicated, albeit in a different form. Elite domination and rural-urban divides remained significant. Nevertheless, two elements were important within social structural conditions which had significant effects by the 1980s. First, occupational changes and an increase in the levels of education altered the nature of society. Second, a slow-down in social mobility led to a decrease in opportunities for younger generations, at a time when expectations were growing.

Changes in Occupations and Education

Between the 1950s and 1980s there was a significant rise in the urban population and a shift from jobs in the primary sector to secondary and tertiary sectors. Tables 2.3 and 2.4 below show the decline in traditional peasant populations and increase in manual and non-manual workers employed by the state. By the late 1980s in Poland, Hungary and Bulgaria, over 60% of the population lived in urban areas and over 80% were manual and non-manual state employees. Only Romania had relatively low levels of urban dwellers and employees (see tables 2.3 and 2.4). Romania is also notable for the low percentage of "non-productive" or professional categories (see Table 2.5). In the early years peasants became factory workers and during the rapid modernisation period of the first five or six year "plans", opportunities to become office workers or bureaucrats were available to this newly mobilised generation. Some people moved up the social ladder very rapidly through membership of the communist party. A talented peasant could move to the city, gain a good education and become a manager or apparatchik.

Modernisation produced a new social hierarchy. A cadre party elite with access to privileges, such as country houses and special shops, dominated society. A bureaucratic and expanding middle strata emerged to run the state apparatus and fulfil the professional
and non-manual occupational roles, whilst the workers laboured in heavy industrial plants. In Poland a particular category of peasant-worker emerged from the pre-war landless labourers. A peasant-worker employed in a factory could also produce food for minimal subsistence on a tiny plot of land. Also in Hungary and Bulgaria many urban workers maintained their own small private plots to supplement their incomes.

Table 2.3 Rise in Urban population 1950-1989 (percent of total population) selected figures

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<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>36.9</td>
<td>48.3</td>
<td>52.3</td>
<td>58.7</td>
<td>61.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>37.8</td>
<td>41.7</td>
<td>49.9</td>
<td>56.8</td>
<td>62.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td>53.0</td>
<td>62.5</td>
<td>62.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>25.2</td>
<td>32.4</td>
<td>36.9</td>
<td>45.8</td>
<td>53.2</td>
</tr>
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</table>


Table 2.4 Growth of population by social groups of manual workers and non-manual employees (percent of total population)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>1950-65</th>
<th>1977-85</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>52.5 (Dec.50)</td>
<td>77.6 (Dec.84)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>72.8 (Jan.65)</td>
<td>80.5 (Jan.80)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>43.9 (Dec.56)</td>
<td>94.2 (Dec.85)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>37.0 (Feb.56)</td>
<td>68.9 (Jan.77)</td>
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Table 2.5 Non-manual employment 1950-1987 (as a percentage of workforce)

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>21.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Alongside the development of these social categories education levels generally increased. State schools and networks of evening classes and correspondence courses provided basic education for the majority. In the 1960s higher education expanded, but this did not necessarily provide equality of opportunity. The numbers going on to university remained proportionally small. For example, in Poland in 1972 22% of the working population reached higher or secondary levels of education, but only half of those were of lower status origin. In Hungary even in 1984 only 9.9% of those eligible by age had university places.

Education was selective and the proportion of students from working class or peasant origin decreased progressively. This was not only a result of the changes in social structure. Increasingly higher education opportunities were only open to the children of professionals and party elites. However, the numbers of people with tertiary education who were qualified for non-manual occupations in the economy increased (see Table 2.6).

These changes produced an increasingly well educated, potentially white collar workforce with restricted access to higher level occupations. For the generation who had experienced the war and pre-war conditions, the possibility for social advancement was welcomed and often achieved. For the generations born after 1945 improvements in education and standards of living were expected. This created problems in societies where social mobility was declining.

Table 2.6 Numbers of qualified non-manual employees with higher and specialist secondary education (000s)

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<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>1781</td>
<td>3365</td>
<td>3772</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>868</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>521</td>
<td>858</td>
<td>1013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(n.a.- not available)

125 Heinrich,H., (1986) p.166
The Decline in Social Mobility

From the 1960s the rate of industrialisation tended to slow. By the late 1970s a decline in economic growth was accompanied by a slow-down in social mobility. After the initial upheaval of society in the early post war period there was a decline in individuals of peasant or working class origin moving into managerial and professional occupations. This was accompanied by an increasing propensity for children to inherit parental occupations.\(^{126}\) The reduced opportunities for social advancement, especially for younger non-communists created a structural barrier. Well educated people were employed in relatively low status occupations with little opportunity for career advancement. Even within the communist elite, career paths were often blocked by ageing party members unwilling to relinquish their posts to a younger generation.

When reforming the system away from the command economy towards more efficient and rationalistic management, the potential losers were the middle-level party bureaucrats.\(^{127}\) This group tended to resist change and often blocked attempts at reform (as we shall see below in the following sections). Their material privileges tended to decline as a result of reform. This was especially the case in the area of fringe benefits, such as government subsidised housing. Technocratic reform was also less likely to benefit the blue-collar, semi-skilled, urban worker. They were often excluded from earning extra income in a second economy (through part-time farming for example) or lacked the necessary skills for self-employment. In Poland this may have been particularly relevant in contributing to the greater discontent amongst workers.

In Hungary the decline in social mobility was less of a problem for society than elsewhere. While real wages were declining, living standards actually increased. The Hungarian "second economy" expanded. During the early 1980s around 70% of families generated incomes from outside the official economy. Although this often produced only a small

supplement, such as additional income or produce from private plots, the accumulation of extra wealth produced a dual system of social stratification.\textsuperscript{128} Those who would otherwise be frustrated by the lack of opportunities could turn to some form of private enterprise.

Elites in the more liberalised political and economic systems of Poland and Hungary had an ambiguous position. On the one hand those dependent on the nomenklatura for their position were more likely to resist change towards a market economic system in which their privileges would decline. On the other hand there was an educated professional class who could potentially benefit and improve their life chances by reform away from state planning and political control. In Bulgaria and especially Romania opportunities for advancement were limited. Patronage networks within the communist parties were virtually the only means of climbing the social hierarchy.

These social structural conditions had the potential to affect the political system. Declining social mobility put a glass ceiling on opportunities for much of the younger and middle aged groups. Combined with higher levels of education amongst these groups, dissatisfaction with the political and economic system was more likely. In fact it was members of this post-war generation which were to become prominent in the post-communist political and economic systems (as we shall see in Part 2).

2.4 The Communist States

The structure of the communist states was essentially similar initially, and based on the Soviet model. Between 1944-1948 the communists gained political control, eliminating or absorbing other political parties and associations. In Poland and Bulgaria remnants of political associations remained within the communist "Front" organisations. Parties such as the Polish United Peasant Party (ZSL), Polish Democratic Party (SD) and the Bulgarian Agrarian Union (BANU), retained little more than their names; all associations were subordinated and ultimately controlled by the communists. Each state embodied a top

\textsuperscript{128} ibid p.126
down hierarchical structure, heavily dependent for its continuation on the nomenklatura system, party leadership and ideological legitimation. Despite an apparent uniformity of state structures there were differences in the development of each state which affected the potential for change. This potential depended most significantly on how closely the party was interwoven with the bureaucracy, as well as the ability and political will of each party hierarchy to maintain a closed political system.

There were complex relationships and interdependencies woven in and through the various state institutions from the politburo to local district offices. These relationships varied. The difficulties encountered by the parties in the early years in Poland and Hungary led to relatively liberalised political systems after 1956, within which bureaucratic and party relationships were generally less clientelistic. Hungary provides a particular example where institutional relationships differed as a result of Hungary's "goulash communism". Romania provides an example of the opposite extreme where the development of rigid state structures and the particular style of leadership constrained any movement towards reform. By the 1980s these differences manifested themselves significantly in two ways. First, in the way each regime reacted to the changes in Soviet policy and second, how each party hierarchy was affected (as we shall see in the section on ruling party elites). Before turning to these points, the general developments and institutional features will be examined by comparing Hungary and Poland separately in order to highlight their particular differences, followed by the case of Romania and Bulgaria.

The State in Hungary

There are two aspects which contributed to Hungary's particular institutional path. First, there is evidence to suggest that the movement away from central planning helped to alter political relationships, which in turn altered dependence patterns within the party hierarchy. Second, the effects of the 1956 revolution helped to create an institutional form within which reformist party members could eventually initiate the transformation process.

Within the first aspect alternative forms of revenue from outside the planned or official economy created greater political autonomy for party agents. As dependence patterns loosened so the top down hierarchical links were broken giving opportunities for resistance within the state structure to develop. This aspect was partly a result of the post 1956 normalisation process and was complemented by the particular institutional form created at that time. These elements were later compounded by changes of personnel within the party and state apparatus from the mid 1970s.

After the revolution and a period of coercive rule from 1956 to 1962, the party was almost completely reconstructed and rebuilt on reconciliation rather than force. The introduction of liberalised policies and a relatively decentralised political system which incorporated an array of ad hoc organisations became reasonably successful as a means of co-opting society and professional experts. Rather than driving intellectuals out of the party, a controlled intellectual dissent was allowed within party ranks and the formation of social opposition was successfully blocked for many years.

In the mid 1970s, in response to early signs of economic crisis, the political leadership began handing over politburo decision making powers to the party's financial and economic experts and, through them, to the state bureaucracy. To counter these "experts" and the growing influence of non-party ideas, an acceleration of co-optation of blue-collar workers to key positions was instigated by the politburo. However, this policy turned out to be self defeating for the party. The party apparatus was deficient in the professional skills necessary for the effective supervision and administration of the state bureaucracies. This eventually weakened the party's control over the economy and political administration at local and regional level. It is evident that the turnover of top state personnel increased from around 9% in the 1970s to 53% between 1984 and 1988, indicating drastic changes within the nomenklatura. It is suggested that by 1989 the ageing, mainly unskilled, party

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130 for a more extensive review of this argument see Walder, A.G., "The decline of communist power: Elements of a theory of institutional change," Theory & Society, Vol.23/2 April 1994, p.297-323
apparatus was a "sinking ship" which had allowed a "specialist intelligentsia" to occupy positions which then provided for the party's own disintegration. 132

Meanwhile regional party organisations had stagnated. The greater tendency towards clientelistic relationships in rural areas meant that intellectuals were more marginalised. However, as social tensions increased in the late 1980s, so reform circles began to emerge within the rural parties. 133 Although they did not organise themselves into a cohesive central group, the horizontal connections they did make challenged the vertical structure of the party, and affected increasingly anxious party leaders. Additionally from 1987 the so-called "parachutist phenomenon" began to occur. The increasingly uncertain political, economic and social climate led many privileged party and state bureaucracy members to find themselves new mid-level positions within the political and economic structures becoming factory directors or school principles, thereby manoeuvring themselves out of the political power structure into the economic-managerial sector. 134 Many within the Politburo and Central Committee began to concede that political reform was inevitable. These processes within the party and state apparatus help to explain the deconstruction of the party from within and Hungary's particular reform movement, which emanated from intellectuals and intelligentsia at both central and regional level.

The State in Poland

In Poland the party and government bureaucracies were generally conservative, resisting innovations and reforms. The party apparat tended to be opportunistic and careerist. Unlike Hungary, the post 1956 normalisation did not include repression by occupying forces. Some achievements were preserved. These included the rejection of forced collectivisation, the maintenance of the independent-minded Catholic Church, along with the heightened


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class consciousness and assertiveness of the working class. The Church was even represented in the Sejm, by three associations licensed by the regime; the PAX association of patriotic priests, established by the regime in an attempt to undermine the Roman Catholic hierarchy, the Christian Social Association, and Znak. The latter was the most significant; reformed as the Polish Catholic Social Union in the mid 1970s, it was the nearest equivalent to a licensed opposition. Nevertheless, rather than taking the opportunity to implement Kadarist policies, Gomulka utilised the Hungarian experience to repress revolutionary change and became increasingly isolated from the reformist forces who had initially supported him in 1956.

Gierek (1970-1980) fared little better. His reliance on technocratic government further isolated the regime from an already dissatisfied population. Gierek opened Poland "a little bit to the West", and there was much less fervent communist propaganda. Yet, unlike Hungary where Kadar managed to improve lifestyles, Poland always had problems. In Tyszkiewicz's view the 1970s, and "opening" the system to Western contacts was "a very important factor" not only in changing the basis for opposition (as we shall see below in Chapter 3 in developments in opposition), but also in starting the gradual withdrawal of communism as legitimation for the regime. During this period reformists within the party were severely hampered in attempts to modernise and develop either the internal functioning of government or the wider political system. Intellectuals and the technical intelligentsia were unable to become fully involved in reform processes. The nomenklatura system served as a means to enhance elite privileges. Periodic attempts to make the system more efficient were usually blocked by bureaucratic opposition. Gierek alienated one group after another until even the bureaucracy lost faith in the ability of the party to rule with any competence. The resulting stagnation left the government unable to resolve economic crisis and left it vulnerable to mounting opposition from workers. The wave of strikes in 1980 finally brought government concessions in the shape of the Gdansk accords, giving workers the right to strike and form free trade unions (see Chapter 3). Gierek suffered a heart attack in September 1980 and Stanislaw Kania became party leader. Between 1980 and 1981, the army began to fill the vacuum as the party became unable to

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136 Views gathered from an interview with Dr. Jakub Tyszkiewicz, Department of History, Wroclaw University by Ruth Rodda, 30/3/98
function as government. Reformist elements within the apparat were crushed in the summer of 1981 and martial law was imposed for the following two years.

Jaruzelski was a compromise leader of a divided coalition. He attempted to revitalise the party by recruiting younger members and appealing to nationalist sentiments. However, Jaruzelski was constrained by the same structural features as his predecessors. His attempts to initiate economic and political reforms came up against the resistance of bureaucrats and an ageing party hierarchy, who were unwilling to dilute the nomenklatura system and their own privileges. Supreme power was in the hands of around two hundred generals who ruled through the section of the party charged with supervision of the armed forces. In the 1980s a new pattern of recruitment to the elite was supposedly introduced based on meritocratic principles. Some electoral changes were also initiated. Revised procedures allowing for more voter choice for local government elections in 1984 and 1988, and for Sejm elections in 1988. However, the nomenklatura proved to be strong enough to control recruitment to its own ranks. The communist party became just another bureaucracy. This kind of attempt at reform followed by reversals of policy or empty formulas for propaganda purposes were to undermine what little elite authority remained. Despite Jaruzelski’s endeavours to establish a centralised power system, a variety of unsupervised groups, committees and clubs persisted. The power and influence of the party elite was completely demoralised by the defeat suffered at the hands of Solidarity in 1980. Jaruzelski’s imposition of martial law in 1981 and limited party purge only served to destabilise this elite even further. The regime finally had to give in to an independent opposition of marginalised intellectuals and disaffected workers.

137 Schopflin, G., (1993) pp.183/4
140 During martial law Jaruzelski got rid of many conservatives, reformists and those seen as too close to Solidarity. Those removed were mainly from lower levels of the party, the purge was not impressive at higher levels. See Hahn, W.G., (1987) Democracy in a Communist Party: Poland’s Experience since 1980, Columbia University Press, New York, p.211
The State in Bulgaria and Romania

Corruption and personal patronage were the hallmarks of both the Bulgarian and Romanian regimes. In Bulgaria the power of the regional party organisation was sacrosanct. The regional barons owed their powers to Zhivkov and he enjoyed their support for thirty-five years. Zhivkov became First Secretary of the party, styling himself on Khrushchev, and in 1962 took control of the government. Throughout his rule Zhivkov pursued a course of mimicking Soviet policy. In 1971 a new constitution was enacted which created a State Council as the top policy making body. As president of this council he became the head of state, was relieved of the day to day running of the country, but set the policy line. The implementation of policies fell to the Council of Ministers headed by a series of pliant Prime Ministers.

There is little evidence to suggest that any significant bureaucratic or party organisation changes took place from the 1970s. Corruption and dishonesty permeated much of society. Opposition to the regime was dealt with at first brutally and later with the use of psychiatric hospitals. There were some minor changes during the 1980s which gave potential for autonomous activity within society. For example, although remaining officially subordinate to the party, the Central Council of the Bulgarian trade unions functioned as an agency for the formulation of national labour relations strategy. However, such actions as the forced assimilation of the Turkish minority, beginning in 1984, were reminiscent of the Stalinist era. While Brezhnev ruled the Soviet Union, Zhivkov's policies were accepted. Some tentative reforms were made in the economy, but political structures were generally rigidly maintained. It appears that over the years the institutions stagnated and the party elite became more and more removed from the realities of the outside world, and from the realities that the population had to face.

In Romania, Ceausescu took patronage and clientelism to extremes. Despite extolling the virtues of collective leadership in the early years, his recruitment of a hegemonic team to support his consolidation of power provided the basis for his personalised rule. He placed

141 Glenny, M., (1990) p.169

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himself at the helm of party and state in 1974 (as President of the Republic), and a marginalisation of the party apparatus began. Frequent reorganisation of ministries and rotation of top personnel were initiated in order to prevent potential rivals from establishing a power base. From the late 1970s reorganisation of ministries on a basis more reminiscent of the Stalinist era took place. Gradually members of his own family and close associates were appointed to high positions. A new political elite emerged, closely linked to Ceausescu and his wife Elena. Ceausescu took control of policy and ministries reported directly to him. Within state structures the Securitate played a significant role. The Department of State Security within the Ministry of the Interior was responsible for internal security against "terrorists" and for propagating the cult of personality. As supreme commander of the armed forces, Ceausescu maintained direct control of the Securitate and loyalty to him was maintained with high wages and privileges.143

As a result of Ceausescu's extremely personalised form of leadership and abuse of power, the party became paralysed. The Securitate effectively prevented opposition both within state structures and in wider society; dissident intellectuals even facing harassment in exile. In both Bulgaria and Romania rigid state structures, patronage networks and terrorist tactics obstructed any form of internal party reform process. While Ceausescu and Zhivkov remained in control, the formation of cohesive opposition organisations was successfully suppressed.

2.5 The Ruling Party Elites

By the late 1970s, the general tendency within communist regimes was for there to be a preponderance of rigid, conservative "old guard" leaders in power underpinned by a bureaucracy similarly resistant to change. The army and security services were controlled by. and intermixed with, these older party members. Amongst this "old guard", the general tendency was a desire to maintain the status quo. This was partly due to three factors. First, the nomenklatura system which, coupled with elite privileges, did not encourage change. Second, generational change; the mass recruitment in the 1950s and 1960s to the parties

were from young people, who by the 1980s were ageing and entrenched in their positions. Third, the parties had difficulty in recruiting younger members from the 1970s onwards.\(^{144}\)

In Poland and Hungary democratic centralism had already begun to break down by the 1980s. In Hungary the turnover of personnel and weakening of the nomenklatura at the centre contributed to a breakdown of the hierarchical structure within the ruling party elite. In Poland economic and social pressures had demoralised the party. Recruitment from younger members of society had dramatically declined and attempts to rejuvenate the party failed. In Romania and Bulgaria the party simply stagnated. Managerial positions tended to be filled with a gerontocracy who consistently looked to the leadership for direction. Younger, reform-minded, party members were excluded from the top echelons, and often expelled from the party. Opportunities for reform of the system were severely restricted. These general differences were reflected most significantly within two aspects of ruling elite interaction, which in turn affected the forms of revolution. First, party leaders' reactions to Soviet reforms, and second, the resulting splits within the party elites. Each of these interactions will be contrasted between the two cases.

**Party Elite Reactions and Ruling Elite Splits in Poland and Hungary**

By the mid 1980s the Polish and Hungarian regimes recognised the need for change. They had already experimented with economic reform and attempted some political reorganisation, well before the Soviets initiated reform. In fact Hungary may well have been the model for Gorbachev's reform programme. In this context the Soviet influence gave more room for political as well as economic manoeuvre, allowing the possibility of further reforms without fear of Soviet reprisals.

Although cautious at first, the Hungarian government took some quite radical steps towards attempting to solve the country's problems. Having become the most dependent on Western trade and generating the highest per capita hard-currency debt by the second half of the 1980s, a first step was to tackle the economic situation. This involved political as

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well as economic changes. The communist government reaction to the decline in Hungarian credit worthiness on international financial markets was to replace top economic ministers, oust the premier Lazar and replace him with the ambitious party bureaucrat Karoly Grosz. Grosz's image as a party reformer was welcomed by the West, particularly by Kohl in Germany, and a government programme tailored to International Monetary Fund (IMF) taste was introduced in 1987.

There were changes in elections in June 1985 (the electoral law was changed in 1983), where a choice of party candidates was introduced - and some independents won - but Kadar was unwilling to go further with political reform of this kind. Kadar became more and more isolated, both within the Hungarian party and with Gorbachev. At the party conference in May 1988 Kadar was unceremoniously ousted as General Secretary and replaced by Karoly Grosz. Grosz was not a radical reformer. He embraced ideas of economic and political pluralism, standing for modified party supremacy. Despite his reformist image he did not embrace ideas of Western capitalism or parliamentarianism. More radical change was initiated by such figures as Imre Pozsgay, who came to the forefront during the following year.

Within the party elite reformers, such as Poszgay and Nemeth were able to influence the top echelons, eventually ousting Kadar and reforming the party at the top. At the rural level too, a series of scandals finally undermined the conservative, often corrupt party leadership in the counties. The reform circles, which began to emerge in 1988, had their origins in Csongrad county. Although never becoming a strong political force in their own right, these circles were highly influential over the following year. Their demands for reform and democratisation of the party and Hungarian institutions were influential, not only in the reform of the Hungarian Communist Party (MSzMP) itself, but also in the reformed party's (MSzP) final demise at the 1990 elections.

Pozsgay (as leader of the Patriotic Peoples Front) had already built a power base within a reform wing of the party and was dissatisfied with Kadar's increasingly inept attempts at economic and political renewal. Nyers and Poszgay were promoted to the politburo at the

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146 See O'Neil, P., (1996)
conference in May 1988 and pressured Grosz for more radical political reform. By August 1988 there were calls for revisions of the country's constitution. Supported by Gorbachev's new posture vis-à-vis East-Central Europe, the group around Poszgay transformed an economic debate into a political one on democratisation and national sovereignty. By early 1989 opposition groups were conducting Round Table negotiations, and by September the party was involved in agreeing moves towards multi-party democracy.

As we have seen, in Poland continued economic crises had contributed to a destabilisation of elites over the years. Jaruzelski's imposition of martial law only served to enhance destabilisation within the party hierarchy. The radical reform programme introduced during the martial law period suffered from those hard liners who, fighting for their political survival and economic interests, were able to disrupt the process. Politburo members, such as Stefan Olszowski and Tadeusz Grabski advocated tough policies for dealing with dissidents and saw Mieczyslaw Rakowski and Kazimierz Barczikowski as too liberal. It was not until some hard liners were finally removed by Jaruzelski in 1987 that acceleration of reform took place. However, in the final months of the regime, unlike Hungary, the reformers did not have the time, experience or skill to dismantle the system and convert themselves into "social democrats". They were constrained far more by the economic and political conditions. There were some similarities with Hungary; a "shadow economy" which could provide alternative career paths for the old nomenklatura, pressures from Western governments and the world economy. Yet unlike Hungary, they

147 for example from Kalman Kulcsar, Minister of Justice -see Hungarian Situation Reports, Radio Free Europe, September 1, July 9, & September 12, 1989
148 By March 1989 the Hungarian Communist Party had conceded to reform of the political system and accepted that some form of multi-party elections would take place at a future date. However, at that time, that future date was thought to be several years ahead. It was anticipated that after elections the Communists would hold onto power via the Presidency and key ministries. It was not until events later in 1989 (especially the semi-free elections in Poland) that the communists conceded to complete democratisation of the political system.
had less political space in which to manoeuvre, and far greater difficulties to face; not least of these was the challenge from Solidarity.  

Following a period of repression in the first half of 1986, Jaruzelski had already begun to change tactics after the martial law period and the change of leadership in the Soviet Union. He acknowledged Gorbachev's calls for reform at the Tenth Party Congress in June (which Gorbachev attended) and initiated several responses. These included a full amnesty for those involved in the opposition movements, declared in September 1986, and a Social-Consultative Council was also established. A third visit by the Pope was allowed in 1987, and a more liberal economic reform plan developed. The reform plan was put to the people in a referendum in the hope that the regime would gain public support for what would be a painful economic programme. In the event the referendum did not provide public support, mainly because the turn out was too low. Regardless of the referendum result, the regime announced steep price increases on commodities in early 1988. In April and August strikes calling for higher pay were the public response.

Pressures from the West affected the regime as much as Soviet demands. Western sympathies for Solidarity at a time of burdening foreign debt, coupled with the outbreak of strikes in 1988, left the government with little room for manoeuvre. Martial law would not be acceptable again and some other way forward had to be found. In July a further visit by Gorbachev probably helped convince the leadership that the economic and political impasse of previous years had had to be resolved. The response to the August unrest was to offer talks with Solidarity with a view to legalising the movement. This caused serious upheaval within the regime and those acknowledged as hard-liners, or who felt defeated, withdrew. Messner, Prime Minister since October 1985, resigned, as did Szalajda, a leader of the hard-line faction. The more liberal replacements included Josef Czyrek, Wladyslaw Baka (politburo members), Stanislaw Ciosek (regime economic official), Kazimierz

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150 After the imposition of martial law, Solidarity was banned and the mass following of 1980-1981 subsided and remained relatively weak, even when strikes began again in earnest in 1988. However, any worsening of economic conditions was likely to evoke further pressure from a social opposition. Pressures from the opposition will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.
Barcikowski (president of PRON), Czeslaw Kiszczak and Rakowski, who became Prime Minister in September 1988.¹⁵¹

Party Elite Reactions and Ruling Elite Splits in Bulgaria and Romania

These two countries had not made any significant moves towards political or economic reform by the 1980s. Unlike in Poland and Hungary, calls for reform from the Soviets was not a signal to the Bulgarian and Romanian leadership that they could continue reform. Rather it produced the usual sycophantic and omnipotent reactions. Zhivkov gave formal approval to the Soviet prescription and announced radical change in the form of the July Concept, introduced in 1987. The Concept purported to proceed from equality and diversity of ownership, from the separation of the communist party from the state administration, from corporate self-management and municipal self-government, from new principles on pensions, banking, shareholding and so on. Decree no.35 encouraged free enterprise and no.56 on economic activity attempted to put some of the ideas into practice.¹⁵²

Yet, there are conflicting accounts surrounding the July Concept. It is suggested that Zhivkov merely paid lip service to Gorbachev's pressure for reform and that he had no intention of actually implementing any of it.¹⁵³ In contrast, it is reported that the reforms heavily affected the planning organs and the state's financial system. However, old structures remained under the umbrella of a super ministry, which actually increased bureaucracy and clogged information channels.¹⁵⁴ Apparently many ministries were closed down and parasitic departments eliminated, but restructuring met with resistance from the bureaucracy. The Soviet Union Central Committee secretary, Medvedev, came to Sofia and was sceptical about what the Bulgarians were doing. Zhivkov apparently spoke to Gorbachev about the need to democratise the bureaucracy, blaming the political form for

¹⁵¹ PRON (Patriotyczny Ruch Odrodzenia Narodowego, Patriotic Movement for National Rebirth) was a party agency formed in 1982. This was an attempt by the party to create "a kind of surrogate pressure group", see Kolankiewicz,G., & Lewis,P., (1988) p.92
¹⁵² Tchakarov,K., (1991) p.111
the failure of economic reforms. Gorbachev is reported to have urged a more measured pace and was also concerned that too many party members would be sidelined by the reduction in district and state officials.\textsuperscript{155}

It is uncertain what effect these changes had on the party. Tchakarov alludes to increased dissatisfaction and disunity within the party cadres, while others imply that party members saw the publication of the document "as a sign that Zhivkov was no longer assured of power as he used to be".\textsuperscript{156} Whatever the interim disunity within the party, by the autumn of 1989 top party members were disturbed by the changes taking place in the Soviet Union, Poland, Hungary and East Germany. On 10 November a reformist group headed by Dobri Dzhurov (Defence Minister), Petar Mladenov, Alexander Lilov, and Andrei Lukanov, ousted Zhivkov from his post as Head of State and General Secretary of the party. This was the first significant sacrifice the ruling elite offered in its attempt to preserve a monopoly on political power.

Ceausescu's reaction to Gorbachev was to deny any need for reform. He insisted that Romania was already implementing reforms beyond Gorbachev's remit. When Gorbachev visited Bucharest in 1987 Ceausescu attempted to show off the prosperity and democracy of his country. Gorbachev was greeted by thousands of people chanting "Gorbachev-Ceausescu" and he was given a tour of new buildings and the Bucharest-Danube Canal construction, but Gorbachev was not taken in. He saw the crowds as a staged performance and Ceausescu's proposition that the Romanian economy was a model to emulate as tragic.\textsuperscript{157}

As already stated, Ceausescu's personalised rule and clan leadership left little room for reformers within the party. However, indications of interest in perestroika and glasnost had been received by the Soviets from 1986.\textsuperscript{158} There was deep resentment and frustration amongst members of the bureaucracy, the military and party elite. In March 1989 Ceausescu was challenged by six party veterans, including two former general secretaries

\textsuperscript{155} ibid p.112 & p.117
\textsuperscript{156} Tchakarov,K., (1991) p.159-162 and Glenny,M., (1990) p.170
\textsuperscript{157} see Gorbachev,M., (1996) p.474-478
(Apostol and Pirvulescu), in an open letter criticising his erratic rule. There were also younger party members who were worried about the deepening crisis. Most notable amongst these reform-minded communists was Ion Iliescu, who had been purged from his post for liberalism and intellectualism in 1971. It is suggested that an assassination of Ceausescu was planned amongst "a nucleus of former communist party members.... who approached the Russians [and were] 'very happy if you do it, but don't expect any help". However, it was not until the violent events of December 1989 that party oppositionists emerged within the hastily formed National Salvation Front. Unlike Hungary, where intellectuals were co-opted by the party, the climate of anti-intellectualism in Romania isolated and marginalised those who challenged Ceausescu. The only criteria for political success was unconditional loyalty to the president.

In all four countries the Soviet reform process created difficulties for the old established ruling party elites. The undermining of ideological orthodoxy which underpinned old guard rule, coupled with bewilderment over the new hands off approach, created problems. In Poland and especially Hungary, splits in the party elite appeared relatively early. Younger, reform-minded party members were able to manoeuvre and influence the political process. In Romania and Bulgaria, elite splits were not evident until much later, and reformers had less room to manoeuvre against their entrenched leaders.

Conclusion

The application of the comparative-historical method shows that the common factor for the East-Central European countries in the 1980s was the international context. The Soviet influence was especially significant. Soviet party ideological reorientation in the past (under Krushchev for example) had created potential and actual public rifts in the "satellite" parties, and Gorbachev's reformist policies had similar effects. The undermining of old guard leadership, and insecurity created by the apparent Soviet hands off approach towards East-Central Europe, destabilised the ruling elite. This was even more notable when all the countries were also suffering from varying economic and social crises.

However, the interaction of these external influences with different internal conditions, had different effects within and between cases. Although burdened economically by its Western connections, Hungary was able to adapt to external pressures through greater economic and political openness. The more liberalised political and economic system, and accompanying decentralisation of state structures, provided opportunities for reformers inside the communist party to promote themselves and react positively towards the international situation. Poland's high risk strategy of an import-led boom severely aggravated the volatile populace. Polish internal conditions were potentially more conflictual, but without resorting to violent suppression of opposition forces, and without Soviet support and intervention, there was little alternative for the party but to negotiate a solution. In Romania and Bulgaria the attempts to isolate society and carry on business as usual might well have succeeded under different external conditions. If Poland and Hungary had not moved towards negotiated reform of their political systems in 1989, the communist institutions in Bulgaria and Romania may have remained unaltered, even if Ceausescu and Zhivkov had been replaced by reformers.

Alongside these political and economic conditions changes in social structure, education and social mobility altered the social base of political support (and non-support) for the system. By the 1980s a large educated non-manual urban population was the ascendant group to which Gorbachev's reform policies were most likely to appeal. Within the party apparat the younger reform communists had the opportunity to remove the "old guard". In Poland and Hungary the more open political, economic and social structures created autonomous "space" within which intellectuals and intelligentsia disaffected with the system had the opportunity to form alliances both within the party and on oppositional bases. In Bulgaria and Romania, the intellectuals were marginalised or repressed. Reformists and oppositionists had neither the opportunity nor the structural conditions on which to organise, whilst a suppressed society resorted to spontaneous outbursts of discontent. In all four countries manual and unskilled workers continuing expectations of higher living standards were not matched by real rises due to declining economic conditions in the 1980s. The "social contract" the regimes made with the working classes, which was premised on steadily increasing living standards and price stability in return for citizen compliance, steadily broke down (if indeed a "social contract" ever existed in
In all four countries, communist party claims to a "vanguard" role became irrelevant.

These external influences and internal structural conditions provided the preconditions for the breakdown of communist rule, and go some way to establishing the differences between the cases. Yet they are not enough to completely explain either the collapse of the old regimes, or the different forms of revolution. We must turn to developments in opposition movements, the role of political actors and the military, and discuss aspects of legitimacy, in order to understand more about the revolutions and their differing forms.

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161 See more in Chapter 3 in the sections on Developments in Opposition and Legitimacy.
Chapter 3 Opposition, Political Actors, the Military and Legitimacy

The previous chapter examined the structural preconditions for the breakdown of communist rule. These conditions provided the context within which organisations and political actors could transform the political systems. This chapter will examine other major factors which help to explain the revolutionary changes that occurred, and further establish the differing nature of the communist systems. These factors include developments in opposition movements, the role of political actors and the role of the military. These elements are not only important in explaining the breakdown of the communist regimes at a particular time, but also help to account for the differing forms of revolution. In the light of previous studies of revolutionary phenomena, and assessments of the collapse of communism, the concept of legitimacy also requires examination. As in the previous chapter, variables are difficult to isolate from their structural, cultural and ideological context, but some compartmentalisation is necessary in order to examine their contribution to the revolutions.

Developments in opposition will be examined by comparing dissent and opposition between the two cases. Three political actors: Gorbachev, Walesa and Ceausescu, have been chosen to illustrate the role played by important political actors. Although it is uncertain what exact role the military played in each country's revolution, the potential for intervention or non-intervention will be discussed. Finally, two aspects of legitimacy will be examined to discern what part legitimation crisis may have played in the breakdown of the old regimes.

3.1 Developments in Opposition

In all four countries there was continuous resistance to communists rule. In the communist take-over period removal of old elites from the political system and their replacement with peasant and working class party members, although initially a radical change, eventually resulted in a similar situation for society to that of the inter-war years. The so-called politicisation and atomisation of society left individuals isolated and perpetuated much of the inter-war elite-mass relations in a different form. However, it was not solely a state-society split which created opposition to communism; inter-elite battles were also fought.
There were two main forces of resistance evident. First, dissent amongst the intellectuals. and second, dissent within wider society. Both forces were frequently apparent, even in Romania and Bulgaria, despite the greater oppression within these regimes. However, there were distinct differences in the development and form of opposition movements which emerged to challenge each system in the 1980s. There was also a distinction between intellectual opposition, often grounded in ideological debates, and the spontaneous outbursts of disaffected groups in wider society. These two strands of dissent will be examined within a comparison of the two cases.

**Dissent and Opposition in Poland and Hungary**

Although dissent over the years emanated from disparate groups involving a range of issues, there were two notable forces which laid the bases for political opposition in the 1980s. These were; first, the critical intellectuals; and second, opposition amongst workers. In Poland these two forces amalgamated, while in Hungary the former provided the main pressure for change.

For both Polish and Hungarian intellectuals critical Marxism and the revisionist movements provided a basis for opposition to the political system. Intellectual ferment already existed prior to 1956 and reached a peak in 1957. The so called "Budapest School" in Hungary, and intellectuals such as Kolakowski, Kuron and Modzelewski in Poland, openly criticised the form of Marxism-Leninism practised in the East European regimes. The Hungarian revolution of 1956 became a symbol of anti-totalitarianism, and revisionist thinking developed to challenge regime Marxism and undermine dogmatism. However,

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after the Prague Spring of 1968 many revisionists began to openly question the possibility of reforming Marxism, and marginalised dissident groups began to emerge.

The differences in the development of specific movements were partly due to the consequences of the 1956 uprisings. The Soviet military intervention in Hungary left a bitter memory for both the population and the regime. The nature of the Kadarist system, which cleverly manipulated and co-opted potential opposition, left an intelligentsia which, up until the 1980s, did not openly challenge the regime on specifically political issues. In Hungary elite-dissident interaction was a prominent factor in opposition formation. By the early 1960s a rapprochement between the young, newly graduated intellectuals and the cadre bureaucracy developed, partly as a result of the ideological re-orientation and scientific successes of the late Khrushchev period. A new generation of optimistic and ambitious radicals and reform Marxists emerged determined to bring about a renaissance of Marxism.\footnote{Lukacs and the Budapest School influenced many of those who were to become future dissidents. For example, Janos Kis and George Benczte and economic reformer Tamas Bauer, see Szelenyi,I., "The Prospects and Limits of the East European New Class project: An auto-critical Reflection on The Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power", Politics and Society. 15, No.2. 1986-87. pp.103-144} From the late 1970s, a new generation of technocrats became established within the middle layers of the party and state bureaucracy, and a new reform intelligentsia began to promote political change to accompany economic reform.

Unlike the Polish, the Hungarian reform minded intellectuals did not opt out of the regime framework or insist on a dialogue on equal terms; most remained co-opted within the political system. There was continuous antagonism between an intractable cadre bureaucracy and reformists within the regime. Intellectual disillusionment and frustration with Kadar's backsliding on reform did not become apparent until the 1980s.\footnote{The Crisis of Marxist Ideology, Routledge, especially Chap.7; and Kolakowski,L., (1978) Main Currents of Marxism Vol.III, Clarendon Press, p.457-474.} Only a small group concentrated on dissident activities after leading members of the Budapest school were exiled in 1973. Not until the 1980s were there discussions amongst intellectuals about pursuing a course similar to that undertaken by Polish intellectuals from the 1970s. As pointed out by the former dissident Ferenc Miszlevitz, attempts were made by some members of the Flying Universities and the Network of Free Initiatives to stir the population at grass roots level, but grass roots political engagement on
the Polish scale was mainly rejected. Despite publishing samidzat articles, participating in Flying Universities and setting up independent groups, such as SZETA (Szegenyeket Tamogato Alap - Foundation for the Support of the Poor, founded around 1979), critical intellectuals remained essentially self-limiting in their approach towards political action against the state for most of the communist period.

Within society, fringe cultural movements grew over the years. By the 1980s public involvement in alternative lifestyle movements were frequent. These movements were non-political or even anti-political, but as indirect expressions of critical attitudes, they created some "autonomous spaces in society". Single issue movements eventually developed; ecological groups and peace movements, such as the Danube Circle and Dialogue Peace Group, began to indirectly express political opposition to the regime. The number of public demonstrations rose (for example, student-led pro-democracy demonstrations on the anniversary of the 1956 uprising from March 1986), but these kinds of activities were still mostly limited to Budapest. Despite some evidence of official trades union opposition, regime attempts to marginalise groups by trying to politicise them was relatively successful. The Hungarian people were allowed greater access to internal bargaining and decision making processes through official channels. The official unions had considerable influence on policy making. This led to few strikes, and coupled with the relative effectiveness of the "black economy" - which supplied private and self-sufficiency strategies for home repairs, food production and construction of family homes - resulted in a relatively acquiescent population. Nevertheless, the increase in clubs and groups, which often discussed political issues, was seen by some as a "revitalisation" of civil society. The notion of civil society, as a political as well as an economic term, became important amongst elements of the intellectual elite. Observers and participants within

164 Szelenyi,I., (1986-7)
165 Miszlevitz,F., (Senior Research Fellow and Director of Research, Center for European Studies, Institute of Sociology, Hungarian Academy of Sciences) interview with Ruth Rodda, May 1996, Budapest.
167 For example, in 1972 the Trade Union Council forced the Ministry of Health to co-finance the construction of three major health resorts after the government had agreed a stop to investment prior to the trade union decision. They also had influence in wage increases for blue collar workers in growing economic crisis and after the negative effects of the NEM - see Heinrich,H.. (1986) p.153.
opposition movements were often optimistic about the possibility of a revitalised civil society in the early 1980s, but were later disillusioned by the eventual lack of public participation. Although demonstrators chanting slogans demanding freedom and democracy encouraged the emerging political opposition in the late 1980s, unlike Poland where many opposition intellectuals actively encouraged grass roots organisations, certain Hungarian political elites were seen to have co-opted a "potentially civil democratisation process". 168

Overt political opposition eventually emerged from within the party and the intellectual elite. As we have seen (previously in Chapter 2) reformers, such as Poszgay and Nemeth were able to influence the top party elite, while reform circles within the rural party also influenced political change. However, the intellectual movements were to provide the bases for opposition parties.

Two main groups were discernible amongst the intellectuals. First, a populist group of writers, artists and academics who initially had close connections with reform communists, but later rejected any contact with the regime to become strongly anti-communist. This group regarded communism as an enemy of the nation and of the peasant. The second group was dominated by urban and democratic members, many of whom were influenced initially by critical Marxism. Although these groups were small and mainly confined to academics and professionals, they took the initiative in publicly confronting the government with the economic and political realities of the 1980s.

In 1987 three significant events took place which showed the extent to which confidence in the regime by party members and other elite groups had deteriorated. Each event involved groups and individuals who later became prominent within processes of political and economic change. First, radical economists published a document which brought into the public arena the acute economic difficulties the regime faced, along with radical proposals on how to deal with these problems. Second, a special issue of the samizdat publication Beszelo entitled the "Social Contract" was produced by urban and democratic oppositionists calling for political pluralism, and a free press. Most strikingly this included

a proposal for Kadar to step down.\textsuperscript{169} Third, a meeting at Lakitelek, dominated by populist writers and critics, which also included reformist members of the communist party; most notably the guest of honour, Imre Pozsgay. The meeting was the foundation for the Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF) as a discussion group for democratically committed people.\textsuperscript{170}

In 1988 the pace of change accelerated. The urbanists and other groups formed the Network of Free Initiatives (members of which later formed The Alliance of Free Democrats). A younger group formed the first oppositionist political organisation: the Alliance of Young Democrats (AYD or Fidesz).\textsuperscript{171} Finally in May 1988, a special party conference was convened at which economic decline, the growth of extra-party movements and inter-party splits were discussed.

Party reformers such as Pozsgay, Nyers and Nemeth, understood that Kadarist solutions had reached a dead end and political reform was required. The May 1988 Party Conference (the first since 1957) ousted Kadar and replaced him with Grosz. In November 1988 the government accepted amendments to the Act of Association which gave evolving political organisations a legal framework. This was seen by some as creating legal conditions for a multi-party system. Late in 1988 "historical" parties such as the Independent Smallholders Party, began to appear. Although many hard-line communists saw the Act as applying merely to interest groups, by February 1989 the Hungarian Communist Party (HSWP) had accepted that a multi-party democracy was inevitable, and in June 1989 agreed to Roundtable negotiations. Also significant was that unlike Poland, party reformers like

\textsuperscript{169} Members of the mainly "urbanist" groups were radical-liberal oppositionists. They had no communist links and were attached to the principles of human rights. They later formed the Alliance of Free Democrats (AFD or SzDSz) in November 1988.
\textsuperscript{170} This meeting was a follow up to the 1985 Monor gathering of dissident groups when urbanists and populists first came together. Many populists had close links with reform communists, but in September 1988 the MDF became an oppositionist political organisation which by the time of the elections in March-April 1990 had abandoned its "third way" philosophy.
\textsuperscript{171} The founders of Fidesz gained political experience in the "college movement", several became financially independent due to foundational support, see Bozoki,A., & Sukosd,M., "Civil Society and Populism in the Eastern European Democratic transitions," \textit{Praxis International}, Vol.13, No.3. October 1993, pp.224-241. It is also suggested that financial support for democratic groups and individuals came from the United States. Information from a leading academic (who preferred to remain anonymous), interviewed by Ruth Rodda, Budapest, May 1996.
Pozsgay were popular, and there was a feeling that a reformed party could continue to play a political role after elections. In contrast to other East-Central European countries, the Hungarian opposition lacked comparable parallels. There was no powerful Catholic or religious contingent of dissent, little opposition action amongst workers and little liberal or social democratic tradition on which to base a theory or ideology of opposition.

In contrast to Hungarian co-optation under Kadar, a section of Polish intellectuals were cut off from the regime framework during the Gierek period. Despite developing a cynicism about the possibilities of dramatic political change, these intellectuals were to become openly critical of the regime. Unlike Hungarian intellectuals, this criticism was more specifically outside and in opposition to the party-state, and appeared at a much earlier stage. This intellectual movement eventually developed a unique, although sometimes strained, partnership with disaffected workers, finally rallying public support in direct political opposition to the Polish regime.

Workers began to seriously challenge the regime in Poznan in 1956, continuing to threaten regime stability in the 1970s and early 1980s. The intellectuals assumed a chief role in criticising the regime in the early 1960s and early 1970s, reaching a peak in opposing government in the campaign against constitutional revisions in early 1976. However, by this time there was a growing realisation that success in opposing the regime lay in re-establishing an alliance with the workers. An alliance that had successfully supported Gomulka in 1956, but would now challenge a vulnerably perceived Gierek. From the 1970s many intellectuals put theory into political practice, organising a number of groups, most notably The Workers Defence Committee (KOR) and the Movement for the Defence of Human and Civil Rights (ROBCIO). The creation of these groups in the wake of the 1976 strikes - although initially uncohesive - provided the foundation of support for worker's rights and for the Solidarity movement.

The Catholic Church in Poland was also important. Although tending towards ambivalence on the question of dissent throughout much of the communist period, the Church not only produced a Catholic intelligentsia which grew more critical of the communist regime, but also provided a symbol of opposition for the Polish people. From 1976 Church-state relations became more confrontational. The Church played an increasingly more subtle political role and attracted many intellectuals to its ranks. The election of Cardinal Karol
Wojtyła as Pope John Paul II in 1978, and his subsequent visits to Poland in 1979, 1983 and 1987, boosted the Church's status as an independent non-communist structure. This provided a catalyst to unite Church and society, and gave the opposition movements renewed impetus.

Dissent after 1976 had a different character than elsewhere in East-Central Europe. Even amongst those who were not antisocialist, the "new evolutionist" conception of criticism for the system was founded in seeking a change in the behaviour of the population, rather than in a simple "revision" of regime policy or institutions. The Soviet signing of the Helsinki Accords in 1975 is seen as having little or no influence on the opposition in Poland. "It was allowing people to go abroad to work, and the relative lack of strong oppression in the Gierek era" which helped to promote ideas of liberalisation. However, human rights became part of some oppositionists political articulation at around this time. The apparently homogenous opposition which emerged by the 1980s was in fact made up of diverse groups and organisations which individually articulated a wide range of ideas and values. Opposition movements included Church, non-communist left, national independence, workers, self-education and citizen's action groups representing traditions and values which ranged from Catholic social doctrine to freedom, tolerance and human rights; a central compromise being between the Church and non-communist left which laid the foundations for the non-violent means of protest.

Ironically the political rights, which many intellectuals expected to wait years for, were won by workers' open confrontation within the single year of 1980. In this year, after the wave of strikes in the Silesian coal fields and Baltic ports, the signing of the Gdansk Accords in August was a triumph for the workers, gaining them institutional guarantees of

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172 Adam Michnik's and Leszek Kolakowski's disillusionment with Marxist revisionism led to the theory of New Evolutionism. The concept was anti-totalitarian and supportive of extra-systemic opposition rather than activity within the party. The organisation of social opposition and forcing of concessions was expected to be a very long process. See for example Adam Michnik, "Nowy ewolucjonizm," 1978, in Szanse polskiej demokracji, 1984, London, p.77-87
173 Dr. Jakub Tyszkiewicz, Department of History, Wroclaw University, interview with Ruth Rodda, 30/3/98

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their status as an independent, autonomous movement. The Gdansk Accords were a turning point for the different groups which had striven separately since the mid 1970s to gain freedoms of organisation, information and an end to inequality in society. Although the union movement was initially intent on pressing for workers' rights and economic reform, the recognition of Solidarity as an independent organisation outside the party-state apparatus was the foundation for overt political opposition. Although the movement was outlawed during the martial law period, by August 1988 the government implicitly acknowledged defeat by agreeing to convene Round Table talks to end the impasse which had paralysed Polish politics since 1981. The strikes of 1988 were weak in comparison to those of 1980. However, the central demand for the relegalisation of Solidarity, together with Catholic intellectual pressure and the party's inability to govern successfully, led finally to the "constructive opposition" (centred around Walesa) negotiating its way to the historic elections of 1989.  

Dissent and Opposition in Romania and Bulgaria

In contrast to Poland and Hungary, the opportunity for political opposition to develop in Bulgaria and Romania was severely restricted by oppression and the intolerance of dissent by the regimes. This is not to say that dissenters inside or outside the parties did not exist, but that the more closed societies, and what has been classed as "odious Stalinist practices," continued well into the 1980s, making the formation of groups extremely difficult and dangerous.  

In Bulgaria there were dissidents and defectors throughout the communist period. There were tobacco workers strikes in 1953, and in the 1970s there was recognition of an Agrarian movement. There was a series of bombings, sabotage and arson incidents beginning in 1984, which it is suggested were politically motivated and well organised. Yet, it was not until November 1987 that an independent group emerged. The Discussion

177 Alexeiv, A. (1985) p.93

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Group for the Support of Glasnost and Perestroika was formed by intellectuals - some of whom were party members - to articulate the case for openness and reconstruction. This was followed by the Independent Society for Human Rights in January 1988, which was the first structured dissident organisation. During the following eighteen months several other movements appeared, Ekoglasnost becoming one of the most political. By the latter half of the 1980s environmental concerns touched the national consciousness and created a common cause between intellectuals and wider society.

A coherent intellectual opposition emerged as much as a result of the changing circumstances in the Soviet Union and other East-Central European countries, as from the demands of the younger generation, or from token gestures to reform emanating from the Zhivkov regime.\textsuperscript{178} The regime was not totally insensitive to public demands and with the close links to the Soviets (especially economically), could not ignore pressures from society. However, Zhivkov miscalculated when he attempted to suppress the Turkish minority after they formed independent groups and began promoting their cause internationally.\textsuperscript{179} The Conference on Security and Co-operation (CSCE) to discuss the environment, held in Sofia in October and November 1989, provided the now flourishing independent groups with an international stage on which they could rally mass support. Although not the sole cause of Zhivkov's demise, opposition from the intellectuals and wider society was a contributing factor in his removal. Although only appearing very late this opposition pressured the party towards reforming itself and seeking Round Table talks in 1990 (see more below in section 3.3 and Chapter 4).

Romania had some similarities with Poland. Consumer shortages and economic tinkering prompted worker unrest beginning in 1971.\textsuperscript{180} There was a miners strike in 1977 and a Free Trade Union Movement (SLOMR) founded in 1979 when 20 intellectuals and workers

\textsuperscript{178} At the 1987 July Plenum Zhivkov stated that it was time to develop voluntary associations, but subsequent actions did not support the intellectuals' idea of civil society development, see Crampton, R., "The Intelligentsia, the ecology and the opposition in Bulgaria," \textit{The World Today} 1990,46,2 London, pp.23-26.

\textsuperscript{179} The Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) in Paris May-June 1989 was used by the Democratic League for the Defence of Human Rights in Bulgaria to represent the Turks cause against assimilation pressures.

\textsuperscript{180} In response to the Polish unrest of December 1970, Paraschiv, a petro-chemical plant worker, sent a letter to discuss trade union improvements. Although the regime had encouraged the move, Paraschiv was detained in a mental hospital and later exiled.
signed a document announcing the formation. Despite these similarities, no independent organised opposition in a similar form to Solidarity emerged. Leaders of the union were swiftly jailed and later exiled.

Dissidents themselves blamed the lack of opposition organisation on the timidity of the masses due to the history of oppression. They also blamed the West for not supporting them. The West supposedly "sold the East to the Russians in 1945". However, it is also suggested that there was no adequate political support amongst the intelligentsia for workers' revolts, when such incidents as the Jiu Valley miners strike in 1977, or tractor plant workers strike in Brasov (1987) took place.

Ideological control of the mass media and intellectual life, coupled with repression, did not allow the framing of political problems in political terms. Many intellectuals became isolated with few - if any - students being able to study outside Romania by the late 1980s. After Ceausescu's "cultural mini-revolution" in the 1970s contacts with Western universities and institutions (which had flourished during the late 1960s) were gradually reduced and eventually completely disappeared. The intellectuals only voice was through literature, historical writing and philosophy of culture. Those, such as Paul Goma, Dorin Tudoran or Doina Cornea could only be openly political via external voices such as Radio Free Europe. There was therefore little opportunity for a worker-intelligentsia type organisation to emerge.

Although it is suggested that some of the most vocal dissent came from the intellectuals, there appears to have been a lack of ideological revisionism on which to base intellectual opposition on the same terms adopted in Poland. There was also a lack of communication between intellectuals and the masses, especially with the more poorly

182 Dr. George Voicu, Faculty of Political and Administrative Sciences, Bucharest University, e-mail conversation with Ruth Rodda, 29 October 1998
184 For example, in 1977 Goma and others sent an open letter to the Belgrade conference attacking the regime on violations of human rights. After the Helsinki Accords, Frunza sent Ceausescu a letter attacking the regime and its interpretations of Marxism-Leninism. Also in the 1980s the Writers Union had a relatively open literary debate on cultural policies. see Freund,E., in Curry,J.L. (ed) (1983) p.63-4
educated rural population.\textsuperscript{185} This was despite religious fervour being a way for ordinary people to show their opposition to the regime, and despite attempts by Hungarian minority groups to make their opposition to discriminatory policies heard.\textsuperscript{186} There was - and still is - a tendency for intellectuals to hold an attitude of disdain for the workers; "they look upon them from above - very patronising".\textsuperscript{187} Intellectuals emerged within oppositional groups only after the December 1989 revolution. Intellectuals, students and groups such as the Group for Social Dialogue only began to openly criticise the National Salvation Front (NSF) during 1990.\textsuperscript{188}

The perversion of Romanian communism into a particular form of nationalism, and the purging of potential dissent from the party contributed to the lack of opposition movements or reformist within the party in the pre-1989 period. The initial spark for the revolution emanated from the Hungarian minority where intellectuals, church and ordinary people had a common cause, on a similar basis to that of the Turkish minority in Bulgaria.\textsuperscript{189} Partly because no coherent opposition movements emerged to pressurise and negotiate with the communists it took a mass spontaneous outburst to promote political change. Reformists within the party appeared to seize the opportunity to oust Ceausescu (see 3.3 below).

3.2 The Role of Political Actors

Structural conditions can provide the context within which certain actors can become prominent. These actors can then provide a focus of attention and potentially influence

\textsuperscript{185} For details of intellectual groups in Romania and possible reasons for their lack of salience with the population, both pre and post-1989, see Mungiu,A., "Intellectuals as political actors in Eastern Europe: the Romanian case", \textit{East European Politics and Societies}, Spring 1996, Vol.10, No.2, p.333 (32), electronic version.

\textsuperscript{186} This was despite regime attempts to cut church attendance and prevent religious education. Also some ministers and pastors formed the Romanian Committee for the Defence of Freedom of Religion calling for an end to state intervention into the church.

\textsuperscript{187} Shafir,M., interview with Ruth Rodda, (Radio Free Europe) Prague, 27/3/98


political events. Three such political actors will be examined here: Mikhail Gorbachev, who helped to provide external conditions which favoured political change; Lech Walesa, who provided a focus for the Polish opposition; and Nicolae Ceausescu, whose personality and form of rule contributed to the particular conditions of Romania. This is not to say that the role of the actor and their ideological orientations are part of a deliberate effort; that they are somehow the root "cause" of revolutionary movements and regime overthrow. But that there is a place for identifying the role of key political actors, and their attitudes and ideas in explaining events.\footnote{Alternative ideological claims may also be part of the political actor's role. See also below in section 3.4 on Legitimacy and later in Chapter 5.}

It is, of course, difficult to assess the significance of the role of political actors in the process.\footnote{As Park suggests, the role of personality in history is a philosophical one. No-one can avoid political values and we must remain aware of our ability to reach the truth on the subject. Park,A., "Gorbachev and the Role of Personality in History", Studies in Comparative Communism. Vol.XXV. No.1, March 1992, p.47} However, there are certain probabilities that can be assessed. It can be surmised that if Andropov had remained in power for longer a slower, more pragmatic political change may well have taken place in the Soviet Union and East-Central Europe. Consequently, in Hungary the economic reforms already introduced under Kadar might have promoted a more gradual political liberalisation without Gorbachev's intervention. Romania without Ceausescu may not have been so repressive, and as a result not succumbed to violence. The Polish opposition may not have aroused such popular support without the charismatic leadership of Walesa. It appears that without such people, or actors like them, it is unlikely that certain events would have taken place when, or in the way they did. Strategic choices of political actors can be important, and sometimes crucial at key points in time. For example, Ceausescu’s decision to hold a rally in Bucharest on December the 21st 1989, to demonstrate support for himself and the regime, was central to the revolutionary events that followed.

**Gorbachev**

Gorbachev can be regarded as a key figure in the process of change. His initiation of reformist measures and ideological revisionism certainly provided a climate in which
political change was more readily accepted, both within the Soviet Union and in Eastern Bloc states. There is little doubt that structural conditions were a factor in enabling him to take steps towards change, but without his personal visions and motivations a different route might have arisen. If for example, one of the other possible candidates for General Secretary at the time had taken control there may have still been some kind of reform process - due to the poor economic situation - but it would probably have been much slower, and could have followed the Chinese route to market-oriented reform without political liberalisation.

Park argues that Gorbachev's role diminished after 1985 in terms of his affect on Soviet events. However, for East-Central Europe it might be argued that his personal intervention remained significant up until the end of 1989 at least, and possibly up until the unsuccessful Soviet coup in August 1991. For some, especially Poles, although perestroika and glasnost are accepted as important factors, Gorbachev is not seen as so important. “Poland’s internal conditions – the scenario started in 1980 - were part of the dynamic. Glasnost “opened the window” a little bit wider”. It is also suggested that in Poland the (so-called) “Gorbachev factor is neglected” because Solidarity wanted to “play the role of defeating communism”. Nevertheless, Gorbachev’s meetings with regime leaders and attitude towards military intervention could have been decisive in terms of the relatively peaceful forms of revolution.

Although it is uncertain how much direct involvement Gorbachev had within the East-Central European parties in the late 1980s, it may well be that he was able to influence events up to, and even after, the official dissolving of the communist parties. In his actions and statements he gave hope (and at least ideological support) to reform elements within the communist parties, and to the dissidents and wider populations. He appeared to put pressure on the more resistant regimes to instigate change, even though he did not wish to undermine the influence of the communist party as the "vanguard". There are suspicions

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192 ibid. (1992) p.48
193 Professor Ryszard Herbut, Institute of Poltical Science, Wroclaw University, interview with Ruth Rodda, Wroclaw, 2/4/98
194 Dr. Jakub Tyszkiewicz, Department of History, Wroclaw University interview with Ruth Rodda, 30/3/98
195 For example, Tchakarov reports a meeting between Gorbachev and Zhivkov on 16 October 1987. in which Gorbachev was concerned that restructuring did not diminish the
over Moscow’s involvement in the events of December 1989 in Romania. Ion Iliescu, who was prominent in the revolution and became Romania’s first post-communist President, had attended university in Moscow with Gorbachev and remained a close friend. The choice of Mazowiecki as Prime Minister in Poland may also have been directly influenced by Gorbachev. 196

Whatever his personal involvement in these events, Gorbachev was certainly part of the younger generation of technocrats with which reform communists could identify. Without his initiative it is unlikely that the reform process within the Soviet Union would have taken the form that it did. Nor might the effects for East-Central Europe, or the events of 1989 have taken place at that time.

Walesa

Walesa’s charismatic leadership during the height of Solidarity’s opposition years promoted the movement. He rallied workers, united them with middle class and intelligentsia dissenters, and provided a symbol of resistance for the Western media. His possibly dictatorial and certainly commanding style of leadership was perhaps what was needed to commend him to a disaffected public. It was certainly his photographic image which was to catapult Solidarity into government in the first semi-free elections of June 1989. 197

Walesa’s working class background and ability to motivate a crowd with improvised and impromptu speeches brought him to the forefront of the workers movement in the 1970s as a bold and stubborn opponent of the communist system. Between 1981 and 1988 Walesa’s role was mainly symbolic. During the early 1980s the intellectuals were able to co-operate with him and promote his image as a leader among the middle class and intelligentsia. Later, during the round table agreements he let the intellectuals participate in, and iron out, role of the communist party as vanguard. It was obvious that the younger Soviet leader did not see eye to eye with the old guard Bulgarian, and by July 1989 Zhivkov apparently had no illusions about Gorbachev’s feelings towards him, see Tchakarov, K., (1991) pp.112-121 & 186.

196 see previously in section 2.1. and below in 4.3, and for example, Garton Ash, T., (1990) We the People. Granta Books, Cambridge, p.40-1
197 see Garton Ash, T., (1990) pp.25-46
the details. He preferred to travel the countryside and deliver speeches in support of negotiations, rather than partake directly in the political process. He finally assumed centre stage as a national leader in the aftermath of the 1989 elections and Solidarity's unanticipated formation of a coalition government.

Without his leadership image or a similar rallying point, the election campaign may well not have been so successful. Without his particular personality the later fragmentation of Solidarity may also not have been so contentious. 198

Ceausescu

Ceausescu personalised the politics of Romania to the extreme. He took on the role of dictator, legitimising his leadership not through Marxism-Leninism and the vanguard party, but through appeals to the nation reputedly embodied in his own person. All significant issues had to be presented to the General Secretary and his wife, including matters of culture and sport. The leading role of the party was superseded by Ceausescu and his extended family, who held key positions in the party and government. Any party members who mistrusted Ceausescu's increasing hold on power were removed from positions of influence. 199 This, coupled with constant purges and rotations of personnel, effectively suppressed any opposition within the party. As a result Ceausescu's own interpretation of history, the essence of Romanian socialism and decisions on policy were imprinted on the party and structures of government.

Ceausescu's promotion of nationalism and his megalomania in later years, certainly contributed to his downfall. His use of national symbolism was combined with an antagonistic and discriminatory foreign and domestic policy. He isolated the Romanian communist party from the Moscow leadership and attempted to gain Western support for his anti-Soviet foreign policy stance. His success in acquiring popularity in the West and isolation from other communist countries eventually backfired in the late 1980s. Western

198 see Zubek, V., "Walesa's Leadership and Poland's Transition," Problems of Communism, Jan-April 1991; and later in part 2
and Hungarian government concerns over human rights issues (especially during the systemisation campaign), and the withdrawal of most favoured nation (MFN) status by the Americans, isolated Ceausescu on the world stage.\textsuperscript{200}

Internally Ceausescu adopted discriminatory policies against non-Romanian minorities with regard to education, linguistic and cultural provision. Anti-semitism was revived in the late 1970s adding to xenophobic domestic policy orientations. In particular Ceausescu aggravated the Hungarian minority, compounding their anxieties with assimilation campaigns and the threat of destruction of their villages. By his own actions, Ceausescu alienated himself; externally, from Western and communist states, internally from the people, and finally from his own party and the military.

3.3 The Role of the Military

In a politically unstable situation, the military could potentially take an active political role. The form of revolution is then partly dependent on how the military reacts to the process of political change. Within the communist systems the military was integral to political control. The military was potentially highly politicised and both dependent on and supportive of the party leadership. In East-Central Europe the armies were controlled by the national party, but were ultimately dominated by the Kremlin as members of Warsaw Pact forces. East-Central European leaders were both potentially restrained by Soviet military inter-relationships and bolstered by them. As Soviet foreign policy changed in the latter half of the 1980s, so that restraint and support became less effective. This in turn potentially modified the capabilities of leaders in maintaining control when internal conditions became unstable. Although there are considerable overlaps between external and internal conditions, the two will be looked at separately, integrating facets relevant to each country within the two sections.

\textsuperscript{200} In March 1988 Ceausescu announced details of a plan (the systemisation plan) for rural redevelopment which involved the destruction of around 7000 villages. The programme was started, having the greatest effect on the Wallachian plain and the Western region of Transylvania near the Hungarian border. See Rady, M., (1992) pp.70-71.
External Military Considerations

Soviet influence in national military and security services were considerably modified after the full Stalinisation of the early post-war period. The communist party had originally infiltrated and controlled organisations and personnel, but after Stalin's death direct Soviet military control was considerably reduced. The establishment of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation (WTO) in 1955 was a more indirect means of maintaining Soviet military influence in East-Central Europe and provided a legal basis for the presence of Soviet troops on East-Central European soil and, more important, assisted the maintenance of Soviet political influence. Although the Warsaw Pact remit did not officially include interference in internal national affairs, instability within East-Central European countries (Hungary and Poland 1956, Poland 1980,1981 for example) was successfully suppressed by national armed forces and either the threat, or actual use of Soviet and, or Warsaw pact military support.

In fact, national armies were reluctant to repress challenges to communism within their own countries and the party was more inclined to use its own militia in internal crises. However, the threat of Soviet interference no doubt played a part in each party's reaction to internal crises, and was likely to be more acute where Soviet troops were deployed on East-Central European soil. Hungary and Poland were occupied from 1945 to 1991 and 1992, respectively. Although the Soviets did not deploy troops in Bulgaria, close Soviet military ties were maintained. Romania took a very different attitude. The Red Army left Romanian soil in 1958, Romania refused to participate in WTO activities and took an independent stance in foreign policy. Ironically in the 1980s, it was the latter two countries where Soviet troops were not deployed, which became more likely to succumb to military intervention, not from Soviet or Warsaw Pact forces, but from their own national military organisations.

The reduced threat from the Soviets emanated from the changes which Gorbachev introduced in foreign relations with East-Central Europe. Soviet foreign policy changes in the 1980s included significant alterations in military doctrine from an offensive to...

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defensive position. Although Gorbachev initially renewed WTO principles in 1985, Soviet political influence within East-Central Europe was significantly reduced by measures intended primarily to diminish Cold War tensions with the West. The Conference on Disarmament in Europe in September 1986, which included challenge inspections, alongside the announcement in 1988 that a significant number of troops and tanks would be withdrawn from East-Central Europe, meant previous options for intervention in internal affairs were effectively prevented (and if enacted, intervention would be tactically impossible). These signals potentially provided different scenarios for East-Central European national forces, depending on Soviet military inter-relationships. Where there were strong Soviet ties, as in Hungary, Poland and Bulgaria, withdrawal meant that Moscow would no longer play a major role in national security decision making. Nor could senior officers rely on Soviet pressure for their promotions or increases in military budgets.\textsuperscript{202} In these three countries top military officers were trained in the Soviet Union and were closely tied to their respective national parties. Only Romania insisted on educating all military officers in its own institutions.\textsuperscript{203}

By the late 1980s old guard East-Central European leaders could no longer count on Soviet tanks to help out when experiencing difficulties within their own countries. Nor could they use the potential of Soviet intervention as a justification for severe internal suppression, as Jaruzelski probably did in 1981. This may partly explain why repressive measures were not used to control escalating opposition forces in Poland in the late 1980s. The removal of Soviet backing left the communist parties more vulnerable to internal dissent, and, ironically it was the Romanian party who potentially needed that backing. Yet, that removal of support could also have produced a destabilising effect within the national militaries, where Soviet trained officers saw promotion prospects and military budgets potentially undermined. To understand why there was little or no military intervention on that basis, we must turn to internal civil-military relations.


Internal Civil-Military Relations

The function of the military in communist systems was not only to protect against external foes, but also to suppress internal opposition to socialism. Close ties with the party were paramount for both sides. The party needed loyalty in defense of the regime. The military needed the party for improved material status and social prestige. Political control over the military was strongly maintained in Romania and Bulgaria, but became more subtle in Poland and Hungary in the post-Stalinist period. Representation of military personnel within the politburos was relatively small, or in Hungary's case non-existent. Poland after the imposition of martial law in the 1980s was exceptional. The creation of the Military Council of National Salvation consisting of twenty high ranking officers, and the election of Jaruzelski as leader of the Polish United Workers Party (PUWP), gave the military an unusually high number of political offices.

In all the countries, despite a high number of military personnel being members of their respective communist parties (as much out of necessity as loyalty to communism), evidence suggests that they were reluctant to actively support the communist regimes against internal foes. The party was also more likely to rely on militias and internal security troops to suppress popular revolts. Certainly after 1956 in Poland and Hungary, internal suppression was not a function which the army would willingly perform against its own national population. Poland insisted on the removal of Soviet officers from national forces and Hungary's forces were reconstructed and considerably reduced, becoming the smallest East-Central European army.

In Poland, the Baltic Coast riots (December 1970) were the last time the army was asked to act as a police force when ordered to shoot at striking workers. Jaruzelski, as Defence minister at the time, was apparently unhappy with this use of his forces and decided they should not be used to suppress workers again. From then on the Polish military acted

204 Barany, Z., (1993) p.595
205 ibid p.598
206 Wiatr suggests that army units were used to suppress the riots. However, Korbonski suggests that regular army units were not used. The use of police and internal security troops was stressed by the military in order to present the army as a professional body which refused to perform police duties for the discredited Gomulka regime, See Korbonski, A., in Simon & Gilberg (1986) p.267; Korbonski,A., in Held, J., (ed) (1992)
very much as a veto group; the communist party was unable to take important decisions without consultation with military leaders. By the 1980s the government and military became virtually one and the same, and appeared to be in favour of greater freedom and democracy. In 1988 and 1989 they certainly did not prevent democratisation, despite being in a perfect position to do so. The regime leaders did not anticipate the overwhelming support for Solidarity in the first semi-free elections, no doubt expecting to maintain overall control of the political system at that time.

Similarly in Hungary, the military apparently condoned the process and did not play an appreciable role. It may not be possible to find out exactly what happened between the military and political leaders during negotiations to transform communist institutions. What was "most important" for many observers was that "the transition was peaceful". Top military officials may have been reluctant to embrace radical political change. They possibly envisaged the purge of potentially disloyal elements and undermining of cohesiveness which took place from 1990. Yet they did not intervene, partly because they were not asked to by the party. Also the majority of younger career soldiers were less supportive of any continued involvement of the communist party within the army. They were more likely to take advantage of joining other political parties, allowed after mid-1989. The protracted liberalisation and transition process probably aided the negotiated path that was taken, and the adjustments the military made in conforming to post-communism.

In Bulgaria strong Soviet links amongst the officers to some extent over- rode national party affiliations. However, in the final analysis the military was most loyal to itself. During 1989 military leaders happily supported ideas of democratisation and glasnost within a framework of socialism, and in 1990 gave assurances of loyalty to the reformed communist party when it renamed itself the Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP). By the late 1980s there was little loyalty shown to the old party or to Zhivkov, probably due to

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207 Pok, A., (senior historian) interview with Ruth Rodda, 30 May 1996, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest

208 For what happened to the military in the wake of the revolutions see for example, Herspring, D., (1992)
decreasing military budgets and subsequent reductions in living standards. Officers supported Zhivkov's removal; Defence Minister Dzhurov, who participated in the cabal to unseat the party leader in November 1989, almost certainly enjoyed the tacit support of the military.²⁰⁹ The military involvement in politics was prominent during revolutionary events, but armed intervention was not apparently considered, despite Bulgaria's tradition of military putschism.²¹⁰ The military merely transferred its allegiance from the Communist party to the BSP. This suggests they expected no wholesale change in the political system; anticipating their support for the new regime would aid their own influence and provide improvements in their own situation.

Romania differed from the other three countries not only in the more prominent role of the military in the revolutionary process, but also in terms of violence during the revolution. The Romanian People's Army (RPA) was both asked to play a role and took an active part in the revolution. In some part this can be attributed to Ceausescu's appeals to nationalism, which were aimed at the military as well as the general population, in order to bolster support for the regime. The independent stance taken with regard to military operations and institutions vis-à-vis the Soviet Union, reduced the co-optation of officers by the Soviets in order to reinforce nationalist orientations of the RPA. However, the danger of promoting nationalism rather than Marxism-Leninism was all too apparent when the military acted finally in defence of the nation, rather than in defence of communism or the party leader. The intense politicisation intended to ensure the loyalty of the officer corps ultimately failed.

Ceausescu appeared to be firmly in control of the military for much of his rule. Patronage networks and nepotism ensured the political manipulation of the highest officers. A branch of the Securitate (Military Counterintelligence), under the responsibility of Ceausescu's two brothers (Ilie and Nicolae Andruta), monitored the military officer cadre. However, the RPA was neglected for years. In comparison to the troops of the interior ministry and the Securitate, the RPA was marginalised and humiliated. The Securitate was perceived as the elite force which gained the most privileges from Ceausescu's regime and in return provided greater loyalty. The RPA was frequently mobilised for civilian economic

²¹⁰ There were reputedly two coup attempts in the 1960s, see Brown, J.F..(1970) Bulgaria under Communist Rule, Praeger, New York
projects, such as Ceausescu's Bucharest renovation and reconstruction projects. With the increasing economic and social crises in the 1980s the army was even used as cheap labour for industrial production, further degrading their status. The potential for military intervention was acute, and there are suggestions that there were several military conspiracies to overthrow Ceausescu.\textsuperscript{211}

Although there is evidence that the military was involved in the final removal of Ceausescu, there is considerable contention over revolutionary events and the extent of military involvement in December 1989.\textsuperscript{212} There are allegations that the revolution was "hijacked" as part of a conspiracy by military and secret service plotters with involvement from Moscow. Plotters apparently fabricated evidence of genocide by pro-Ceausescu forces in order to heighten public opposition to the former regime and to legitimise the new leaders. There is much conflicting evidence and it is just as probable that any conspirators were totally inefficient and ineffectual.\textsuperscript{213}

Yet it is apparent that some army and Securitate units did open fire on demonstrators in Timisoara, Cluj and Bucharest when ordered to. The army subsequently refused to shoot at the people, and Defence Minister Milea refused to reinforce troops in Bucharest to defend the political leadership.\textsuperscript{214} It may be that the army and Securitate became hesitant when events in Timisoara escalated. It is also suggested that Ceausescu could have accused military leaders of treason which, with the realisation that the regime was crumbling, led to the military turning against their leader.\textsuperscript{215} There is controversy over whether or not Ceausescu had a force of terrorist (Securitate or foreign) troops who tried to derail the revolution, and whether Iliescu made a deal with the army. General Militaru (a former army officer and high ranking communist party member) and Dimitru Mazilu (reported to have held the rank of colonel in the Securitate) were certainly initially influential within

\textsuperscript{211} There are several references to attempted coup plots, but there is little hard evidence to substantiate rumours. See for example, Barany, Z., (1993) footnote 26.
\textsuperscript{214} See for example Barany, Z., (1993)
the NSF Council. Iliescu enjoyed the support of the generals after negotiations on December 22 1989. It appears most likely that any coup conspirators took advantage of the situation rather than driving the revolution.

The revolution was bloody, but there was considerable exaggeration over the numbers shot. Early reports of 10,000 or more were later reduced. The official numbers reported in June 1990 were 144 killed and 727 wounded during the seven days and 889 with 1,471 wounded after Ceausescu's flight. Whatever the actual circumstances it is certain that the army was prominent within the revolutionary process and contributed to its violent form.

Both the Bulgarian and Romanian militaries were relatively "politicised"; political indoctrination outweighed professional training, and communist party control remained more intensive and extensive. Although the Bulgarian military played a prominent role within the process of political change, the old guard leadership did not request intervention against the reformers, and the armed forces were pragmatic in defence of their own interests. The Romanian situation was the most volatile and the only East-Central European revolution in which armed interference was requested and actually occurred. The fact that the armed forces finally opposed the old regime was crucial to the revolutionary outcome. In contrast both Polish and Hungarian political elites were able to negotiate successfully with the military. Indeed in the case of Poland, a number of the political elite were military personnel. However, the communist party maintained its dominance over the more "professional" military institutions. Neither army appeared to want to lose their high standing with the population and consequently supported political reform. Where liberalisation took place early the military took the least active role in the process of change. Their action was neither requested by the party, nor did the military intervene to defend their own interests.

216 ibid p.78
217 For an interesting discussion of civil-military relations, and the "politicised" and "professionalised" militaries in East-Central Europe, see Barany,Z., "Democratic Consolidation and the Military; the East European Experience", Comparative Politics, Vol.30, No.1, October 1997. pp.21-43
218 The Polish population in particular maintained high confidence in the military as an institution despite becoming directly involved in politics, see for example Wiatr,J., chap.9
3.4 Legitimacy

Prior to Gorbachev's leadership of the Soviet Union, it was commonly assumed that ruling elites in communist regimes ruled with little or no regard for mass legitimacy. However, since the collapse of communism there has been renewed interest in legitimacy as a potential factor to explain the breakdown of the old regimes. A crisis of legitimacy is often invoked as the major factor in any state breakdown and is examined here to evaluate its importance.  

Legitimacy is a complex concept which potentially encompasses the relationship between the principal objects of legitimacy (the nation-state, socio-political institutions of the state, and the rulers), and the principal subjects of legitimacy (the elite, the political administrative personnel, the intelligentsia and the masses). Closely related to the objects of legitimacy are three key normative references: national interests, values of a "good" society (such as justice and fairness) and "charismatic qualities" (such as wisdom, courage and determination).

It is also necessary to distinguish between legitimacy of the state or its institutions, and the legitimacy of the rulers. The legitimacy of the state was not questioned in the two cases (excluding the possible exception of ethnic minorities, such as the Hungarian minority in Romania). Mass support, or tolerance for the regimes may have been based on sheer acceptance of the status quo. As long as the people perceived that the state was being run in a smooth and efficient way, they were willing to acquiesce to their rulers and even endorsed some leaders (for example Gomulka was relatively popular in 1956). In this context two normative references appear most relevant; the ability of rulers to provide social and economic benefits, and their ability to provide human rights and freedoms.

There is little concrete evidence to prove or refute aspects of legitimacy within closed societies. This is especially the case when these systems did not, in the main, support

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219 See previously in Chapter 1
legitimacy tests, such as contested elections, opinion polls or studies of public attitudes. However, several surveys were carried out, especially in Poland, where social scientists were able to practice relatively freely, and less direct sources give indications of legitimacy, or the lack of it. 221

Two main areas will be addressed here. First, the acceptance of the masses of a ruling body's right to dominate. Second, how rulers perceive their own effectiveness, both within their own state and in terms of their relations to other states. The latter factor may be the most significant in the East-Central European case.

Legitimacy and the masses

Mass legitimacy is often seen as the only basis for long term stable rule, whether it is conferred by willing consent or manufactured by ideological indoctrination. The general vision of Soviet-type systems was that they relied heavily on ideological factors to legitimate their systems. Yet despite the considerable energy exerted by the regimes to mobilise popular consent through constant agitation and propaganda, there is little evidence that the people regarded their participation in the political process as in any way meaningful.

It may be the case that the regimes obtained some kind of "conditional tolerance" through the use of ideological rhetoric and - in the early years - through advancing economic and social conditions. 222 Regime tolerance was potentially based on the social values which underpin the image of a good and desirable society. This was periodically sustained during the communist period, through economic and social benefits and the degree to which

221 In Poland there is evidence that the regime became interested in public opinion from the 1960s. From 1980 the spread of survey research was rapid. The Jaruzelski regime undertook regular polls through the Centre for Social Opinion Research. There were also national surveys undertaken by academics. See for example, the Polish Academy of Sciences, Adamski, W., et al, "Poles 1980. Results of Survey Research," Sisiphus, Vol.III, 1982

human rights and freedoms were upheld. However, the regimes also survived through systematic repression and the habits of inertia and apathy.

Although reliable data on attitudes is difficult to obtain in closed societies, some indications are available. Evidence from East-Central Europeans travelling in the West suggests that public support for communist regimes eroded over time. A longitudinal survey showed that between the periods 1975/6-1979/80 and 1979/80-1984/85 the population's attitude towards regime performance declined, with Romania and Poland showing the largest negative shift in opinion. Bulgaria was the only country to exhibit growth in positive responses to system performance. However, a distinction between popularity and legitimacy may be needed here. Legitimacy implies effective communication between rulers and ruled. It also implies a link between the bases of claims to legitimacy and reality. These links were mainly absent, especially in Romania. Regime claims that they were successfully "building socialism" did not fit well with the realities of declining economies (especially from the 1970s onwards). Nor did ideological claims associated with socialist values correspond with actual conditions.

Evidence suggests that support for socialist values did not decline, but any association of these values with socialism or the communist party disappeared. For example, in Poland, core social values included justice, respect for human dignity, equality of opportunity, and freedom of expression, as well as notions of democracy, truth and social welfare. By the 1980s these values were rarely associated with the communist establishment, and more often used to oppose the regime.

Nevertheless, it appears that support for state institutions remained fairly high in Poland. Even the army retained a high degree of support, despite martial law and a strong association with the party regime. However, the institution which people had the greatest confidence in was the Catholic Church, the communist party coming tenth on the list of preferences.

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225 Center for Social Opinion Research in Wiatr,J. (1988) p.187. Surveys also showed that the leading role of the party was accepted by only between one quarter and one fifth of
It may well be that by the 1980s any "conditional tolerance" that existed was generally eroded by worsening socio-economic circumstances and the increasing influence of glasnost and Western cultural penetration. It was likely that the communist parties were blamed for economic crises. Arguably the web of dependency which the centralised political-economic system generated meant there was no-one else to blame.\textsuperscript{226} Certain groups in society were also likely to condemn the regime for their poor conditions. For example, the Turkish minority in Bulgaria, and the Hungarian minority in Romania were likely to feel an erosion of their rights and freedoms as a result of the actions of communist leaders. Opposition groups which eventually emerged in these two countries articulated their protest on such bases. Across northern tier states, cross-national connections amongst dissident groups deepened in the late 1980s. Topics for collaboration included human rights, religious freedom, workers' rights to form independent unions and nuclear disarmament. Yet concerns over economic and social conditions, and the lack of consumer goods, were also cause for mass dissatisfaction well before 1989. The masses had long perceived their rulers as ineffectual, as the workers' strikes in Poland showed. In Romania, the masses took the opportunity to publicly articulate their grievances within the revolutionary atmosphere of December 1989.

**Legitimacy and the Ruling Elite**

It is argued that legitimacy does not rest solely on mass perceptions. It also rests on the rulers' sense of their own legitimacy.\textsuperscript{227} There are two main aspects which potentially affected the East-Central European regimes. First, their perceptions of the state in relation to other states; second, their perceptions of themselves as rulers. Again it is difficult to produce evidence, but there are indications that in some cases ruling elite perceptions were altered by the time of 1989.

\textsuperscript{226} Valerie Bunce "Socialism and Underdevelopment", in Ramet,S.P., (1992) p.99

For the elite, ideological justification was potentially significant. This was particularly the case in the East-Central European context, where a well cultivated political formula, based on Marxist-Leninist doctrine, was used to justify the communist party's domination and the leadership profiles propagated by the party.\textsuperscript{228} Any breakdown in the ideology on which that justification rested was potentially harmful to the parties own sense of legitimacy. Khrushchev's attack on Stalin in 1956 produced splits within the elites and undermined the basis of the parties' self-legitimation. Gorbachev's reform programme and movement away from the Brezhnev doctrine had a similar effect (as we saw previously in Chapter 2).

In all four countries the parties' "satellite" status changed by the late 1980s. For Poland and Hungary, as Soviet international relations changed so Western governments became more prominent in pressurising them economically, indirectly constraining their political policies and creating dilemmas for the political elite. For Bulgaria, the new international environment also posed problems. The ally, which could have become a Soviet republic, was being cast adrift to fend for itself.\textsuperscript{229} Zhivkov's close liaison with Moscow was put in jeopardy by Gorbachev's hands off approach. Zhivkov did not appear to understand the new climate created by the Soviets. There were attempts to trade with the West, but internally ideological rhetoric was not matched by serious practical steps to implement reform. Romania's independent stance vis-à-vis the Soviets left the country isolated in the 1980s. Gorbachev clearly rejected Ceausescu, but equally the West declined to bolster a regime which had such an appalling human rights record in an atmosphere of Soviet-US détente.

Internally, the political elites of Poland and Hungary relied less on ideology to maintain their own sense of effectiveness. There were considerable attempts to utilise economic reform and provide consumer goods to maintain a measure of popular support.

\textsuperscript{228} This formula incorporated the principles of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the superiority of centralised social and economic control and the "brotherly ties" with the Soviet Union. Socialist internationalism or "socialist communitism" was invoked to justify Soviet intervention in Prague (1968) and Hungary (1956), see Pakulski,J., in Frentzel-Zagorska,J., (ed) (1993) p.77

\textsuperscript{229} Bulgaria's historically pro-Russian tradition continued into the communist period. For the political elite, their own legitimacy rested on rigorously following the Moscow communist party line. Modernisation of the country initiated by the communists, gave the party some legitimacy amongst the masses in the early years, and the Bulgarian communist party saw no reason to diverge from following the Soviet path to socialism.
Legitimation was especially difficult for the Polish regime where Marxist-Leninist principles were abandoned by the 1980s as a means to legitimate authority, and the regime resorted to technocratic and pragmatic rule in order to appease society. Ideology served a ritualistic function for the elite signalling loyalty to the regime, and ultimately to Moscow. Regime appeals to nationalistic elements in society on the basis of patriotism and national unity had limited success for Moscow backed rulers given the Polish anti-Russian and anti-statist traditions. The elite had to take notice of public disaffection, especially after the success of Solidarity. Heavy subsidies were frequently utilised in an attempt to keep the population satisfied. However, the party was reduced to crisis management for much of communist rule. Eventually much of the bureaucracy, many intellectuals, and military personnel lost faith in the party's ability to rule. With the introduction of Gorbachev's foreign policy approach the Soviet constraint (whether real or threatened) was removed. Soviet hegemony no longer protected the Polish regime, neither could the threat of Soviet military strength be used by the regime as a reason for constraint regarding systemic reform.

The Hungarian party also relied less on Soviet-type ideological justifications. Reformers within the party were more open to Gorbachev's new direction, which endorsed their own perceptions that political change was required. The Hungarian party took measures to deal with economic crisis and attempted to accommodate pressures to give legal status to groups outside the party apparatus in the 1980s. In a similar way to Poland, loss of support from factions of the elite was significant in undermining old guard leadership. However, the reformist party members in Hungary did not lose faith in their own ability to adapt, as their attempts to reform the party and institutions during 1988 and 1989 show. There were factions within the Polish and Hungarian parties who realised the need for change. Reformers initially hoped to bolster their mass support through economic and political reform within the one-party state, but eventually acknowledged the need for greater change and dismantling of their own power base.

For these traditions and the dilemmas faced by the Polish regime, see for example, Schimmelfennig,F.. "International Relations and Political Culture: International Debate and Transition to Democracy in Poland". in Jablonski,A.W., & Meyer,G., (eds)(1996), pp.65-81
Romania and Bulgaria appeared less willing to decentralise control. The leaders self-legitimation rested far more on old style ideological rhetoric. In both countries the regimes' appeals to nationalism resulted in the persecution of ethnic minorities. The Bulgarian leadership took a somewhat ambiguous position. On the one hand Zhivkov's aggravation of the Turkish minority was more reminiscent of old style Stalinist measures. Yet, by the late 1980s minor attempts to placate public demands were made, even though concern over the environment was directed initially at the Romanian government, rather than at the Bulgarian regime. Eventually the splits within the party elite resulted in a loss of support for the old guard. In the charged atmosphere of late 1989, the reform communists had to quickly renounce any affiliation to one-party rule. Yet the political bases of the communist party remained basically intact.

Ceausescu's extreme use of nationalism and development of the cult of personality finally isolated him from all factions of society. Yet, he did not appear to lose faith in his own ability to rule. Even in the final few days of his leadership, he held a mass rally to affirm his position. There were no attempts to appease public disaffection, or even to acknowledge discontent. He was apparently oblivious to the reality of the circumstances until the final moments. Even then, he suspected a Soviet plot, rather than admit that the people were against him. The former communists of the NSF were not in a position to undertake gradual reform of the party. Their communist affiliations were not in doubt. They had to rely on disassociating themselves with Ceausescu. Iliescu's assertion that the NSF Council had filled the power vacuum left by Ceaucescu's flight from Bucharest - even if not entirely true - was designed to maintain support for the NSF as a revolutionary organisation.

For much of the communist period, it appears that mass compliance was generated by rewarding conformism, sanctioning dissent and intermittent disciplinary measures. In the

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231 Public protest over air pollution in Ruse in 1987/8 was allowed by the authorities. However, protest was directed at Ceausescu's regime for allowing chemical emissions from industrial plants, which blew across the Danube river border. See for example, Nelson, D., in Ramet, S., (1992) p.32


less coercive regimes of Poland and Hungary, where glasnost gained most relevance, the regimes perceived that reform was necessary to retain continued compliance, and the parties attempted to gain some popular support. In Romania and Bulgaria, the more coercive regimes lacked almost any kind of bases for regime support, especially on human rights grounds. The Romanian and Bulgarian regimes were seriously undermined by the Gorbachev reforms. Yet even under internal pressures, the old guard leadership did little to indicate that their own sense of legitimacy was eroding until very late in the day. In all four countries the regimes' ideological legitimation was challenged from both reformism in the Soviet Union and from the penetration of Western ideas and culture. Yet even the Polish and Hungarian regimes were unsuccessful in legitimating themselves on the basis of reform and renewal.

In Poland and Hungary the party was more open to public pressure, self-reflection and reorganisation. However, the reformers within each party initially expected to maintain the parties' dominant position. It was not until the semi-free elections of 1989 in Poland and the rapid rise of independent parties in Hungary that the communist parties appeared to realise their vulnerability as a ruling body. In Romania and Bulgaria, although each country's circumstances were different, the communist parties were pressurised into rapidly transforming their identity. Yet neither party fully disassociated themselves with the old regime structures or bases of support.

**Summing Up Part 1**

The application of the method has shown that there were factors common to all four countries. The international context of the late 1980s, alongside severe economic and social crises provided preconditions for change. Within these preconditions opportunities for political actors and independent organisations to transform the political systems arose. The changes in the Soviet Union and Western cultural and ideological penetration alongside internal crises provided potential for destabilisation of the communist systems. In particular the economies were in need of radical reform to enable these systems to provide adequately for society, and compete in the international arena. Each regime encountered party-elite splits and faced dilemmas as a result of the conjuncture of external influences and internal pressures. The application of the method has also identified
significant differences between the cases. These differences emerged from different internal conditions in each state. The actions - or reactions - of each regime to external factors and internal crises, and each society's response during the late 1980s, partly reflected the specific political and socio-economic conditions within each country.

In Poland and Hungary post-1956 "normalisation" resulted in more liberalised and open state structures, economies and societies. In consequence - what might be described as - "semi-plural" political, social and economic systems existed by the late 1980s. Greater penetration of Western economic and cultural influences partly created and partly resulted from these more open and liberalised systems. In this context Gorbachev's reforms and foreign policy signals enabled party reformers, intellectuals and society to openly challenge the old regimes, and reformers from within the party-state could respond with attempts to change the system. In Hungary relatively successful economic reform from the late 1960s, and particular party-state developments resulted in the formation of an "inside" opposition movement. Wider society remained mainly uninvolved in oppositional activities. In contrast, the Polish communist party and reformists within it were confronted by continuous economic crises and the development of an "outside" mass opposition in the form of Solidarity. In both these countries the regimes acted in response to Soviet reforms, the more "professionalised" militaries did not intervene when the regimes collapsed, and anti-communist opposition movements became politically prominent and active within the revolutionary changes of 1989.

In Romania and Bulgaria the regimes were less affected directly by the West, but also faced potential economic and social crises. However, the entrenched regimes responded differently to external influences. Zhivkov misunderstood Soviet reform policy whilst Ceausescu rejected the need for change. In both Bulgaria and Romania, rigid state structures, patronage networks and repressive conditions meant opposition from within the party or in wider society was restricted. Not until the other East-Central European communist regimes were on the brink of collapse, and the masses took to the streets, were reformists and intellectual oppositionists able to openly confront hard-line regime leaders. Yet, unlike the Polish and Hungarian oppositions - which were well organised and involved in negotiating change - the Bulgarian and Romanian opposition forces developed late, lacked focus, organisation and resources, and were restricted in their ability to influence revolutionary processes. Although Bulgarian opposition movements and
Romanian street protests played their part in toppling the old regimes, reform of the systems emanated from within the unrestructured party-states. Elites from within the regimes were finally forced to react to external and internal pressures in an attempt to protect their own power bases.

A lack of legitimacy may well have played a precipitating role. Changes in Soviet policy, splits within the ruling elite and discontent amongst the masses - especially over economic problems - put added pressure on potentially vulnerable regimes. The popular support for organisations outside the party, mass demonstrations and spontaneous outbursts of discontent, may have provided the "final nail in the coffin."

However, a lack of legitimacy cannot be taken as a main "cause" of instability, especially as it may not have existed in the first place. The loss of mass legitimacy may not, in effect, destabilise the state, especially if the coercive organisations of the state remain coherent and effective. For example, the Hungarian revolution of 1956 and the Polish upheavals in 1956, 1976 and 1980 were effectively repressed. The role of the military, and external support, can be important in this context. One reason for the mainly peaceful forms of revolution was the lack of military intervention. This was partly due to political forces not requesting their assistance in repressing opposition (Romania apart). Also the militaries were willing to shift their allegiance from old to new elites. The interdependence of the Soviet bloc, and the attitude of the Moscow regime was significant for this action. The armies in Poland, Hungary and Bulgaria were not prepared to stand firm without Soviet assistance, and decided to back - or at least tolerate - political change. Some elements of the Romanian forces did initially resist, perhaps for similar reasons. They suspected there would be no external help, but saw little alternative than to defend the old regime in the confusion of the first few days of disruption. Although Soviet intervention may have been requested in the case of Romania, neither the Soviets nor the West openly backed military intervention in the climate of the late 1980s.

The application of a comparative-historical approach has identified common factors which appear significant for the collapse of the old regimes. The approach also shows that similar contributing factors had differing effects in each country. These differences appear to be dependent on the political, economic and social "nature" of the communist systems. The
different political, economic and social conditions that existed by the late 1980s were integral to the revolutionary processes which took place.

The investigation does not, however, end with the collapse of the communist regimes. The 1989 conditions also provided the "starting point" for the political, economic and social changes which occurred after 1989. We must now move on and apply the method to the forms of change and the post-1989 systems to trace what changed, and to examine what impact the differing nature of the communist systems had on outcomes. Part 2 will establish the differing forms of revolution, and compare international, political, economic and social aspects of the post-communist systems.
Part 2

Outcomes of the Revolutions

Part 1 has established that each communist regime faced some form of political, economic and social crises by 1989. Yet, - what has been described as - the “nature” of the communist systems created very different contexts and consequences in each case. The more open and liberalised systems in Poland and Hungary provided the conditions for political negotiations between communists and established opposition movements to take place. In Bulgaria and Romania rigid regime and party-state ties, alongside centralised economies and closed societies, meant little or no established alternative political organisations developed to compete with the communist parties.

Political factors provide a focus for investigating the different political forms of revolution. The type of regime and party-state structure which existed by 1989, the responses of the communist regimes to the crises they faced, and the presence or absence of organised anti-communist opposition movements within revolutionary processes appear significant. In Poland and Hungary complete regime change took place. In Bulgaria and Romania the old regime collapsed, but the former communists remained dominant within the post-1989 systems. These differences in political forms of revolution had effects for post-1989 reform processes. Yet, integral to political factors were economic and social conditions which played a part in shaping outcomes. Change occurred within different internal conditions and a specific external context. Post-1989 regimes were both aided and constrained by the conditions within and surrounding each system in 1989, and by the issues raised through attempting both political and economic restructuring at virtually the same time.

It is difficult to delineate the effects of the pre-1989 systems from the effects which post-1989 conditions had upon outcomes. However, some aspects of the impact of the nature of the communist systems on outcomes can be separately identified. Part 2 will focus on these aspects, whilst also recognising additional aids and constraints to post-1989 system building.

In order to compare the two cases, and trace the post-1989 changes that occurred, it is first necessary to briefly establish the differences in political forms of revolution. The following
chapters will then compare outcomes by describing and discussing political, economic, social and international aspects of the post-communist systems in turn. These areas interact and overlap, but - as identified in Part 1 - some compartmentalisation is necessary in order to discuss processes and outcomes of change. Chapter 4 will first, establish and compare the political forms of revolution before going on to compare the nature of the new states. Chapter 5 will complete the discussion of political factors by describing political party developments, concentrating on the early 1990s, but including 1989 to 1997 elections. Chapter 6 will discuss some major aspects of economic and social change. Chapter 7 will look at the international context and the effects of external influences on attempts to restructure post-89 systems. The final chapter will conclude the investigation by first drawing together the differences between the cases, and suggesting some reasons for those differences. Secondly, it will summarise the two main theoretical issues addressed within the thesis. Thirdly, it will assess the strengths and weaknesses of the comparative-historical method, and examine the usefulness of its application to the East-Central European cases.

Chapter 4 The New Political Order

All four post-communist regimes faced unique situations in rebuilding political and economic systems. To change from communist one-party states and command economies towards democracy and market economies was a completely new phenomenon. Each new regime made at least some attempt to decentralise power and reform ailing economies. They all looked to Western Europe for institutional and economic models. Yet, none could anticipate the effects of attempting economic reform alongside political reform. However, Poland and Hungary probably achieved the greatest success in moving towards complete political system change. Why is this the case? The political form of revolution, and resulting regime change had an impact, but integral to this form were the political, economic and social contexts within which each new regime attempted to rebuild the political system. These features will be addressed by first briefly comparing the form of revolution in Poland and Hungary with the form of revolution in Bulgaria and Romania. The structure of post-communist political institutions and aspects of political power relationships will then be described. A comparison of the two cases will show some similarities across the cases, and differences within the cases. The issues which each new
regime faced also had consequences. However, there are patterns of difference between the cases which can be highlighted.

4.1 Forms of Revolution

The revolutions in East-Central Europe were relatively peaceful. Only in Romania was wide-scale violence experienced on the streets in 1989. Despite this obvious difference, similarities between the Polish and Hungarian revolutionary form can be contrasted with the Romanian and Bulgarian form. Details of revolutionary events and negotiations (such as Round Table talks) will not be discussed here. Some significant elements have already been mentioned in Part 1, and other important details will be addressed below in future sections and chapters. The purpose here is to identify the general similarities and differences in political form by comparing the two cases. We have already seen (in Part 1) that the Polish and Hungarian party-state structures were less rigid and hierarchic by 1989. The type of regime and party-state in these two countries created conditions within which reformists could act in response to the late 1980s crises, and established, organised anti-communist opposition movements became prominent within revolutionary processes. In contrast Bulgarian and Romanian anti-communist opposition movements were either very recently established or non-existent, and had limited influence in institutional change or within political elite processes. These are key factors in comparing the political forms of revolution in the two cases.

Poland and Hungary

Poland and Hungary both experienced - what might be classed as - a form of "negotiated" revolution which was essentially peaceful. In both countries, the old regime response to the Soviet reform signals of the mid 1980s was to attempt some kind of party democratisation and reform of the political system. However, communist actions were promoted for different reasons. There was more pressure "from below" in Poland in the form of Solidarity. Although by the late 1980s Solidarity was less of a social force than it was in
1981, the regime recognised the potential disruption the Polish people could exert upon the political system. The differing external conditions from those of the early 1980s (especially in the Soviet Union) provided different opportunities for the anti-communist opposition and reformists within the party; a context within which regime leaders were pressured towards reform after the wave of strikes in the spring and summer of 1988. In Hungary demands for reform came from sections of the elite. Mass participation during 1989 was far less significant than in Poland. The communist party itself was more involved in initiating political change. Reform communists and emerging opposition elites made pacts which determined the speed and extent of political events; the "old guard" offering little resistance as they surrendered power.235

In both countries communist parties and leaders of opposition groups were involved in round-table negotiations. During 1989 both Polish and Hungarian parliaments, still dominated by communists, played an active role in accepting laws that determined post-1989 political institutions and processes. Round-table negotiations began earlier in Poland, and with the unexpected support for Solidarity in the June semi-free elections, political change accelerated.236 In Hungary, party and counter elites maintained greater control of the revolutionary process, without similar pressure from grass-roots movements. Yet, both countries experienced a complete change of regime as anti-communist opposition parties gained power in the early post-communist period. In both countries the communist parties initially expected to retain considerable control over any reform process they initiated, but were thwarted by external and internal conditions. In particular the strength and ability of oppositional groups, and public support for them, was underestimated by leaders and reformists within the communist parties. Partial reform of the systems prior to 1989, and subsequent complete regime change, was to have significant consequences for post-1989

234 Only the general political form of revolutions will be discussed here. See previously in Chapters 2 and 3, and the following sections of Chapter 4 for more political details.
235 There are some differences of opinion over the idea of elite transaction. Some argue that it was mainly an elite process, for example Tokes,R.L., "Hungary's New Political Elites" Problems of Communism, Nov-Dec 1990, pp.44-65; Bruszt,L., "1989: Hungary's Negotiated Revolution" Social Research, 1990, pp.365-387. Others emphasise social and economic forces precipitating and accompanying change, for example, Keri,L., (1991) Oszczomalas utan (After the Collapse), Kossuth, Budapest
236 Details of each country's post-communist elections will be addressed in the following chapter on Political Parties.
political, economic and social change (as we shall see in the following sections and chapters).

**Bulgaria and Romania**

At first glance Romania and Bulgaria appear to have experienced very different forms of revolution. Bulgaria was similar to both Poland and Hungary, being essentially "negotiated". It was similar to Hungary in terms of the involvement of the communist elite in the initial reform process. As in Poland and Hungary, opposition movements were formed and participated in round-table negotiations. However, these movements were established late and barely disassociated from the party-state apparatus. Revolutionary events were "collapsed" into a few short months after November 1989, at a time when other communist regimes in the region were already losing power.

The main similarity evident in Bulgaria and Romania was that the communists did not anticipate reform of the political system before the autumn of 1989. The communist parties had to adapt very quickly to the changing conditions of late 1989 and early 1990. People came out onto the streets in large numbers in November and December 1989 (respectively). In Bulgaria, although there was no violence initially, there was widespread industrial and ethnic conflict in the immediate aftermath of Zhivkov’s removal from power. In Romania the masses on the streets gave alternative elites the opportunity to remove the old regime (as we have seen in Chapter 3). In both countries the communists were forced to respond to external conditions, and the associated spontaneous action of

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237 In Bulgaria people started coming out onto the streets in urban areas in large numbers immediately after the first wave of resignations from the communist party in November 1989. See Popov,S., "Political and Symbolic Elements at earlier stages of Bulgaria's Transition", *Praxis International* Vol.13 No.3, October 1993 pp.268-284. Demonstrations in January 1990 over the Turkish issue forced the Bulgarian Communist Party (BCP) and opposition Union of Democratic Forces (UDF) to make progress at round table negotiations. In February UDF supporters marched complaining that the BCP was using delaying tactics at the round table, and in March forced the government to make concessions over freedom of the press. Also in March Turks, Pomaks and Muslims secured concessions over the restoration of Muslim names through protest. The trade union Podkrepa also caused disruption by threatening strikes on several occasions. See Crampton,R., "Bulgaria", in Whitefield,S.. (ed) (1993) *The New Institutional Architecture of Eastern Europe*. Macmillan, Basingstoke & London, pp.15-19
people on the streets within their own states. In both countries the form of regime change was essentially through mimicry of Round Table formulas, and "facade negotiations".

Initially in Bulgaria and Romania former communists were very much in evidence within the early post-communist governments. In Romania, the ruling body within the National Salvation Front (NSF), which took power immediately after the revolution of December (and was later elected to government), was comprised of communists not immediately associated with Ceausescu. This ruling group were quickly accused of co-opting the revolution by many intellectuals and students. In Bulgaria former communists within both the reformed communist party (Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP)) and within a section of the oppositionist Union of Democratic Forces (UDF) (around Zhelyu Zhelev, Clubs for Glasnost and Democracy) were involved in the initial political changes. Like the NSF, the BSP was elected to govern in June 1990.

Despite some differences between the Romanian and Bulgarian events, former communists maintained considerable dominance over revolutionary processes and post-1989 political and economic systems. This had its effects for system change and post-1989 reform processes.

4.2 The Nature of the New States

In all four countries the revolutions left intact much of the structure of communist rule. This was especially the case initially within the state bureaucracies and the large state owned enterprises. However, considerable restructuring of government and administration in both Poland and Hungary prior to 1989 left very different conditions in place. In the late 1980s both countries had already made changes to their institutions and

238 In particular the announcement by the NSF Council on 23 January 1990 that the NSF would stand in the April elections as a political organisation outraged dissidents. For those with suspicions about the former communists who led the NSF, it was a clear contradiction to the December 1989 programme and promises of the provisional government. See for example. Gallagher.T., (1995) pp.81-82

239 see more below in Economic and Social change; and for example, Erzsebet Szalai "Political and Social Conflicts Arising from the Transformation of Property relations in Hungary", in Cox & Furlong (eds) (1995) Hungary: The Politics of Transition, Frank Cass. London

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procedures, and it was these remnants of communist rule which remained after 1989. The first post-communist governments also initiated further changes in administrative structure and personnel. It was in Bulgaria, and especially Romania, where old communist structures and processes remained more firmly in place and proved difficult to dismantle.

The more complete regime change in Poland and Hungary led to rapid attempts to change the political systems. In both countries Round Table talks in 1989 provided a framework and timetable to enable movement towards more liberal democratic institutions and processes. In Poland the semi-free elections of 1989 slightly delayed the establishment of settled institutional relationships. Yet, in both countries communists were politically marginalised within a short period. In Bulgaria and Romania former communists continued to dominate politics in the early 1990s. In Bulgaria political change was in some respects different and more conflictual to that in Romania, but in these countries political reform was at least much slower. Indeed in Romania many questioned that any reform of institutions or practices initially took place. In order to examine the patterns of difference apparent in the post-communist states the new institutions and political reform processes will be outlined. Additionally some significant aspects of central and regional administrative power relations will be discussed in order to see how political processes changed. Some of the issues faced by the regimes will also be incorporated into this section. Finally, some political consequences of economic reform will be discussed. This latter issue was one of the most significant for the political fortunes of each new regime, and will be discussed in relation to the effects for all four post-1989 regimes.

New Institutions and Political Reform Processes

In all four countries revolutionary events led to changes in political institutions, and political reforms were initiated. However, Poland and Hungary began from very different institutional bases; they were already less centralised by 1989. Additionally, the more complete change of regime in this case led to more rapid and effective political reform processes.

See for example Rady, M., (1992)


Poland and Hungary

In Poland the Round table negotiations begun in February 1989 resulted in a partial reform of the political system. By April the communist party had agreed to the relegalisation of Solidarity and semi-free elections to a reformed Sejm and reconstituted Senate. The first non-communist government led by Mazowiecki continued dismantling the old system in late 1989 and early 1990. The Polish republic was reconstituted in December 1989. Pre-communist national symbols were restored and the Polish United Workers Party's (PUWP) "leading role" erased from the constitution. By 1991 the political system had been transformed. Presidential elections in November 1990 and free Parliamentary elections in 1991 completed institutional change. The Presidential election of 1990 altered the parameters of politics. Conflict over political and constitutional issues between the President, Parliament and the prime minister ensued (see below). The "little constitution" of 1992 provided compromises and went some way to clarify the system of government after the paralysis experienced in late 1991 and early 1992. In fact, it took until May 1997 for compromises to be reached over a new constitution. The new document represented bitterly fought debates between "new-old opponents"; those who supported a secular state and church-backed moral crusaders.

In Hungary a similar process of change took place during 1989. From June to September 1989 opposition parties and social organisations met with the Hungarian Socialist Worker's Party (HSWP) to prepare the ground for constitutional reform and the holding of free elections. Talks concluded with an agreement to amend the constitution, establish a constitutional court and introduce an electoral law clarifying the status of political parties. There was considerable conflict over proposals to hold Presidential elections prior to Parliamentary elections. The communists favoured Presidential elections first. The Hungarian reform communists had similar expectations to their counterparts in Poland thinking that a communist President would retain overall control of a transforming system. However, by the autumn of 1989 the communists accepted their unpopularity

243 Pozsgay was popular and many thought he would become the first post-communist President up until the autumn of 1989 when anti-communists reduced the chance of a
and relented to the holding of a referendum to determine the timing of elections. The referendum was also used to make decisions about HSWP assets, the worker's guard and factory cells. The narrow victory for the postponement of Presidential elections until after Parliamentary elections defined the political landscape of the new Parliamentary system.\footnote{The vote was 50.1\% to 49.9\%, Whitefield, S., (ed) (1993) p. 84} Form then on a basic consensus on the need for a Parliamentary system was not challenged. Although there was some debate over the need for a bicameral legislature, the unicameral system and the first post-communist government remained remarkably stable and generally uncontested.\footnote{for details on the new parliaments see Agh, A., "Democratic Parliamentarianism in Hungary: The First Parliament (1990-1994) and the Entry of the Second Parliament", and Simon, M.D., "Institutional Development of Poland's Post-Communist Sejm: A Comparative Analysis", both in Olsen & Norton (eds) (1996) The New Parliaments of Central and Eastern Europe, Frank Cass, London & Portland, Oregan} Hungary is like Bulgaria in having a unicameral Parliament, but remains unique amongst the four countries in having an indirectly elected President.

In both Poland and Hungary the legislatures had strong historical traditions and played an important role in changing the political systems. After the organised opposition of the early 1980s, the Sejm in Poland became less of a "rubber stamp" as the communists permitted Parliament to play a more active role. During the 1989 to 1991 period the National Assembly became the main arena for political battles. Similarly in Hungary the last Parliament of the communist era became the main focus for politics, eventually accepting the laws which would determine the new democratic Parliament and new political processes.

Although there were difficulties in making a complete break with the past, there was a basic consensus in both countries that the old state structures should be dismantled and new processes adopted quickly. This included "depoliticisation" of the army, and reformed civil-military relations.\footnote{For details of military reform in Poland and Hungary, see for example, Barany, Z., "Democratic Consolidation and the Military; the East European Experience", Comparative Politics, Vol.30, No.1, October 1997, pp.21-43; Michta, A.A., (1992) East Central Europe} The modernisation of the administration at central and regional level, and the devolving of power away from the centre was seen as necessary. Again

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former communist attaining the post. The Free Democrats (see below in Political Parties) were also insistent that a Parliamentary system, rather than Presidential system should be established.

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reforms during the communist period, aimed at strengthening economic development, proved to be a useful starting point from which to further decentralise control. The regional levels of government in Poland date back to the 1970s and the basically two-tier system remained largely unchanged. Reform legislation covering functional, political administrative and financial areas potentially transformed the role of local government, giving greater political and economic autonomy.\footnote{247} Actual reform of local government in Poland was slow to materialise, partly because of the quick succession of governments in the 1990 to 1993 period (except the reforms introduced during Suchocka's government), and the conflicts over appointments to regional districts.\footnote{248}

Hungary probably took the greatest steps towards local government reform. The relative tolerance of political debate in the 1980s allowed a basic tax structure for the finance of local authorities and restoration of local government autonomy to take place almost immediately after legislative elections in 1990.\footnote{249} This early establishment of democratic local-central relations led to less controversy over relationships between tiers of administration, and better co-operation and supervision of local amenities. Devolution of functions, property and resources to the local level at an early stage helped to legitimise local democracy and put a system in place which the new government in 1994 merely fine-tuned, rather than radically changed.

In both countries the election of reformed communist party personnel to power (Hungary 1994, Poland 1993) did not significantly alter the institutional form or democratic processes already established. However, there were some difficulties in reorganising the bureaucracies.

Poland and Hungary did not have over large state bureaucracies in terms of numbers of personnel during the communist period, therefore neither country had to significantly


\footnote{247} see for example Hesse,J.J. "From Transformation to Modernisation: Administrative Change in Central and Eastern Europe", \textit{Discussion Paper No. 27}, Centre for European Studies, Nuffield College, Oxford, April 1993

\footnote{248} see below and Cielecka,A., & Gibson,J., "Polish Local Government: Wither the Second Stage of Reform", in Gibson,J., & Hanson,P., (eds) (1996) p.139-142, especially p.135

\footnote{249} see Davey,K.. "Hungary: Into the Second Reform Cycle", in Gibson,J., & Hanson,P., (eds) 1996
reduce core administrative state employees after 1989. However there were problems with recruitment of skilled and qualified staff who could implement policy within a reformed political and economic state sector. Rather than being able to recruit the staff administration needed, public service had to take what it could get. Relatively low pay and poor prestige did not attract qualified or well motivated candidates. There was also evidence of recruitment on the basis of party affiliations, favouritism and nepotism. This did not necessarily mean that new state structures were reliant on a type of democratic centralism to operate, but the public sector had to deal with unstable governments (in the Polish case), unpredictable policy output, and was under pressure to adapt to the new political and economic climate without appropriate skills to deal with the situation. Additionally in Poland there were problems with de-communisation which created added difficulties and heightened tensions within both government and administration. Although these conditions had potential to slow reform processes, in both countries compromises were made which enabled reform to continue without complete dismantling of the old state structures.

**Bulgaria and Romania**

In Bulgaria, and especially Romania, movement towards new institutions and practices was initially much slower and in many ways incomplete in comparison to the Polish and Hungarian case. Two main reasons for this can be discerned; the lack of developed opposition organisations which could successfully bargain with the communist establishment (although Round Table negotiations did take place in Bulgaria and Romania they were very different from the Polish and Hungarian equivalents), and the number and strength of communist personnel who remained within the post-communist state institutions. The greater focus on the leader (and leadership) in these states prior to 1989 was reflected both within revolutionary processes and subsequent political relationships. Although old guard leaders in Bulgaria and Ceausescu's clan were removed from office, the clientelistic networks and corrupt practices of communist rule were less easily removed from the administrations. Additionally the more "politicised" militaries were involved in

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250 See Hesse, J.J., 1993 p.38
1989 events, and were potentially more prominent within the post-communist systems. This was especially the case in Romania (see more below in the following section).

In Bulgaria there were initially some similarities to Hungarian and Polish processes of change, but Round Table negotiations were established on a somewhat different basis. The talks were not the result of a long history of oppositional activities, although they were of considerable symbolic significance to the population. Mladenov, who replaced Zhivkov in November 1989, had similar aspirations to those of Pozsgay in Hungary earlier that year. With a similar reaction to political crisis - albeit to a different set of circumstances than those which had taken place much earlier in Poland and Hungary - the Bulgarian communists sought reform measures and compromise as an exercise in self-preservation. Mladenov's new administration declared its intent to reform the political system. At the 14th Congress of the Bulgarian Communist Party (BCP) which met from 30th January to 2nd February 1990, an interim government was engineered. Mladenov was pushed - as much by public opinion and flourishing opposition groups, as by reformist motives - towards dismantling the BCP's leading role over state and society. He resigned as party leader, promoted Aleksandr Lilov to that post and appointed Andrei Lukanov (a close associate and former foreign economic relations minister) as prime minister.

Round Table talks took place from January to April 1990, and produced a framework for general elections to a Grand National Assembly (GNA) to take place in June. Following the country's historic tradition, the main task of this assembly was to adopt a new constitution. (It took until July 1991 for a new constitution to be agreed.) During the Round Table talks, after some disagreement between BCP and the oppositionist Union of Democratic Forces (UDF) representatives, a compromise concerning election of the President was reached. The existing assembly (sobranie) continued its function of

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251 Popov, S., "Political and Symbolic Elements at earlier stages of Bulgaria's Transition", Praxis International 13; 3 October 1993 pp.268-284
252 Mladenov was Zhivkov's foreign secretary for 17 years and replaced Zhivkov on his resignation on November 10, 1989.
253 An indication of the BSPs attempt to preserve its power can be seen in the reform of the electoral law which was deemed to be the most favourable for the party's own electoral success. See Simon, J., "Electoral Systems and Regime Change in Central and Eastern Europe 1990-1994", Representation, Vol.35, Nos. 2 & 3, Spring/Autumn 1998, p.128
254 In a similar conflict to that which took place in Hungary between reformed communists and the liberal opposition, the BCP wanted direct elections alongside GNA elections.
"rubber stamping" executive decisions even under the extra-constitutional remit of Round Table authority. The sobranie signed its own death sentence by approving the end of communist rule and nominated the President until the GNA was able to elect the head of state. Mladenov was elected President on April 3 1990 (the BCP also became the Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP) that day), and the former communist chief administrative body of the State Council was dissolved. The Bulgarian communists attempted to establish paternalistic rule - similar to the Polish and Hungarian communist parties' attempts before and during 1989 - whereby reforms would be granted and concessions issued to select opposition groups.

Once national assembly elections took place in June 1990, the GNA became the main centre of political life and focus for reform of the system. The BSP won the most seats in the elections, but the party suffered from its communist heritage. The pattern exhibited by the BCP in the initial stages of political reform, and in reforming itself, was one of making concessions in principle, but then watering them down in detail. This led to many oppositionists and more radical reformers within the party discerning the supposedly reformed BSP as somewhat undemocratic. The communist power structure was certainly reduced: party cells were disbanded, members of the judiciary, the army, police and foreign service relinquished their party membership in order to pursue their careers, and the traditional communist "transmission belts" - such as trade unions or Komsomol - were separated from the party. However, there was continuous suspicion of the BSP when avowed commitments to reform were delayed by the party's own prevarications.

The instability of governments did not help, but there were instances when Parliamentary politics were viewed as an instrument for marginalising political opponents, rather than as a forum for the representation of balanced interests. This approach was also utilised by the

the UDF wanted Parliamentary election of the President. The President was initially elected by the GNA after Mladenov was forced to stand down. As in Hungary, the reformed communists did not gain by the conflict and a UDF President took office (Zheliu Zhelev). Zhelev was subsequently elected by direct means in 1992 and another UDF President (Petar Stoyanov) was elected in November 1996.

256 The traditional "transmission belt" role of trade unions was modified in the late 1980s providing a basis for political activity before alternative parties were legalised. See Thirkell,J., et al, "Trade Unions, Political Parties and Governments in Bulgaria, 1989-92" in

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Union of Democratic Forces (UDF) when they gained power in the minority government after the 1991 elections. The conflict which arose between the polarised political forces was a major factor in contributing to delays in the reform process. The time spent on adopting a new constitution also added to the slow progress of reform. In the 1991-1994 period, although many bills were passed by parliament, out of 210 bills adopted only 25 were new laws, and only around 10 of these were substantially connected with reform of the old authoritarian system.

Some decentralisation of local government had already begun before 1989 with the introduction of a new system introduced in January 1988. It appears that this decentralisation continued under the post-communist government. A new "Local Self Government and Local Administration Act" was passed in 1991 giving municipalities a wide range of responsibilities over local policy, including local economic development, but limited direct control over their capital or revenue budgets. However, the main issue for decentralisation was the lack of organisational capacity or skilled staff, and concerns over the level of independence for municipalities vis-à-vis central authority.

In Romania the pace of political change was slow. The National Salvation Front (NSF) which took power during the bloody events of December 1989 presented itself as a transitional ruling body. The Front's first proclamation claimed that all communist institutions would be dissolved. Yet, the early months of NSF government bore significant resemblance to communist party rule. Despite setting up a council - apparently delegated by 145 National Front members - control was initially concentrated in the hands of Silviu Brucan, Ion Iliescu and Petre Roman. The communist party was never officially

258 ibid p.51.
260 Brucan and Iliescu joined the communist party in 1944. Brucan was the most outspoken in his criticism of Ceausescu and finally put under house arrest, but neither men were ever completely denounced by the regime, yet both utilised their apparent opposition to Ceausescu as evidence to legitimise their positions within the NSF. Roman's father was a close associate of Iliescu, see Rady, M., (1992) pp.124-128.
dissolved and although some political and civil freedoms were immediately established, changes to political practices was initially slow. Promises to institute a special committee to investigate the previous regime's crimes, and hold referendums on banning the communist party and the question of the death penalty, were rescinded. Many communist techniques of political centralisation were utilised by the NSF both at executive and local level.  

The NSF did make a commitment to holding free elections, and the electoral law published on March 14 1990 overtly specified democratic principles. The law provided for the simultaneous election of a national President and two houses chosen by a system of proportional representation based on constituencies and party lists. However, in these early elections, the National Salvation Front's resounding victory in both houses and Iliescu's Presidential victory defined the political conditions of the early post-communist institutions and practices.

Following the May 1990 elections, the primary task of the new legislature was to draft a new constitution and a new law for the September 1992 national elections. Iliescu was extremely influential in obtaining significant powers for the executive (see below in the following section). The new electoral rules also appeared to protect the National Salvation Front's control over the legislature. Although the Democratic National Salvation Front (DNSF - the NSF was renamed after a formal split in 1992, and in 1993 renamed the Party of Social Democracy of Romania - see the chapter on Political Parties below) had to form a coalition with several extremist parties after the 1992 elections, the DNSF held the majority of government portfolios and Iliescu retained the Presidency until 1996.

The Romanian post-communist government was committed to gradual reform ostensibly in order to maintain stability. This applied to economic and political reform. Although there was some conflict over the pace and nature of reform, both from within the NSF and by opposing organisations, the NSF also appeared committed to maintaining control of the political system. In the first two years after the revolution decentralisation of authority was

not a priority and opposition to the NSF was frequently brutally dealt with.\textsuperscript{263} Prefects and Mayors were initially appointed and local government elections were postponed. Public finance of local councils also remained highly centralised. Central government argued that it was difficult to decentralise the over centralised state inherited from the communist regime, and that local authorities were not yet ready to take on their appointed role.\textsuperscript{264} Although the central authorities may well have been committed to democratisation of local government, reform was initiated in such a way as to minimise any political threat to central authority and keep intact central monitoring, co-ordination and control.\textsuperscript{265}

\textbf{Political Power Relations}

Although new political institutions were established and considerable political and economic reform initiated (in three countries at least), the effects of more complete regime change in Poland and Hungary compared to incomplete change in Bulgaria and Romania can already be seen. To look at this in more depth some aspects of central and central-local power relationships will be discussed. Constitutional and institutional arrangements can provide a framework for democratic practice. Within this framework the distribution of power and influence may remain ambiguous. An examination of some aspects of power relations is then useful to discern the changes in political practice that took place during the early post-communist period. Not all aspects of power conflict can be addressed here, but some examples will serve to illustrate the complexities that political change engendered in this area. Previous examinations of the new political systems have often taken the role and powers of Presidents and decentralisation of state control as primary concerns.\textsuperscript{266} These

\textsuperscript{263} For example, a group of miners were co-opted to discourage student protests in University Square in Bucharest after the May 1990 elections. Also an example is the events in Tirgu Mures in March 1990. There was also evidence of intimidation and electoral irregularities at the 1990 elections, see for example Rady,M., (1992) pp.145-159 & pp.160-173


\textsuperscript{265} ibid p.90

\textsuperscript{266} For example, Lijphart suggests that Parliamentary rather than Presidential systems are preferable for building new democracies, see Lijphart,A., "The Southern European examples of democratisation: six lessons for Latin America", Government and Opposition, Vol. 25, 1990 pp.68-84
aspects will be examined here, but not to discern the effects of Presidential or Parliamentary systems for democratic outcomes, but to highlight the differences between the cases in terms of power conflicts at the institutional level. Many political conflicts were based around issues such as freeing the media from state supervision, and antagonism surrounding decommunisation of administrations. Some of these points will be addressed within a comparison of political power relations.

*Poland and Hungary*

Both Poland and Hungary might be described as essentially Parliamentary systems. Yet there are differences in the interpretation of the role and powers of the President vis-à-vis government and Parliament in each country. In Hungary Arpad Goncz became a mainly symbolic figure; "the father of the nation," denoted by his popular title of "Uncle Arpy". Although possessing similar formal powers as Walesa in Poland, less conflict between the President and government was apparent. Where there was conflict in Hungary it manifested itself mainly around opposing party political platforms. For example, the protracted battle between Goncz and Prime Minister Antall over the leadership of Hungarian radio and television reflected the President and his party's (Alliance of Free Democrats) objection to Antall's apparent manipulation of the media in the interests of the MDF. Although not afraid to use his influence, Goncz did not seek to extend Presidential powers or exploit divisions within Parliament to bring down governments. Even the election of a former communist to the office of prime minister in 1994 did not lead to significant conflict with the former dissident President. In fact the MSP and Free Democrats formed a coalition government. Political conflict was more apparent within and between the former opposition parties than between former communists and oppositionists, or between government institutions.

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267 see for example Baylis, T.A., "Presidents versus Prime ministers; Shaping Executive authority in Eastern Europe", *World Politics*, Vol. 48, April 1996 pp.297-323

268 State control of the broadcast media was a particularly contentious area. The MDF was frequently accused of interfering in the editorial freedom of television and radio broadcasting and purging the media of anti-government journalists, especially in the run up to the 1994 elections. See East, R., & Pontin, J., (1997) *Revolution and Change in Central and Eastern Europe*, Pinter, London. In fact the first commercial television station did not begin broadcasting until October 1997, ending forty years of a state monopoly; see *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Newsline Report*, 13 October 1997, electronic version

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In contrast Walesa attempted to create a Presidential system in Poland. The fact that Walesa had the mandate of a direct election placed him in a strong position vis-à-vis the Sejm which - in December 1990 - was still composed of a majority of communist deputies elected before the end of communist rule. Walesa's assertiveness became apparent when he called for the creation of a Presidential council. It was feared that this would become a shadow cabinet which would encroach on the executive authority of the prime minister. The 1991 Parliamentary elections initiated "the war at the top." Up until 1992 when the Little Constitution to some extent alleviated the situation, the "Bermuda Triangle" - as Walesa termed the confrontation between the key political players of government, Parliament and President - battled over where executive and legislative authority lay. Key issues involved appointments of senior personnel, de-communisation of administrative and military positions, and the apparent failure of successive prime ministers to conform to Walesa's policy line. Walesa's dictatorial style and attempts to put himself "above politics" did not help. Additionally the influence of the Church was visible in Polish politics. For example, the 1993 media law which stipulated that radio and television programs should respect Christian values. Hungary suffered far less from such conflicts. In particular decommunisation was not a major issue. One reason for this was that the secret police files were not published (although Antall had access to files) and Hungary did not experience public recrimination over ex-communists and possible "collaborators".

As already mentioned (in the previous section) considerable movement was made towards devolving power from the centre in both countries. Yet there were still problems in establishing central-local power relations. Again it was in Poland where conflict was most apparent. The first "Solidarity" government acted quickly to decentralise the political system and establish local self-government. The Local Self-Government Act, adopted on

269 For elections and composition of the Sejm, see below in the chapter on Political Parties
270 see Baylis,T.A., (1996) p.310
272 Walesa attempted to build a non-party bloc (BBWR), seen by some as a parallel to Pilsudski's interwar grouping. See also more below.
March 22, 1990 provided for local government based around the municipalities (gminy) which was intended to devolve power, allow for local democracy, and assist small business privatisation (where there was reasonable success) by making the local authority responsible for managing local property. However, there were complaints that the government did not devolve sufficient power, provide sufficient resources to the local authorities, and that local issues were marginalised. Only the Suchocka government addressed these issues. Much of the conflict was due to party political friction. In the local elections of 1990 candidates supported by Solidarity citizens committees won most posts. As happened at the national level - once opposition activists had defeated their communist opponents - internal bickering within the Solidarity movement ensued. Local political elites became embroiled in narrow interests dominated by personal bias and individual ambition, rather than community-wide issues. After 1993 the Peasant and Left Alliance (PSL-SLD) coalition in central government wanted to postpone further local reforms, and made many appointments of coalition approved candidates to voivoidships. The governments actions were seen by some as postponing, if not stopping, decentralisation and recreating the politicisation of the civil service.

Hungary also did not immediately solve all the issues surrounding local government or administrative reform. The basis for electing mayors, and the issue of co-operation amongst small rural villages in employing a professional rather than political administrative advisor to elected officials, were bones of contention. Differences between local and national elections (1990-1994 when most mayors were Free Democrats whilst national elections were won by the MDF) also meant that local interests were stoutly defended by the opposition. Since 1994, as part of the government alliance, the Free

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273 For more detail, see Hicks, J. F. Jr, & Kaminski, B., "Local Government Reform" in Staar, R., (ed) (1993)

274 There are also Voivodships which are regional districts. Local government representatives are brought together in Voivodship Assemblies. Both districts and municipalities had some autonomy in the late communist period (1980s) but were not delineated from central authority or guaranteed as autonomous bodies.


Democrats had to practice what they preached in opposition. Hungary's advantage was being able to deal with these conflicts within a more settled local government political and economic framework from the beginning.

**Bulgaria and Romania**

In Romania and Bulgaria the continued dominance of former communists within institutions and administration had its effects. In Bulgaria communist dominance was to some extent constrained by the opposition forces that emerged in 1989. In particular the demise of Mladenov (forced to resign in July 1990 after publicity of his apparent suggestion of the use of tanks to disperse demonstrators in December 1989), and GNA election of oppositionist Zhelev (UDF) to President helped. Zhelev created a Political Consultative Council (PCC) which brought together Parliamentary groups and members of other organisations as a consultative body - basically a continuation of the round table. Although Zhelev may have been attempting to provide himself with more extensive executive authority, the PCC did help to contain crises when the GNA became ineffective.\(^{278}\)

However, Zhelev could not prevent the reformed communists from maintaining control of much of the still centralised state system. Lukanov's government (which ended in November 1990) had already allowed the nomenklatura to acquire key positions in state banks and industries and, under the guise of reform, divert resources into new trading companies, banks and brokerage houses. Despite attempts by the UDF led government in 1992 to break up the cartels, the machinery of government - still controlled by communist apparatchiks - delayed implementation of reform. For example, the UDF-Dimitrov government made vigorous efforts to break the hold of former communists over the civil service, but a Parliamentary decision in 1993 to prevent the divulging of secret police files impeded decommunisation proposals.\(^{279}\) The elections of 1994, which brought a new

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\(^{279}\) See for example, "Human Rights and Democratization in Bulgaria", *CSCE Report*, Prepared by the staff of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, September 1993, electronic version. Other issues which generated conflict in 1991 and
generation of former communists to power, under Zhan Videnov, reportedly built patronage networks similar to those of the first BSP government. The corrupt practices of the old state were generally transferred to the new post-1989 state, but lacked the constraints of either new laws or the ideological and legal limits of the old regime.\(^{280}\)

The difficulties for alternative political forces to oppose, or gain power over former communists could also be seen within the mass media. For example, most television and radio transmitters remained under government ownership, and private licensing continued to be complex. The majority of people outside the main cities had easy access to state run television, radio and newspapers. Slow implementation of new media laws and lack of private finance severely restricted alternative independent news sources. Despite the possibly deliberate delays in implementing reforms, liberalisation of the media was as much due to lack of access to finance and professional training, as to deliberate attempts to keep new technology and an independent press from emerging.\(^{281}\)

The Romanian context was more reminiscent of old regime practices, with continued tactics to suppress any opposition to the ruling body. The first free elections in 1990 were certainly flawed. Intimidation of opposition candidates and electoral fraud, especially in rural areas, was reputedly widespread.\(^{282}\) The media was used to promote a negative image of groups standing in opposition to the NSF. A lack of coverage - especially on television - for opposing political parties and some political events distorted and manipulated public perception and opinion.\(^{283}\) However, the decisive victory for the NSF in 1990 did not produce the legitimation hoped for by the NSF government. In fact, the tactics of the NSF

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1992, included the monarchy and land restitution which created rifts between the UDF and its coalition partner (the Turkish minority party), and with President Zhelev. See Bell,J.D., "Bulgaria", in White,S., Batt,J., & Lewis,P.G., (1993) pp.93-94

\(^{280}\) See more below in Chapter 6 Economic Change, and Borger,J., The Observer, 27 October, 1996. p.22

\(^{281}\) For more details regarding communications and media change in Bulgaria in the early 1990s, see for example Hall,L., "Post-communist Developments in the Media in Bulgaria", Columbia Education, electronic version, archive accessed 18/3/99


\(^{283}\) For example, in December 1989 and January 1990 protest rallies against the NSF political monopoly were not broadcast live on television. The population was told that a violent coup against the Revolution and NSF was taking place. For this and further detail on manipulation of information through media control and influence, see Pourchot,G., "Mass Media and Democracy in Romania: Lessons from the Past, Prospects for the Future". in Stan,L.. (ed) (1997) pp.67-90
gave the emerging opposition ammunition with which they attempted to undermine the Front's power. This was especially evident in intellectual circles, and helped to unify anti-Front groups into an oppositionist coalition (see below in Chapter 5).

There was also resistance to the new regime from within state institutions. For example, the conflict which ensued with the army. Just as the army was involved in the revolutionary events of 1989, so senior personnel and sections of the military were also involved in the immediate aftermath. Conflict surrounded such issues as army involvement in the revolution and depoliticisation of the army. In particular, confrontations between the NSF and a group of officers (the Action Committee for the Democratisation of the army (CADA)) - especially over who should be minister of defence - caused potential for destabilisation within the army and political problems for the government.\textsuperscript{284}

Another source of tension developed when local government elections finally took place in February 1992, and parties in opposition to the NSF (notably the Democratic Convention) won mayoral and council elections in the vast majority of major towns and cities. Central government perceived local authorities as a threat to stability.\textsuperscript{285} A main source of conflict in local-central relations was the fact that the government did not want local authorities to have a role in privatisation. Despite the promise of decentralisation of powers - given in principle in the 1991 Law of Local Public Administration - finances were restricted by central authority control, while functions and actual power of local administration remained ambiguous. The role of the prefect - the appointed representative, seen by many as too similar to the party district first secretary under communism - was also viewed with suspicion, and seen as having greater influence at local level than elected councillors.\textsuperscript{286}

The NSF gradually became less sure of itself and splits emerged within the party, especially between Iliescu, the old guard and conservative wings, and Roman and the more radical technocrats. Yet there is considerable evidence that a continuance of old state structures and practices helped to maintain Iliescu's power base. As already mentioned,

\textsuperscript{284} For details see Watts,L., "The Romanian Army in the December Revolution and Beyond", in Nelson,D., (ed) (1992).
\textsuperscript{285} See Adrian Campbell "Local Government and the Centre in Romania and Moldova", in Gibson,J., & Hanson,P., (eds) (1996)
\textsuperscript{286} These views are taken from interviews with local mayors (March 1993) in Campbell,A., "Local government in Romania", in Coulson (ed) (1995) p.82
NSF influence over the media - especially television - was utilised to promote the Front as the "the emanation of a popular anti-Ceausescu revolt" during the revolution. Influence over the media continued during the early post-1989 period. It became apparent that the NSF commitment to democratic practices and "freedoms" were continually recast, and honoured only to the degree that media outlets did not question the NSF's chosen path to democracy. Biased and limited reporting of political events cast opposition parties and those questioning NSF practice in a negative, illegitimate light. Iliescu also cultivated links with the successor to the communist trade union, the National Confederation of Romanian Free Trade Unions (NCRFTU), whose members in the mining communities were subsequently deployed in his own private army. Iliescu enjoyed support from the nomenklatura who still occupied key positions within the bureaucracy. There is also evidence that another central prop of the old regime was left intact. Although a new intelligence service was supposedly subject to Parliamentary scrutiny, there were suggestions that the Securitate was resurrected in the guise of the Romanian Intelligence Service (SRI), and that old surveillance techniques continued to be used for personal and political purposes.

Romania's post-communist regime retained the greatest control of the political system, and appeared more unwilling to decentralise institutions or reform political practices. However, none of the post-communist regimes could avoid political conflicts within the changing systems, nor could they dismiss issues raised. In particular the consequences of economic issues could not be ignored once the new regimes had submitted themselves to open elections.

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287 see previously in Chapter 3 & Rady,M., (1992) p.184
288 see for example, Borger,J., *The Guardian*, 16 November 1996 p.15. There is also evidence of nine post-communist intelligence agencies with connections to the Securitate, Baleaunu,V.G., "The Enemy Within: The Romanian Intelligence Service in Transition", Conflict Studies Research Centre, The Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst, Camberley, Surrey, electronic version
Attempts to reform the economies inevitably had political consequences, and was an issue which none of the regimes could afford to ignore. For example, in Hungary both opposition and government alike realised that their political future hinged on the success of economic restructuring. This was a critical factor in building political support at the societal level, as well as amongst political elites. In fact, in all four countries a political backlash towards incumbent governments was experienced after 1989, partly due to economic conditions. Various explanations have been put forward, from the increase in unemployment through increasing uncertainty related to economic disruption, and increases in income inequality. Also such issues as the introduction of State Property organisations to oversee privatisation programmes were generally seen as increasing state bureaucracy and aiding state managers to become part of the new economic elite. Examples of government tensions arising from these kinds of issues, and the repercussions for governments from the electorate will be compared between the two cases.

**Poland and Hungary**

In Poland in 1990, the effects of rapid economic change created tensions within and between political parties and coalitions as well as between Parliament and President. Although Walesa backed the economic reform programme of the government once he became President, he strongly criticised the first post-communist government's approach in 1990, and it was not long before "shock treatment" was dropped as a slogan. One policy mistake of the 1990 to 1991 period was excessively optimistic official forecasts of the extent and length of recession. The failure of prophesied recovery to materialise damaged

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289 Details of economic reform will not be discussed here. For details of economic reform processes mentioned in this section please refer to Chapter 6 below.


292 The consequences of this issue will be addressed more fully in the Social Change section in Chapter 6
the credibility of the Mazowiecki and Bielicki governments' economic programmes. A further charge against Mazowiecki was that he had sold the country's business to foreigners too cheaply. Few businesses had actually been sold at the time, but the allegations contributed to his defeat in the 1991 Sejm elections, and in the first round of the Presidential elections of November 1990.294 The first non-communist government also under-estimated the strength of insider coalitions who were able to block mass privatisation plans.

Successive cabinets became reluctant to introduce further austerity measures, and Balcerowicz (the initiator of rapid economic reform) was dropped from the Olszewski cabinet in December 1991. Fragile coalitions made it difficult for Olszewski - who faced opposition from an alliance of the left and economic liberals - and subsequently Suchocka - who faced pressure from the Sjem over radical plans to restructure the coal industry - to implement economic plans to alleviate macro-economic crises. In fact the Suchocka government fell due to a refusal to amend the budget which was to permit pay rises for striking health and education workers.

In Hungary in 1990, in the run up to the election, the two main "opposition" parties (the MDF and SzDSz) displayed similar stances on the economy: both advocated privatisation and the expansion of the free market, whilst neither party paid much attention to the possibility of growing social inequalities or unemployment. It is argued that there was a considerable social-democratic constituency within the Hungarian electorate which remained unmobilised in the 1990 elections, which was reflected in the low voter turnout.295 A lack of support for the first post-communist government was also indicated by the fact that the MDF were in trouble within months of receiving an apparent mandate to govern. They were unable to institute a petrol price rise in October 1990 as truck and taxi drivers blockaded roads throughout the country. Two months later the State Secretary

293 "shock treatment" refers to the rapid economic reform programme put forward by Balcerowicz. For more detail see below in Chapter 6
295 See for example, Szelenyi,S., "The Vacuum in Hungarian Politics: Class and Parties", New Left Review, 187. 1991 pp.121-137
for Economic Policy Gyorgy Matolcsy, and Finance Minister Ferenc Rabar, resigned as a result of a dispute over the pace of reform.

One source of controversy within the Hungarian government in the 1990 to 1994 period was the county's relationship with international creditors and the management of the debt crisis. Conflicts between political personnel over how to deal with debt management alongside the failure of economic policy to deliver an increase in living standards increased political tensions, and roused nationalist factions within the governing coalition.\(^{296}\)

**Bulgaria and Romania**

In Bulgaria, the small majority held by the BSP after the 1990 elections did not aid the passage of economic reform programmes presented by the government. Lukancov presented two successive economic programmes which failed to find legislative support. The second programme of November 1990 led to nation-wide strikes and to the downfall of the government. After the 1991 election, the Union of Democratic Forces (UDF) failed to improve matters as reform proceeded slowly and the economy stagnated. The UDF were out of office within the year. The instability of successive cross-party governments also did not ease the situation. In 1992 a more than six fold price rise created a less than sympathetic atmosphere amongst the population towards a continuation of radical economic change. Key economic policy "shocks" created enormous opposition to further change.\(^{297}\) By 1994 no government had managed to produce any substantial reform measures or prevented the economy from moving towards deeper economic crisis. The consequence of the return of the BSP in 1994 was even more catastrophic. By 1996 a severe economic crisis led to the BSP rapidly losing its credibility. Mass demonstrations forced an election early in 1997. The UDF won the election and subsequently the membership of the BSP dramatically declined.\(^{298}\)

\(^{296}\) See more below in Chapter 5; and for example, Andor, L., "The Role of the Debt Crisis in Hungary's Transition". *Labour Focus on Eastern Europe*, No.52, Autumn 1995, pp.84-99


In Romania hesitant movement towards democracy and a market economy produced public discontent and contributed to early divisions within the NSF. The liberalisation of almost 50% of prices in November 1990 produced a three fold increase by the end of the year. The resulting widespread protests reflected a growing discontent amongst the population for the effects of increasing inflation and accelerating unemployment. Continuing strikes into December forced the government to defer price liberalisation. Matters finally came to a head in September 1991 when the Jiu valley miners descended on Bucharest, not - as in 1990 - as pro-government shocktroops, but this time with the government as their target. Petre Roman was forced to resign, and a power struggle within the NSF ensued. Iliescu's initial endorsement of Roman's stated aim of transforming the economy into a competitive one had become increasingly lukewarm. The miners created the opportunity for Iliescu to replace Roman with more conservative Prime Ministers (Stolojan, and in November 1992 Vacarioiu). Reformers within the NSF were gradually marginalised. As a result, the liberalisation measures of 1991 were far less radical than those originally proposed. After the local elections of 1992 the party formally split into two rival parties.

Electoral support for Iliescu's DNSF in the 1992 national elections declined significantly in comparison to NSF support in 1990 (see Chapter 5 on Political Parties). However, Iliescu's Presidential success allowed him to control the formation of government. Vacaroiu's non-party government relied on the support of the DNSF and ultra-nationalist parties for its survival. The government continued hesitant reform, but by 1993 public opinion polls indicated dissatisfaction with material conditions and the performance of the Vacaroiu government in managing system change. By 1994, the government faced growing industrial unrest and large scale strikes. The government blamed political instability and

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299 Adevarul (23 December 1993 and 17/18 December 1994) reported that only 3% of the population felt their material conditions were much better, 25% somewhat better, and the rest that conditions were the same or worse. As much as 42% were dissatisfied with Vacaroiu's performance and 26% very dissatisfied. See Weiner, R., "Democratization in Romania" in Stan, L. (ed) (1997) p.12. Also in November 1993 the Caritas pyramid investment scheme began to collapse. Oppositionists denounced the scheme as a scam, while the government made no attempt to intervene. The government's reliance on the extreme nationalists may have had an influence. The leader of the group, the mayor of Cluj, was an avid Caritas supporter. See Branson, L., "Romania faces a harsh reality", Sunday Times, 7 November 1993, CD-ROM
the slow progress towards a market economy on miners' previous actions. Continued failure to speed up privatisation and economic reform eventually contributed to the further downturn in electoral support, and final defeat for Iliescu and his party in 1996.

**Conclusion**

In all four countries post-communist regimes had to face issues arising from attempts to change the political and economic systems which had consequences for political elites in power. Free elections meant none of the post-communist regimes could ignore issues raised by the changing systems. This was especially evident regarding problems arising from economic change. These issues not only created divisions within and between political elites, but also created a backlash against incumbent governments from society. In Romania Iliescu utilised economic issues to remove those opposing him. However, in the end he also lost popularity, partly because of the slow pace of reform. Even the former communist dominated regimes of Bulgaria and Romania had to attend to the high expectations for change from the electorate (see more in following chapters, especially Chapter 6).

Additionally, despite considerable institutional change in all four countries, elements of the old state structures and systems were retained. However, the differences in political structures and systems already evident by 1989, and the differing forms of revolution, appeared to have an impact on outcomes.

In Poland and Hungary smaller, less clientelistic communist state bureaucracies, partially dismantled or dislocated party-states, and more "professionalised" militaries provided partially restructured systems by 1989. This alongside the involvement of established opposition groups in Round Table negotiations, and the political marginalisation of former communists immediately after the first free elections, aided reform processes during and after 1989. Polish and Hungarian post-communist regimes had both alternative political elites, and the structural foundations, to further decentralise the political systems. Although there was considerable political conflict over certain aspects of political reform (especially

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300 See Borger, J. "Strike adds to Romanian government troubles", *The Guardian*, 28
in Poland), there was at least a general consensus that further political change should take place, and a basis already present for political autonomy, especially at the local level.

In Bulgaria and Romania larger, clientelistic bureaucracies overseen by leadership oriented parties and hierarchical party-states prior to 1989, created conditions within which former communist party members could dominate political processes and maintain control over unrestructured, highly centralised states after 1989. In Bulgaria the newly formed opposition had some impact, as political conflict emerged over the establishment of new institutions and reform processes. However, the former communists in both countries were initially relatively unchallenged by anti-communist opposition forces resulting in less political decentralisation, and a slower pace of reform after 1989.

It appears that where the state was more decentralised in the pre-1989 period, more decentralisation was at least on the agenda in the post-1989 period, if not actually implemented. Where the political systems were less oppressive and more open during the late communist period, they continued to be more open to processes of change in the post-communist period. Where the revolutions were negotiated, there appeared to be better prospects for alternative elites to participate in government, and move the reform process forward.

There were also differences within the cases. Each country developed particular political institutions and power relationships. This was partly due to the particular nature of each communist system, and to the form and timing of regime change during 1989 and early 1990. For example, the Polish semi-free elections in 1989 and the pact made with the communists, at a time when neither side were sure of Soviet reaction, led to a directly elected President which had its effects for presidential-parliamentary relations, as did the personality of Walesa. In Hungary the inability of any one group to dominate during the "negotiated" process led to the blocking of a directly elected President, and less conflictual institutional power relations. In Bulgaria some opposition involvement in revolutionary processes resulted in some constraints on former communist domination. While in Romania the lack of organised opposition involvement in the 1989 events enabled Iliescu in particular to manipulate political processes, despite internal party conflicts.

February 1994, CD-ROM
Despite the emphasis in this chapter on the effects of more complete regime change in Poland and Hungary, the marginalisation of former communists from politics in the early 1990s did not exclude them from regaining political power, or completely marginalise them from economic elite positions. As we shall see (in the following chapters) former communists in this case rapidly reorganised and reoriented themselves within the changing political and economic systems. The new political parties in Poland and Hungary were not well consolidated and lacked experience in government. Governing coalitions were subject to instability (especially in Poland), and parties suffered the effects of personal rivalries.

For much of society the perception was that they had merely exchanged one political elite for another who continued to control the state, and consequently their lives.\textsuperscript{301} Society could, of course, express political opinion, and actively participate through voting in competitive elections for the first time in over forty years. However a proliferation of new and reformed parties, coupled with sometimes complex electoral systems provided a confusing array of choices. The change from a one-party to multi-party system was an important element of political change, and it is to political parties and party systems that we now turn in order to complete the discussion of the main political aspects of the post-communist systems.

\textsuperscript{301} More will be said on this aspect in terms of political apathy, lack of confidence in politicians, and low voter turnout, see below in Chapter 6; and for example see Gortat.R., & Marciniak.P., "On the Road to Democracy: the Emergence of Political Parties in Poland," in Wightman.G., (ed) (1995) p.49
Chapter 5 Political Parties and Party Systems

The first semi-free and free elections in 1989 and 1990 changed the dimensions of party politics in all four countries. The communist parties lost their monopoly of power and a proliferation of new and re-established parties appeared on the electoral landscape.302 This chapter will examine some of the dimensions of political parties within the post-communist context. This includes first, describing a variety of new and reconstituted parties, their electoral positions, and some aspects of the fluctuating party systems; and second, discussing party identification in terms of ideological representation with a particular focus on two prominent aspects: nationalism and populism.

Differences between the cases in terms of political party development can be traced. We have already seen that the political, economic and social conditions in 1989 provided the context within which opposition movements in Poland and Hungary could take part in negotiations to change the political systems. This had its effects for post-1989 party developments. By contrast, Bulgarian and especially Romanian opposition movements lacked organisation and influence within revolutionary processes which did not prevent the formation of new and alternative political parties, but appeared to slow their development and have different consequences for former communist parties. The main focus of this chapter is to examine the differences (and similarities) in post-1989 political party development, and the conditions apparent in shaping those developments.

In order to investigate the post-1989 parties and party systems the main political parties which were part of governments from 1989 to 1997 will be described and discussed. In the first part of the chapter the parties are divided into three categories: traditional parties with historic roots in the inter-war years (and in some cases continuance as "satellites" during communist rule); new parties which were mainly formed as part of an anti-communist bloc; and lastly the reformed communist parties. This is perhaps a simplistic categorisation

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which follows a mainly genetic typology.\textsuperscript{303} However, it will serve to distinguish the differences in development of the main political parties within the post-communist systems.

The second part of the chapter will discuss ideological aspects of the political parties highlighting the main trends of ideological representation apparent within and between the two cases. We shall see that the lack of established and organised anti-communist opposition movements in Bulgaria and Romania in 1989 appeared to delay processes of party development relative to the Polish and Hungarian case. Although there are some particular differences within the cases, patterns of difference between the cases can be highlighted.

\textbf{5.1 New and Reformed Political Parties}

The Polish political parties present a complex scene which is not easily interpreted. The initial Solidarity "anti-communist bloc" which contested the first semi-free elections as a collectivist, essentially non-pluralist force, fragmented rapidly after the initial phase of communist opposition. Personal rivalries (especially during the presidential election campaign of December 1990), development of new political groups and associations alongside shifting party affiliations and coalitions, produced a confusing number of electoral choices for subsequent free elections of 1991 and 1993. The proportional electoral system coupled with factional parties and conflictual politics meant governments were also subject to instability.\textsuperscript{304}

\textsuperscript{303} For this typology and a thorough discussion of party formation processes see Agh,A., (1998) \textit{The Politics of Central Europe}, Sage, London, Thousand Oaks & New Delhi, especially pp.113-123

\textsuperscript{304} The Polish electoral system appeared to have a significant impact on the number of parties (29 groups received seats in the Sejm in the first free elections in 1991), but the result was not as proportional as first assumed, see for example, Kuusela,K., "The Founding Electoral Systems in Eastern Europe 1989-91", in Pridham,G., & Vanhanen,T., (eds) (1994), especially pp.130-135. The electoral law for the May 1993 elections introduced a 5% threshold, or 8% for a coalition of parties, which led to electoral alliances and party mergers. This reduced the number of parties in the Sejm and left 35% of electorate unrepresented, see Enriquez,C.G., "Electoral Behaviour in Central and Eastern Europe" \textit{Politicka Revue}. to be published (Cevres 96/97).)
In comparison, Hungary's parties were more stable entities. The Hungarian parties appeared uniquely as consolidated political parties for the first free elections of 1990. Although some factionalism took place within the parties, the six parliamentary parties of the 1990 legislature continued in their basic form to contest the elections of 1994. This was partly due to the party nomination process and electoral system, which, although complex, tended to discourage small minority parties and parliamentary factionalism.\footnote{For comments on the electoral system see Racz, B., "The 1990 Elections in Hungary", \textit{Soviet Studies}, Vol.43, No.1 1991, pp.107-136 and for effects of the electoral system on the parties see Hibbing, J., & Patterson, S., "The Historic Hungarian Elections of 1990". \textit{Comparative Political Studies}, Vol.24, No.4 January 1992 especially pp.440-453.}

Also important - despite aggressive electoral campaigning in the run up to the first elections - was the willingness on the part of the political elite to make compromises over constitutional matters for the sake of stability.\footnote{See Ilonszki, G., "Tradition and Innovation in the Development of Parliamentary Government in Hungary", \textit{Journal of Theoretical Politics}, Vol.5, No.2. April 1993, pp.253-265.} In both Poland and Hungary "oppositionists" defeated reformed communists and formed government coalitions in the first post-communist legislative periods. However, by the second free elections, reformed communists regained their electoral strength and formed new governments (Hungary 1994 and Poland 1993). Despite the marginalisation of former communist parties from political power immediately after 1989, they were to successfully reorganise and "reinvent" themselves within a short time period (as we shall see in the second part of this chapter).

A Bulgarian opposition "front" also managed some electoral success immediately after 1989. However, it was not until the second free election of October 1991 that the Union of Democratic Forces (UDF) formed a government, and the party's influence was relatively weak and short-lived. Like Polish opposition forces, UDF factionalism did not assist in producing stable governments. Additionally the Bulgarian anti-communist bloc did not obtain a substantial majority in the assembly. In Romania the anti-communist opposition had difficulty in competing against the NSF, and it took from 1990 to 1996 for an electoral force to become strong enough to form an alternative government.

There are many reasons for these differences between the countries including the impact of electoral systems, electoral behaviour as well as ideological and institutional aspects.
Detail of these aspects will not be addressed here.\textsuperscript{307} Although relevant points will be mentioned as appropriate, the main purpose of this chapter is to discern the patterns of difference in party development by comparing the two cases.

\textbf{Traditional Political Parties}

In all four countries some traditional political parties - or parties pertaining to have historic roots - were reformed to compete in the first free elections. Despite their historic identity none did well initially in terms of percentage vote, although several survived as coalition partners in government.

Some of the oldest political parties of the region were the social democratic parties. In all except Bulgaria they did poorly in the first post-communist elections mainly because of their association with the communists; their forced absorption into communist parties or popular fronts during the communist take-overs of the 1940s discredited them. The most notable traditional parties to re-emerge during the post-communist period were Christian and peasant parties.

\textbf{Poland and Hungary}

In Poland, the particular circumstances of the first elections of 1989 and the Solidarity victory - which acted as a referendum on communist rule - left little room for the

\textsuperscript{307} There is substantial literature on aspects such as the influence of electoral systems on party formation, party political fortunes, and political culture. See for example, previously mentioned texts in footnote 4; Simon, J., "Electoral Systems and Regime Change", \textit{Representation}, Vol.35, Nos 2 & 3, Spring/Autumn 1998, especially pp.44-50; and Meyer, G., "The Socialists' Rise to Power and the Democratization of Political Cultures in East-Central Europe", in Los-Nowak, T., Armstrong, D., (eds) (1997) \textit{Emerging Conceptions of Democracy in Transition Europe}, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wroclawskiego, Wroclaw. However, the details of such influences are only partially relevant to the patterns of difference which are discernable here. Just as political institutions do not follow any pattern between the cases, so electoral systems are different in each country. This is not to say that the choice of political institutions and electoral systems had no effects, but that their relevance appears relatively insignificant to the argument presented here.
resurgence of traditional parties.\textsuperscript{308} The "satellite" parties: the Peasant party (ZSL), Democratic Party (SD) and three Catholic groupings were guaranteed seats alongside the communists under the round table agreement whereby 65\% of seats were uncontested (the ZSL got 16.5\% of vote). By the 1991 elections much of the political spectrum had attempted to establish links with traditions of the inter-war era. Yet, there were few with any clear linkage to parties of the inter-war or early post-war period. This fact was partly due to the proliferation of parties and the continual splits, mergers, alliances and further splits within various movements, party blocs and political camps.

One "historic" community which provided potential support for a revived party was the peasant population. The peasants were a potential source of unified support, becoming one of the most disaffected groups in society in 1991. However, apart from a re-established peasant party, few parties vying for the agrarian vote could claim a clear connection to Wito's inter-war peasant party and the post-war party of Mikolajczyk.\textsuperscript{309} It was the Polish Peasant Party (PSL) - mainly consisting of the successor to the United Peasant "satellite" (ZSL) - which became the leading agrarian party. The PSL had the advantage of an organisational structure inherited from the communist period, and although it had a lower membership than Rural Solidarity, retained a disciplined following. The Democratic Party, the other main "successor" party, received less than 2\% of the vote and gained 1 seat in the Sejm (see Table 5.1 below).


\textsuperscript{309} The Polish Peasant Party "Wilanow" reestablished in 1989 merged with the successor to the communist satellite (ZSL) in 1990. By the spring of 1991 several peasant parties (including rural movements associated with Solidarity) agreed a common programme. However the coalition broke down and two electoral peasant alliances contested the 1991 elections: the PSL-Programmatic Alliance (which included the Union of rural Youth and the network of Rural Circles) and the Peasant Accord (PL) which consisted mainly of the Solidarity movement. See Millard,F., (1993) p.843; and Rivera,S.W., "Historical Cleavages or Transition Mode? influences on the Emerging Party Sytems in Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia." \textit{Party Politics}, Vol 2 No.2 1996, pp.177-208, Sage Publications, notes to Appendix Table A2.

For claims to traditional credentials, especially of the Right, see for example Macdonald,O., "The Polish Right". \textit{Labour Focus on Eastern Europe}, No.2, 1990 pp.17-23.
The PSL became one of the most stable groups in the Sejm. The party headed three ministries in the Mazowiecki government and was reformed and vigorously "cleansed" of its communist affiliations between 1990 and 1991. It gained 48 seats in the 1991 elections to become the fourth largest parliamentary group. Peasant party leader, Waldemar Pawlak, became the third nominee after Mazowiecki for Prime Minister, but was unable to form a coalition at that time. In the 1993 elections the PSL held the second largest number of parliamentary seats and became coalition partner to the reformed communist government with Pawlak as Prime Minister. However by the 1997 elections the PSL saw its support in the countryside collapse.

Table 5.1 Polish Elections

Sejm Election 1989

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Sejm Seats</th>
<th>Percentage Vote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PUWP</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>37.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Peasant Party (ZSL)</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>16.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Party (SD)</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian Groups</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solidarity</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>35.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Sejm Election 1991

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Sejm Seats</th>
<th>Percentage Vote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Union (DU)</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>12.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliance of the Democratic Left (SLD)</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>11.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic Election Action (WAK)</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>8.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centrum</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>8.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peasant Party-Programmatic Alliance (PSL)</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>8.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confederation for Independent Poland (KPN)</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>7.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal Democratic Congress (KLD)</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>7.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PL</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>5.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solidarity</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>5.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends of Beer</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German Minority</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Sejm seats 460.
18 other parties were represented in the Sejm with between 1 and 5 seats, all having less than 3% of the vote.
13 parties were represented in the Senate with the Democratic Union receiving the highest number (21 seats).

### Sejm Election 1993

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Sejm Seats</th>
<th>Percentage Vote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SLD</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>20.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSL</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DU</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour Union</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KPN</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Part Bloc (BBWR)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German Minority</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9 other parties (including Solidarity, KLD and PL) did not receive enough votes to provide them with seats, leaving some 35% of the electorate unrepresented. In the Senate election the SLD and PSL were the most successful with 37 and 36 seats respectively. Solidarity received 10 seats, the Democratic Union 4, and 13 seats went to other parties.
Source: Keesings Archives. September 1993, p.39644; and Rivera, S.W., (1996) p.199
Sejm Election 1997

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Sejm Seats</th>
<th>Percentage Vote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Solidarity Electoral Alliance</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>33.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLD</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>27.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom Union</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>13.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSL</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movement for the Reconstruction of Poland</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German minority</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Solidarity Electoral Alliance also received the most seats in the Senate (51), SLD had 28 seats, and other parties 8 seats or less.
Source: Keesings Archives, Vol.43, No.9, September 1997, p.41832

Unlike Poland, two parties with historic roots were initially prominent in Hungary. First of these was the Christian Democratic People's Party (CDPP). This was the successor to the strongly anti-communist Democratic People's Party formed after the Second World War. It was reformed in June 1989 by politicians who had been members of the party before the communist take-over. The party remained relatively stable from its formation, and its membership and local activity grew steadily from 1989. The second traditional party was the Independent Smallholders Party (FKGP). Reformed in November 1988, the party's origins go back to the beginning of the century. It was also the largest party immediately after World War II. The reformed party was the first to organise supporters at the local level and by the end of 1990 claimed a membership of between 60,000 to 70,000. The parliamentary party was subject to a number of factional conflicts and defections. As a result, the FKGP had a poorer electoral showing in 1994. Both these traditional parties became coalition partners in government with the Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF) in 1990, and went into opposition after the reformed communists won an overall majority in 1994 (see Table 5.2 below)

### Table 5.2 Hungarian Elections

#### Parliamentary Election 1990

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Seats</th>
<th>Percentage Vote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF)</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>24.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliance of Free Democrats (SzDSz)</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>21.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Smallholders Party (FKGP)</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>11.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarian Socialist Party (MSP)</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>10.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliance of Young Democrats (Fidesz)</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>8.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDPP</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>6.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agrarian Alliance</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independents</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint Candidate</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Seats represent the total number of seats won in single-member districts, and on regional and national lists. Percentage Vote represent the national share of votes. Source: Rivera, S.W., (1996) p. 201

#### Parliamentary Election 1994

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Seats</th>
<th>Percentage Vote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MDF</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>11.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SzDSz</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>19.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FKGP</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>8.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSP</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>32.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fidesz</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>7.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDPP</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>7.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agrarian Alliance</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Rivera, S.W., (1996) p. 201
Bulgaria and Romania

There were four parties in Bulgaria which existed prior to communism which were re-established in the post-communist period: the Democratic Party, the Radical Democratic Party, The Bulgarian Social-Democratic Party (BSDP) and the Bulgarian Agrarian National Union-Nikola Petkov (BZNS-NP). The latter two were the most significant and the largest formations in the Union of Democratic Forces (UDF) in 1990. However, by the elections of 1991, major factions of these parties had left the UDF and failed to receive a significant percentage of the vote. Like Poland, agrarian parties in Bulgaria had a strong heritage. The Bulgarian Agrarian National Union (BANU) was particularly significant in the inter-war period, producing the historic Stamboliiski government of the early 1920s. BANU also retained a token existence during communism which gave it a nation-wide organisation; an advantage denied other emergent Bulgarian parties in early 1990. Additionally - like the Polish agrarian movement - the agrarians were subject to a number of factional disputes, splits and further fusions, which resulted in a fragmented movement with seven parties and coalitions claiming to be heirs to the original BANU. By the December 1994 elections one faction, BANU "A. Stamboliiski", was part of the Bulgarian Socialist Party (BSP) coalition which won a resounding victory, one faction remained in the UDF, whereas the other major factions disappeared from the legislature (see table 5.3 below).

311 Aleksandur Stamboliski's Peasant Union ruled Bulgaria from October 1919 to June 1923. Stamboliski purported to represent the peasantry and one of his main achievements was an egalitarian land reform. However, his methods - and that of his Orange Guard - were often brutal, and he and his active supporters were wiped out in a bloody military coup in 1923. See Bideleux, R., & Jeffries, I., (1998) pp.453-454.

Table 5.3 Bulgarian Elections

Constituent Assembly Election June 1990

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Seats</th>
<th>Percentage Vote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BSP</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>47.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UDF</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>36.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MRF</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>6.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BANU</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Parliamentary Elections October 1991

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Seats</th>
<th>Percentage Vote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BSP</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>33.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UDF</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>34.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MRF</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>7.55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All other parties received less than 4% of the vote. Source: Karasimeonov, G., "The Legislature in Post-Communist Bulgaria", in Olsen, & Norton, (eds) (1996) p.49

Parliamentary Elections December 1994*  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Seats</th>
<th>Percentage Vote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BSP*</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>43.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UDF</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>24.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Union</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MRF</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgarian Business Bloc</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4.72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Results for major parties from 40 registered.  
*BSP in coalition with BANU A. Stamboliski and Political Club for Ekoglasnost.  
Parliamentary Elections April 1997

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Seats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UDF</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Left</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union for National Salvation</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coalition Euro-Left</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgarian Business Bloc</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The UDF coalition comprises the Union of Democratic Forces (DS); the Democratic Party (DP); the Bulgarian Agrarian People's Union (BZNS); and the Bulgarian Social Democratic Party (BSDP). The Democratic Left Bloc consists of the BSP and the Ecoglasnost Political Club. The Union for National Salvation comprises the Turkish bloc; Movement for Rights and Freedoms alongside smaller monarchist and centrist groups.

Source: *Keesings Archives*, Vol.43, No.4, April 1997, p.41604

Two historic parties emerged by January 1990 in Romania to contest National Salvation Front (NSF) dominance. The National Liberal Party (NLP) and the National Peasant Party (NPP) were hastily reconstituted from the remnants of their pre-communist equivalents. Unlike Bulgaria, there was no "satellite" organisations, or continuity of membership to sustain either party during communist rule. The ruthless communism of the early post-war years and decades of state propaganda totally discredited their attempts to associate themselves with their inter-war predecessors. For many poorly educated rural people the inter-war period was remembered as a time of exploitation by rural landlords and urban capitalists. In consequence many people were disinclined to vote for parties stressing their "historic" affiliations. The NLP no longer had an entrepreneurial electorate and the peasant party had difficulty in appealing to what should have been its natural social base. Neither the rural population nor the urban "worker-peasant" appeared to associate with parties that urged individuality or independence from the state. Like many other new or renewed parties of the region factionalism became a feature of party development. Internal rivalries between returning émigrés and resident activists, low membership and lack of popular appeal served to diminish initial hopes that they would regain a leading role in national politics.

313 in 1991 the NPP added the suffix Christian Democrat to become the NPP-CD
In the first post-communist elections of May 1990 neither "historic" party made any significant inroads into the electoral scene (see Table 5.4 below). The failure to agree a common opposition candidate for the Presidency or a common list for the two houses of parliament did not assist their campaign. After the elections internal dissension and mutual recriminations led to splits in the parties.\textsuperscript{315} By the time of the February 1992 local elections, the two historic parties ran on the joint lists of the Democratic Convention (DCR). This alliance of groups included several other parties and associations which ran in opposition to the NSF (see New Political Parties below). Despite a strong showing for the DCR in the local elections, the NLP withdrew from the DCR for the national elections of September 1992.\textsuperscript{316} The NLP had already participated in the caretaker government of October 1991 to October 1992, headed by the independent technocrat Theodor Stolojan. Several NLP deputies took ministerial portfolios, but could do little to alter policy. This alternation between opposition and tacit co-operation with the NSF did little to enhance the party as a focus for popular protest, and contributed to the final break up of the party. The NPP-CD was less prone to splits and remained more strongly associated and allied to a democratic opposition. However, neither party was able to win significant electoral support as independent parties.

One further phenomenon peculiar to Bulgaria and Romania was the popularity of monarchist parties. Although the monarchist parties did not gain significant electoral support, the visit of Michael to Romania in 1992 and Simeon to Bulgaria in 1996 were significant events for much of the population. The exiled monarchs popularity caused considerable political concern and in Romania, Michael was regarded as a threat to the ruling socialists.\textsuperscript{317}

\textsuperscript{315} see Almond,M., "Romania Since the Revolution", \textit{Government and Opposition}, Vol.25, 1990, pp.484-496
Table 5.4 Romanian Elections

Parliamentary Election 1990: Assembly of Deputies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Seats</th>
<th>Percentage Vote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Salvation Front (NSF)</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>66.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarian Democratic Union of Romania (HDFR)</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>7.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Liberal Party (NLP)</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>6.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania Ecological Movement</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Peasant Party (NPP)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliance for United Romania</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Agrarian Party</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romanian Ecological Party</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romanian Socialist</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Party</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Democrat Party</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Group of the Centre</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7 other Parties received one seat each and less than 0.38% of the vote.

Parliamentary Elections 1990: Senate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Seats</th>
<th>Percentage Vote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NSF</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>67.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDFR</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NLP</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPP</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romanian Ecological Movement</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliance for a United Romania</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Agrarian Party</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania Ecological Party</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romanian Social Democratic Party</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The NSF won 91 seats in the Senate election; the HDFR 12; the NLP 10; with 5 other parties gaining 1 or 2 seats.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Seats</th>
<th>Percentage Vote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democratic National Salvation Front (DNSF)</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>27.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Convention (DCR)</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>20.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSF</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>10.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party of Romanian National Unity</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>7.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDFR</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>7.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Romania Party</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialist Party of Work</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The DNSF won 49 seats in the Senate election; the Democratic Convention 34; the NSF 18. Five other parties were represented in the Senate with between 5 and 18 seats.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Seats</th>
<th>Percentage Vote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DCR</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>30.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party of Social Democracy in Romania (PSDR)</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>21.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Democratic Union</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>12.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HDFR</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>6.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Romania Party</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>4.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party of Romanian National Unity</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4.36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition 15 minority organisations each received a seat.

In the Senate elections the DCR received 53 seats; the PSDR 41 seats; Social Democratic Union 23 seats; HDFR 11 seats; Greater Romanian Party 8 seats and Party of Romanian National Unity 7 seats.

In all four countries traditional parties had difficulty in mobilising significant support. Several reasons are suggested for the difficulties encountered by historic parties in successfully re-establishing themselves after a period of authoritarianism. The effectiveness of repression and length of time an authoritarian regime has been in power being two main causes put forward. However, in the two cases examined here there are similarities across the cases, rather than differences between the cases as might be expected if more or less suppression were a major factor. In Poland and Bulgaria "successor" agrarian parties were favoured over other traditional formations. This was partly due to the peasant parties ability to maintain organisational links and social bases as "satellites" under communism. In Romania and Hungary traditional forces attempted re-establishment with moderate success. However, it was only in Hungary that traditional parties remained established as separate parties. This appears to be as much to do with the relatively early consolidation of all post-communist political parties as separate entities in Hungary, rather than any specific legacies associated with the traditional parties themselves.

New Political Parties

A large number of new political parties emerged to compete in the post 1989 elections, only the most significant will be examined here. In Poland the unity of Solidarity in the semi-free elections of June 1989 soon factionalised. The Solidarity Civic Parliamentary Club (OKP), formed out of the 161 seats won by Solidarity and the Citizens' Committees, involved a number of personalities and political identities which were submerged during the initial phase of anti-communist opposition. Once in power these factions re-emerged and new parties appeared. In Hungary opposition factions had already formed into specific parties by the first elections of 1990, and continued a relatively cohesive formation. In Bulgaria and Romania opposition parties gained electoral strength as "umbrella" organisations. Although containing identifiable political parties, these organisations were more reminiscent of pre-1989 opposition movements in Poland and Hungary than of developed political parties.

The underlying factionalism of the Solidarity camp came out into the open almost immediately after the 1989 election. After weeks of confusion over the balance of forces in the Sejm, the election of Jaruzelski as President in July (agreed at the Round Table negotiations) established the opposition as a political power.\textsuperscript{319} However, Solidarity's role as an integrating force alongside the conditions of the first elections which led to an emphasis on unity, retarded the development of opposition parties. When the political context was unexpectedly changed by the overwhelming Solidarity victory in June 1989 and the formation of the Mazowiecki government in August, a gradual splitting of the movement began. Within a year at least five main factions had emerged within the OKP. The most significant political parties to emerge from the Solidarity movement were: the Democratic Union (DU) which began as an electoral alliance in support of Mazowiecki's presidential candidacy in 1990; the Congress of Liberal Democrats (KLD), which originally emerged from the entrepreneurial wing of Solidarity in Gdansk led by Bielecki (who became Prime Minister in January 1991); the Centre Democratic Accord (or Centrum), originally conceived as a coalition to support Walesa's bid for the presidency; the Christian National Union (ZChN), a clerical party which became the major force behind Catholic Election Action (WAK); and finally the Solidarity peasant movement.

One other significant group emerged from the Solidarity left-wing: the Union of Labour. Initially in 1991 - as Labour Solidarity - the party did not do well, receiving only 4 seats in the Sejm. By the 1993 election the new party - Union of Labour, launched in 1992 by Ryszard Bugaj - won 41 seats (see table 5.1). The new party was an attempt to overcome the divisions of post-Solidarity and post-communist groupings. It contained people from a variety of backgrounds including the Social Democratic movement, the Labour Solidarity association and former activists who began the disintegration of the PUWP.\textsuperscript{320} Membership of the party grew considerably, especially in the towns and cities. Its liberal socialist economic programme and anti-SLD tendency gaining electoral support from those

\textsuperscript{319} for details of the first election and political manoeuvring see Barany, Z., & Vinton, L., "Breakthrough to Democracy: Elections in Poland and Hungary", Studies in Comparative Communism, Vol.XXIII, No.2, Summer 1990 pp.191-212

\textsuperscript{320} See Union of Labour Statement and interview with Ryszard Bugaj, in Labour Focus on Eastern Europe, No.2 1992. pp.34-36
concerned about such issues as unemployment. A further electoral force which emerged to contest the 1991 elections from the anti-communist opposition, but outside the Solidarity movement, was the Confederation for an Independent Poland (KPN). This was an old dissident party founded in 1979, and apart from some minor divisions remained basically the same from its establishment.

Amongst these new parties only the DU was to gain the most significant electoral success in the 1991 elections, and by the 1993 elections was the main post-Solidarity grouping to retain seats in the Sejm. In many ways the opposition's internal divisions could be traced back to the establishment of the basic movements, such as the KOR (see previously in Chapter 3). However, there was little direct continuity of identity or personnel within the post 1989 political parties. Most of the new parties emerged out of disputes within the Solidarity elite over different strategies for reform. Additionally there was conflict over access and occupation of leadership positions both within the parties and for government positions.

Institutional conflict only added to the strains between opposition factions. Walesa's "war at the top" and decision to create his own Non-Party Bloc (BBWR) for the 1993 elections produced further tension as party factions not only competed for power in the Sejm, but were also in conflict over the electoral system, presidential-parliamentary and central-local power relations. These conflicts contributed to difficulties in forming and maintaining government coalitions, slow policy output, a confused and dissatisfied electorate, and the final ousting of opposition parties from government at the 1993 parliamentary elections.

In contrast to the confusing Polish situation, the Hungarian anti-communist opposition had consolidated their identities and resolved their main constitutional and institutional differences during the Round Table negotiations and subsequent run up to the elections (see previously in Chapter 4). Three new parties were formed prior to the first free elections. Rooted in the late 1980s "inside" opposition movements the Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF), the Alliance of Free Democrats (SzDSz) and the Young

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322 As already mentioned the Union of Labour won 41 seats - a significant gain from 1991.
Democrats (Fidesz) were able to present a clear choice to the electorate in 1990 (see previously in Chapter 3 for more detail of their formation).

The MDF was initially strongly linked to the reform wing of the communist party (the party's first president, Zoltan Biro, was in fact a reformed communist). Under Jozsef Antall (who became president of the party in October 1989 the party distanced itself from the more radical democratic opposition, became overtly anti-communist and attempted to move away from its populist, nationalist and rural roots towards a more European Christian Democratic orientation. A successful "catch-all" formula appeared to have been found to appeal to a wide cross section of the population for the 1990 elections where the party gained the most seats. However, different political platforms did emerge within the parliamentary party, and several MDF members "crossed the floor". The largest breakaway was by Istvan Csurka's extremist right-wing faction in 1993, to form the Hungarian Justice and Life Party. Csurka's convictions were backed by many in the MDF, although less popular with the general population. 323 The faction created increasing tension within the MDF, but it was not until 1992 that Antall finally distanced himself and the government from this group. As a result of defections, the MDF's parliamentary party was reduced from 164 members in 1990 to 134 in the late summer of 1993. 324 Antall's unchallenged authority as party leader and prime minister - until his death in December 1993 - maintained stability within the party. However the government came under increasing attack for unpopular policies from autumn 1990 onwards and in the 1994 elections the MDF won only 37 seats. 325 In March 1996 the party experienced a further split, with a liberal group of deputies breaking away to form the Hungarian Democratic People's Party (MDNP) reducing the number of seats the Forum occupied in parliament to 19. By the 1998 elections the party was reduced to 17 parliamentary seats.

323 Csurka's anti-semetic, ultra-nationalist and populist rhetoric had marginal appeal, but helped to create a hostile, anti-communist atmosphere. For details of the Hungarian Right see Berend,I., "Jobbra At! [Right Face] Right Wing Trends in Post-Communist Hungary", in Held,J., (ed) (1993) pp.105-134
325 Social unrest in Hungary was relatively minor. However when the government unexpectedly increased the price of petrol in October 1990 taxi-drivers and other transport workers blockaded roads for three days.
The second major new political party in Hungary was the Alliance of Free Democrats (SzDSz). Rooted in the urban intellectual dissident movement of the 1980s it was launched as an umbrella organisation (the Network of Free Initiatives), and became a campaigning political party in October 1989. Initially an elite grouping of intellectuals, it quickly became an aggressive opposition and was transformed into a popular political force by its successful campaign to block presidential elections through a referendum (see above in New Institutions). In the first round of the 1990 elections the SzDSz was neck and neck with the MDF, but lost out considerably to the Forum in the second round, finally taking second place with a relatively poor 91 seats. The party's political manoeuvring to place itself on the right of the political spectrum as a democratic opposition party failed as the MDF moved closer to the right and outwitted the SzDSz at its own game. As the largest opposition party of the 1990 to 1994 legislature, the party was compensated for national electoral defeat with the election of Arpad Goncz as President, and electoral gains in major towns and cities in the local elections of October 1990.

The third major anti-communist party, Fidesz, also made significant gains in the first local elections and proved to have strong popular appeal with younger urban based members of the public. A radical and liberal organisation, Fidesz originally set an age limit of 35 for its members, while its representatives wore jeans to parliament. This "alternative" image was subsequently moderated. The inability of the party to win many seats in parliament (21 in 1990 and 20 in 1994) or willingness to co-operate with their most obvious potential partners, the SzDSz, led to a re-orientation of the party. Fidesz drifted ideologically towards the centre and the liberal national wing of the MDF, while some prominent founding members of the party (notably Gabor Fodor) left the party and joined the SzDSz. Despite an apparent loss of direction and support in 1994, by the 1998 elections the party superseded the other two former opposition parties gaining the largest number of seats. The antagonism and independence of the separate anti-communist parties in Hungary created a situation in which any alliance against the reformed communists was difficult. In consequence, the MDF - who did not have an outright majority in 1990 - formed a centre-right coalition with the two historic parties (CDPP and FGKP). In the 1994 elections the


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SzDSz gained second place once again and despite the MSP's ability to govern alone, and the SzDSz's former oppositional stance, the MSP and SzDSz formed a coalition government.  

*Bulgaria and Romania*

In Bulgaria and Romania the anti-communist opposition was less successful in the first free elections than their Polish and Hungarian counterparts. Neither country developed strong opposition movements prior to 1989 and this was reflected in the poor organisational development of new political parties. Bulgarian opposition fared better than its Romanian counterpart during the first free elections. The Bulgarian Union of Democratic Forces (UDF) established itself as a relatively strong electoral force quite quickly. In Romania the Democratic Convention (DCR) was less successful in challenging the reformed communists in the early stages of post-communist politics. The maintenance of control by the communist and reformed communist parties during the initial period of political change severely restricted "opposition" party development in both cases.

In Bulgaria the UDF began as an anti-communist bloc, similar to Solidarity and the OKP parliamentary club in Poland, or the late 1980s Hungarian clubs and circles. However, unlike the Polish and Hungarian movements, the registration of these groups as political parties for the first free elections did little to transform their organisation. The UDF success in the election of 1991 had some similarities with Solidarity's semi-free election victory. An anti-communist bloc formed a government and subsequently suffered internal divisions and defections. However, unlike the Polish case this did not lead to the demise of the anti-communist bloc. The UDF's short-lived term in office and associated inability to produce radical change alongside the ability of the reformed communists to maintain their

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327 FideSz gained 148 seats, the SzDSz 24, and the MDF 17 seats
328 The MSP's rationale for an alliance with SzDSz had as much to do with proving their social-democrat credentials to Western observers as to domestic considerations, although the coalition provided the government with the two thirds majority in parliament required to alter the constitution. See for example, Rady,M., "The 1994 Hungarian General Election". *Representaion*. Vol.32, No.119. Autumn 1994, pp.69-72, especially p.71
strength, contributed to the maintenance of the UDF as a more unified anti-communist political entity.

The UDF functioned very much as a single party despite being a coalition of diverse parties, clubs and movements. On the eve of the 1990 elections the member organisations fell into three main categories: first, the "historic" parties (see above in Traditional Parties); second, a group of new organisations including civil rights groups, reform-minded members of the communist party (the Federation of Clubs for Glasnost and Democracy) and environmentalists (the Green Party and Ekoglasnost); and lastly, organisations representing social groups (such as the Federation of Independent Student's Societies and the trade union body Podkrepa). Several shifts in the composition of the UDF subsequently took place. Four parties which split from the UDF for the 1991 elections failed to gain representation. An attempt to form centrist political forces was difficult in the communism versus anti-communism climate which prevailed at that time.

The UDF's first government required the support of the Movement for Rights and Freedoms (MRF) (see below). This support for the Dimitrov government was withdrawn in November 1992 which brought the government down. In a similar process to that in Poland, conflicts within and between opposition parties, fragmentation or otlyuspi (flake-offs) and shifting coalitions led to government instability. By December 1992 six governments had been formed since the downfall of the communist regime. By 1994 the UDF was left with small insignificant parties as members. Further attempts to fill the centre political space between the reformed communist BSP and the UDF largely failed with only the Bulgarian Business Bloc and National Union gaining seats in the 1994 parliamentary elections. The 1994 elections produced a partial undermining of the bipolar party system, but returned the BSP to power with a substantial majority. The

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332 The National Union's main constituent elements were the Democratic Party and a BANU faction which left the UDF in September 1994. For details of the 1994 elections, UDF factions and new party formations see Karasimeonov,G., "Parliamentary Elections of 1994 and the Development of the Bulgarian Party System", Party Politics, Vol.1, No.4,
previously successful anti-communist stance of the UDF failed to mobilise its former electorate and gave the party a further identity crisis. The coalition has subsequently developed a more centralised structure and has become more like a single political party.\textsuperscript{333}

There were also similarities with Poland regarding added tensions between presidential and parliamentary forces. President Zhelev openly clashed with his own party's 1991-1992 government. This continuous disunity within the UDF between the original leadership and "new" political forces was also evident in the run up to presidential elections in 1996. Petar Stoyanov, deputy chairman of the party defeated the incumbent President Zhelev in a presidential primary in June 1996, ending a long feud between the party and President.\textsuperscript{334} Stoyanov needed to win the presidential election otherwise members of the opposition parties would have been blamed for their non-support of Zhelev. In fact the strategy of a new candidate proved successful as Stoyanov won a resounding victory over his BSP opponent Ivan Marazov in November 1996.\textsuperscript{335}

The Romanian "opposition" did not suffer the same institutional tensions, but had some similarities with the UDF in its original formation. "Historic" parties were part of the initial opposition bloc along with several new party formations. Most notable of the new parties was the Civic Alliance Party (PAC) formed mainly by Bucharest based members of the creative intelligentsia in July 1991, and the Hungarian Democratic Federation in Romania (HDFR) set up in December 1989 (as the Hungarian Democratic Forum of Romania, see more below). The DCR was formed to present a united opposition front for the first local elections. At this time there was particular concern that democratic practice would not prevail when Prime Minister Roman appointed county prefects - many of whom had an active communist past - to help prepare for the local and national elections scheduled for 1992.

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\item For details of UDF development see Waller,M., & Karasimeneov,G., in Lewis P., (ed) (1996) especially pp.153-161
\item See Krause.S., "Opposition Chooses a Single Candidate in Landmark Election Primary". \textit{Transition,} Vol.2, No.15, 26 July 1996, Open Media Research Institute (OMRI) (electronic version)
\item Krause.S., "Petar Stoyanov Elected Bulgaria's President, \textit{Analytical Brief}. OMRI, November 4, 1996
\end{itemize}

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Like the UDF, the DCR suffered from fragmentation and shifting coalitions of parties within the bloc, but presented a united front to the electorate through a rigid anti-communist stance. However, unlike the UDF in the 1991 Bulgarian election, the Romanian opposition was not strong enough to remove the NSF and its associate parties from power in the 1992 elections. The defeat in the elections resulted in splits and new party and coalition formations. A new Liberal party (Liberal Party '93) was formed and initially associated itself with the DCR. In the run up to the 1996 elections more conflict ensued amongst the opposition party leaders over the presidential candidacy. The PAC left the DCR and formed a National Liberal Alliance (ANL) which included the Liberal Party '93, a move which threatened to take away votes from the anti-Iliescu camp. However, the DCR and their presidential candidate Constantinescu were successful in the national elections of November 1996, winning both houses in the assembly and the presidency. The ANL made no significant showing in the elections. Three other opposition parties which entered the assembly were all organised on ethnic or national lines.

In both Romania and Bulgaria national minority parties were significant political groupings. In Bulgaria the party of the Turkish minority - the Movement of Rights and Freedoms (MRF) - found itself holding the balance of power in the assembly after the 1991 elections. Initially the party aligned itself with the UDF allowing the opposition to form a government. However, the party derived little advantage for the Turkish population from this alliance, and later shifted its support to the non-party - but BSP supported - Berov government. In Romania, the HDFR was initially allied to the DCR, and was a significant and relatively stable component. In 1992 it was not the Hungarian party which held the balance of power in Romania, but the ultra-nationalist Greater Romanian Party (GRP) and Party of Romanian National Unity (PRNU). Both the Turkish and Hungarian minority parties lost support in subsequent elections (in the Turkish case partly due to breakaway factions after 1992). However, it is significant that both minorities felt the need to establish

336 See Shafir, M., "Romania's "Different" Presidential Candidate: Nicolae Manolescu", Analytical Brief, OMRI Net, August 13, 1996,
338 These three parties were the HDFR, Greater Romania Party (GRP) and Party of Romanian National Unity (PRNU) (see more below in the following sections). The HDFR and Petre Roman's Social Democratic Union (SDU) were coopted into the DCR government.

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political parties based on ethnic identity. Both ethnic groups suffered persecution and
discrimination under communist rule, and during post-communism both groups were
subject to accusations of autonomist tendencies, rather than being seen as movements for
the protection of minority rights. This is especially the case for the Hungarian minority in
Romania, where Romanian ultra-nationalists proved to have considerable political
salience.339

The Reformed Communist Parties

In all four countries the reformed communist parties initially had difficulty in reorienting
and regrouping themselves after the collapse of communism. This was especially the case
for the Hungarian and Polish parties who were demoralised and confused after the anti-
communist vote of the first semi-free and free elections. The nature of the Bulgarian and
Romanian revolutionary process left former communists with greater organisational
strength and electoral support, yet in all four countries the communists had to make efforts
to "re-invent" themselves.

Poland and Hungary

Despite the initial success of the "opposition" in Poland and Hungary, the reformed
communist parties (whose main successors were the Social Democratic Party of the
Republic of Poland (SdRP) and Hungarian Socialist Party (MSP)) re-emerged relatively
quickly to challenge new and "historic" parties. The Polish SdRP was established at the
final PUWP congress in January 1990, and became the leading member of Democratic Left

339 The PRNU is the Political wing of the extreme-nationalist anti-Hungarian organisation
Vatra Romaneascu (Romanian Cradle) which had electoral support amongst the
"imported" Romanian ethnic element in Transylvanian regions. Along with the nationalist
GRP, the PRNU went into coalition with the NSF after the 1992 elections and both parties
reputedly had strong links with segments of the NSF. See Shafir,M., "The Revival of the
Political Right in Post-Communist Romania", in Held,J., (1993), especially pp.158-166. It
is also notable that 15 minority organisations representing different ethnic minorities each
received seats in the lower house in the 1996 elections. OMRI Net. 10 November 1996.
The SdRP was initially hopelessly compromised by its communist past and found difficulty in appealing to the electorate, as did most Polish parties who attempted to place themselves on the left of the ideological spectrum. By the elections of 1991, the SLD gained 12% of the vote, sending 61 deputies to parliament. By 1993 the electorate were thoroughly disillusioned with "opposition" government attempts to reform the economy, and along with the PSL, the SLD was able to form a new government. In November 1995 an SdPR founder member and chairman of the SLD, Aleksander Kwasniewski, was elected Polish President. Cimoszewicz, who was deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Justice in the Pawlak government (October 1993 to March 1995), was elected Prime Minister in February 1996. In the 1997 elections, the SLD managed to increase its share of the vote, but due to the collapse of the PSL vote and strained relations with its former coalition partner, the SLD accepted defeat.

Similarly the MSP's fortunes revived after their initial defeat in 1990. Formed in October 1989 - following the disbandment of the HSWP - they were initially led by reform communist Nyers, supported by Pozsgay, Nemeth and former foreign minister Gyula Horn. In spite of numerous groupings within the party - ranging from liberal socialism to more radical left-wing trade unionism, the MSP proved to be a stable political formation. The party succeeded in transforming itself into a modern, European social democrat party. Growing disillusionment on the part of the electorate with the MDF coalition government (1990-1994) helped to give the MSP a substantial victory in 1994. Along with their coalition partner (SzDSz), the MSP commanded a two thirds majority in parliament after the 1994 elections.

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340 the SLD was a parliamentary club which contained other post-PUWP factions including the National Trade Union Accord (OPZZ) and was established as an informal alliance in the autumn of 1990 to support the presidential candidacy of Wlodzimierz Cimoszewicz (non-party affiliated).

341 Lewis, P., "Poland's SLD, The Communists who came in from the cold", Labour Focus on Eastern Europe, September-December 1993, pp.29-34

342 It is suggested that the electorate would have been disillusioned with any party in government at that time because the expectations of the electorate were so high, but that the disillusionment was also a result of the government's "false promises". See Winiecki, J., (ed) (1996) Five Years After June: The Polish Transformation, 1989-1994, The Centre for Research into Communist Economies. London, pp.118-119

343 Subsequently Nyers, Pozsgay and Nemeth left the party, and Horn became party leader.
During the 1994 electoral campaign, the MSP were able to exploit the electorate's discontent with their socio-economic conditions. Despite the MDF government's achievements in building a relatively successful market economy; high inflation, rising unemployment and a growing resentment of the new entrepreneurial elite provided much of the electorate with a nostalgia for the security of the old political system. The socialist party's background and organisational structure were also put to good use. They promoted themselves as non-ideological experts who had experience of managing the country in contrast to the amateurism of their rivals. As already mentioned, despite their electoral success, the MSP entered into a coalition with the SzDSz which gave the coalition control of 72% of the seats in parliament. This ensured that all legislation could be passed and left a potentially marginal role for the opposition. The coalition also gave the MSP greater legitimacy. By allowing the SzDSz substantial influence over policy, appointments and draft legislation, and giving the SzDSz some important ministerial portfolios, the MSP could declare itself to be very much part of a post-communist system, satisfying an expressed wish of their supporters and alleviating Western fears of a return to communism. However, the government's commitment to a market economy has meant a loss of support since 1994. Many Socialist voters hoped the party could establish a market economy whilst shielding people from the worst social effects of economic change, which proved to be a difficult task.

Although it is suggested that the electoral systems distorted the former communist victories in Poland and Hungary in 1993 and 1994 elections, and that "opposition" factionalism and fragmentation had its effects in enabling former communists to return to power, it is evident that the early post-1989 marginalisation of the communists enabled a more thorough organisational and ideological reorientation of former communist parties in this case.\textsuperscript{344}

\textsuperscript{344} For a comprehensive discussion of factors enabling former communists to return to power in Poland and Hungary in 1993 and 1994, see Meyer, G., "The Socialists' Rise to Power and the Democratization of Political Cultures in East-Central Europe", in Los-Nowak, T., & Armstrong, D., (eds) (1997) pp.33-56
Bulgaria and Romania

Unlike other communist parties of the region, the Bulgarian Communist Party preserved a certain continuity with its communist past including its social base, organisation and leadership, whilst adapting to the new post-communist situation. The party changed its name to the Bulgarian Socialist party (BSP), revised its ideology and lost some of its assets, including workplace organisation, but kept intact much of its former organisational strength through "clubs of interest". Although abandoning democratic centralist practices it maintained a hard-core, widely spread membership, a body of professional organisers, and also attracted a loyal number of young party workers. After the 1990 elections the party was relatively successful in integrating the UDF into the political system whilst keeping hold of the major levers of power. The parties maintenance of political power from 1989 to 1991 also gave the party time to put the communist's financial assets into new companies and develop the reformed party's own financial concerns. Even with the loss of political control in the parliamentary elections of 1991 (by a very slim margin), and especially after the fall of the UDF government in 1992, the BSP was able to use its parliamentary position to counter anti-communist policies.

These factors were no doubt an advantage for the BSP, and assisted their electoral and political strength. By the 1994 elections the BSP won a landslide victory. The party was able to capitalise on the disappointment with the reform process, mostly associated with the UDF. Like the Hungarian MSP, it was able to appeal to the people who were suffering the negative consequences of economic reform. However, the BSP's electoral prospects were to be seriously reduced by similar, if not more severe, pressures than those experienced by the UDF government. In 1996, the original socialist candidate for the presidential elections - Pirinski - who was a popular choice, and considered a front runner, was declared ineligible to run for President because he was not born in Bulgaria. A change of candidate alongside the government's failure to deal with the ongoing economic crisis hampered the socialists' chances. A humiliating electoral defeat for the socialists led to calls for premier and party leader Zhan Videnov's resignation, and threats of a split from a

345 See the following chapter; and for example, Waller,M., & Karasimeonov,G., in Lewis,P., (ed) (1996) especially pp.139-140
faction within the party. By December 1996 the BSP administration had collapsed and attempts to form a new government abandoned. Severe political and economic crises led to early general elections in April 1997. The BSP contested the election as part of a Democratic Left Bloc, but received only 58 seats compared to the UDF’s 137.

In comparison to other reformed communist parties, the Romanian NSF was a more unique phenomenon. It professed to be a movement which defended the revolutionary overthrow of the Ceausescu regime, and emphasised an anti-communist stance. However, the make-up and style of the NSF leadership, and the readiness of the NSF to monopolise control over state assets - including radio and television - displayed more continuity with communism than departure from it. The intellectual opposition in Romania certainly saw the NSF as a formation of ex-communists building, at best, a limited democracy in order to preserve power and privileges of a still intact communist establishment.

In a similar fashion to the BSP, the NSF utilised established networks to maintain control of the political system. The NSF also showed a readiness to exploit anti-democratic elements within society, dealing brutally with opposition forces in the early post 1989 period (see previously in Chapter 4), making populist appeals, utilising nationalism for legitimization and attacking opposition as "the enemy within".

Like all post-communist political parties NSF factionalism led to rifts. The most notable was after the local elections of 1992. The NSF was losing its appeal to voters due to austerity measures introduced by the Roman government which were continued under Stolojan. An open breach between Iliescu and Roman (begun when Roman was forced from office in September 1991) culminated in a formal split into two parties. Roman's faction initially retained the NSF name (later becoming the Social Democratic Union). The majority of the parliamentary party became the DNSF which was less a party and more a platform designed to secure the re-election of Iliescu. The ultra-nationalist groupings


347 For example Brucan's communist style statements on pluralism and Iliescu's speeches about Western economies, privatization and international monopolies. See Calinescu, M., & Tismaneanu, V., "The 1989 Revolution and Romania's Future", Problems of Communism, Jan - April 1991. p.52
(mentioned above) also emerged as distinctive forces at this time, rather than movements operating in the shadow of the ruling party. As a result of these splits, alongside disillusionment with the government amongst the electorate, the DNSF lost considerable electoral support in the 1992 national elections. Although it emerged as the largest party, 27.71% of the vote was not enough to enable the party to govern alone. Iliescu retained the presidency and Vacaroiu (a senior civil servant) formed a non-party government sustained by an informal alliance of the DNSF and ultra-nationalists. The latter received considerable political influence as a result of their support. In July 1993 the DNSF changed its name yet again to become the Party of Social Democracy in Romania (PSDR), but remained a patronage party dominated by ex-communist officials.

Even in the 1996 elections the PSDR retained a significant percentage of the vote (21.52%). The DCR had to form a coalition with the HDFR and Roman's SDU in order to govern. Supporters of Iliescu and the PSDR were mainly found in the poorer rural regions of the South and South East. As in Bulgaria it was the less educated rural people who were most likely to retain their support for the former communists, being less inclined to see the need for party competition. Especially in Romania, the years of authoritarian rule were well ingrained. Alternative perceptions of how they could be ruled were slow to develop. Equally the socialist and former communist parties were slower to adapt to the pluralist context and develop social democratic credentials.

5.2 Political Parties and Ideological Representation

It is difficult to generalise about ideology within any political context. This is even more problematic in East-Central Europe in the early post-communist period, when the collapse of Marxism-Leninism left an ideological vacuum, and new and reformed political parties were in a state of flux. It is not the intention here to go into a detailed description of the changing ideological orientations of all political parties and prominent politicians, but merely to emphasise certain trends which can be discerned within and between cases. In all four countries elements of a Western discourse were evident, especially in terms of ideas concerning multiparty democracy and some form of free-market economy. Most

political parties strove to be seen as adopting liberal democratic principles. However, political liberalism was often subdued even amongst so-called liberal, intelligentsia-led parties. It was economic liberalism which permeated many parties, especially those which pronounced themselves to be liberal and pro-western. Some parties did model themselves on contemporary Western parties. There were also a great number of small or marginal groups which adopted extravagant names and promoted peculiar, vague or single issue ends, and many parties which were little known outside their own region or social group. However, many parties attempted to utilise pre-communist traditions in some form, and often utilised a mixture of pre-communist ideology alongside contemporary Western ideas. Although "historic" political parties failed to reassert themselves, the political memory of pre-communist politics provided a foundation for ideological orientation and was available as a basis for political mobilisation.

During the initial phase of post-communist politics, ideological identity was difficult to define. After the initial communist - anti-communist phase, a reorientation of former communist and opposition parties began. However, a Right-Left ideological continuum had little meaning in the new context. In Poland the continuum might be described as "a horse shoe not a horizontal line". Initially, in Poland and Hungary, the "left" was discredited through - what was perceived as - forty years of communist misrule. Although the reformists within the communist parties pre-1989 helped to shape the newly reformed socialist parties, reformed communists and socialists had to reorient and "reinvent" themselves. In Bulgaria and Romania the reformed communists maintained a considerable grip on power and had less need for dramatic "reinvention" in the initial post-1989 context. Equally, and again more specifically in Poland and Hungary, the anti-communist movements which had mobilised populations during the communist and early post-1989 period could no longer rely solely on their "anti" identification in the post-communist context. Yet, a "right" identification was no easier to discern than the "left". In all four countries, traditional and inter-war party identifications were hopelessly outdated. Yet, historic and cultural symbols remained salient. Using comparative examples, the following sections will examine briefly; first, how ideology was reconstructed within a communist

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350 The Western discourse was particularly evident in the promotion of the so-called "Big Bang" approach to economic change. More will be said about this in the following chapter.
versus anti-communist polarisation; and second, how traditional ideas and symbols manifested themselves within the new political context.

Communism versus anti-communism

A communism versus anti-communism polarisation may appear to be an oversimplification in some respects. There was indeed considerable diversity within the communist and anti-communist camps. For example, most communist parties split into several factions; some proclaiming social democratic credentials while others remained explicitly communist. Oppositionists also consisted of many ideological factions, and many former revisionist intellectuals identified themselves with the Left as well as Centre and Right. Yet, in all four countries, an antithesis continued to exist between the former communists and oppositionists to a greater or lesser extent. However, it was in Bulgaria and Romania that this polarisation continued as a prominent means of defining the party system. To examine this dimension the two cases will be compared.

Poland and Hungary

After the first founding elections in Poland and Hungary, the anti-politics of the oppositionist intellectuals no longer held the different strands of opposition movements together. The political discourse, built around concepts of human and political rights, legalism, individual responsibility, personalism and neo-evolutionism was ineffective for producing political programmes to satisfy mass expectations of improved living standards and reformed lifestyles.

351 Professor Ryszard Herbut, Institute of Poltical Science, Wroclaw University, interview with Ruth Rodda, Wroclaw, 2/4/98
352 See for example the Polish context where communists and oppositionists split into many factions. Yet, the SdRP was still identified with the old communist party and even oppositionists such as Adam Michnik were identified with the post-communist left if they attempted to bridge the communist/anti-communist gap. See for example, Walicki, A., "From Stalinism to Post-Communist Pluralism: the Polish Case," *New Left Review* 185, 1991. pp.92-121
In the first Hungarian post-communist parliament, political cultural cleavages of the "anti-communists" were placed around two main sets of ideas. First, the pro-western promoters of the free market who also supported many "liberal" values; the SzDSz and Fidesz were mainly identified with this strand. Second, a more traditional, national-christian and "conservative" camp, which the MDF, Smallholders and Christian Democrat Parties could be identified with.\(^{354}\) Poland's ideological landscape was less easily discerned. Attitudes and values surrounding dimensions of the economy, structure of political power, church-state and nation-civil society were not easily separated within or between parties. The factional nature of Polish politics meant that a "right" stance in one dimension did not necessarily mean a similar approach in another.\(^{355}\) For example, “the electoral manifesto of a christian democratic party might be very conservative, anti-market and sometimes anti-liberal”, but as part of government, their “policy might not be so different from the post-communists....European integration, [for example], is accepted by both parties ”.\(^{356}\)

Despite the attempts within post-communist parties to reorient themselves towards the new political context, anti-communism had its effects. This was especially the case initially in Poland and Hungary for political parties identified with the ideological left. A "left" or social democratic identity was unpopular, and a potential handicap within societies which were attempting to rid themselves of the communist past. In Poland and Hungary all social democratic parties - traditional, new and reformed communist - failed to make a mark in the first round of elections. Similarly any social-liberal tendencies within other parties were hampered by underlying anti-communism at this early stage. For example, in Hungary in the summer of 1989 SzDSz anti-communism could be directed at the MDF who were close to the reform wing of the communist party. The SzDSz consequently focused its campaign on the populist wing of the HSWP and the left of the MDF. However with Antall's leadership, the MDF moved to the right and outwitted the SzDSz at its own


\(^{356}\) Professor Ryszard Herbut, Institute of Poltical Science, Wroclaw University, interview with Ruth Rodda, Wroclaw, 2/4/98
The left was ousted from the MDF and the SzDSz was identified with its left wing past. 357

In Poland too social-liberalism was difficult to sustain initially within the political parties. Attempts to embrace a "left" stance on any issues was accentuated by de-communisation. The Lustration Resolution of May 1992 did not weaken de-communisation as a political issue, and made it more difficult for politicians with any connections or affiliations to the communist regime (including Walesa) to obtain or maintain popularity.

Nevertheless, in Poland and Hungary, the initial wave of anti-communism and support for "opposition" parties soon waned. The shift at elections towards reformed communist parties after 1993 suggests that concern amongst the population for economic performance, social welfare and workers rights overtook any fears of returning to a communist past. 358 Although it was not so important a factor within the parties (because of the continuing difficulties with a left or right identity, especially in Poland), "economic problems formed a main line of polarisation for the electorate by 1993". 359 The social democrat and former communist parties proved to be the most consistent in their political orientations and programmes. They mainly focused on softening processes of change through gradual economic reform and retaining redistributive functions of the state. Their economic and social policies were vote winners to those hard-hit by recession. Consequently their support improved when the first post-communist government's attempts to manage the economy were perceived by the electorate as failing. Although there appeared to be yet another reversal of support in Poland in the 1997 elections when economic improvements

357 Many of the SzDSz leaders had strong Marxist connections, such as Janos Kis, a Lukacs disciple.
358 For example, in 1993 and 1995 millions of Poles voted for the ex-communists to express their opposition to the social costs of shock therapy. See Holland,D., "Dirty Politics in Poland," Labour Focus on Eastern Europe, No.53, Spring 1996, pp.47-52. There is also evidence that many who were economically and socially better off also expressed dissatisfaction with the first reform governments. Psychological factors played a role. Some disliked success because it meant exerting extra effort, something not required under the previous communist system. In Poland, the communalism and subordination of individual interest promoted by Catholicism was also seen as a factor in making pro-capitalist changes harder. See Winiecki,J., "The Reasons for Electoral Defeat Lie in Non-Economic Factors". in Winiecki,J.,(ed) (1996) pp.85-94
359 "although not for the parties" Professor Ryszard Herbut, Institute of Poltical Science, Wroclaw University. interview with Ruth Rodda, Wroclaw, 2/4/98
under the SLD did not appear to be credited to the party. However, the failure of the SLD to retain its position was less to do with Solidarity Electoral Action's appeal to traditional and moral issues, and more to do with loss of votes to the SLD's coalition partner, the Peasant Party. In both Poland and Hungary the former communists retained at least a consistent, if not increasing share of the vote in 1997 and 1998 elections.

Bulgaria and Romania

Bulgarian and Romanian socialists were affected by the same popular perceptions that government had to provide economic improvements alongside a programme of social welfare. However, in Romania and Bulgaria the anti-communist opposition was barely formulated in the early post-communist phase. The political vacuum left by the collapse of the old regimes was easily filled by the reformed communists. Homogenisation of society was much more acute during the communist period, and social divisions amongst the population were relatively indiscernible. Oppositionist intellectuals were fragmented with little or no organisational base. Especially in Romania, they lacked social vision and had little or no contact with any social strata but their own. As a consequence the opposition movements were urban based, often student supported, with little appeal amongst the rural population.

New political parties formed in the run up to the first multi-party elections were often based upon pre-given notions of what political parties should look like, rather than on well defined ideological programmes. Simplistic agendas which promised democracy and a liberal economy without "sweat or tears" were often all that was required to amass votes. The figureheads of communism embodied in the leadership of Zhivkov and Ceausescu

360 The Peasant Party lost votes between 1993 and 1997 from farmers because they blamed the party for the lack of change to the agricultural system, and for the small farmers being the biggest losers during economic reform. Views gathered from Robert Wiszniowski, postgraduate, Institute of Political Science, Wroclaw University, interview with Ruth Rodda, Wroclaw. 2/4/98. For Solidarity Electoral Action's appeal to traditional and moral issues see Bowdler,N., "Solidarity takes 'moral' electoral crusade to Poland's Catholics," The Guardian, September 6 1997, p.6 ; and Mather,I., "Solidarity assumes command," The European, 25 September-1 October 1997, pp.22-23
enabled the reform communists to divert the populations' attention away from the old "party". The reformed communists' ability to focus blame for the past on the old guard communist leadership, alongside their maintenance of control over the political system, aided their own electoral chances.

In addition, in Bulgaria a short time-span between old guard collapse and the first democratic elections made it difficult for a weak, fragmented and poorly funded opposition to organise and advertise itself. In Romania the opposition intellectuals were a small group, at first co-opted by the NSF, and later suffering a similar lack of resources with which to set up opposition parties. In both countries, the perception that the old party-state was being dismantled and encouragement of multipartism by the new reformed communist leadership was often enough to symbolise political change for the mass of the population. Intellectuals and students in Romania soon identified the NSF with the old regime, accusing the party leadership of co-opting the revolution (see previously in Chapter 4). Yet, the electorate were not easily convinced that the opposition could govern, or that an opposition was even necessary.

In the Bulgarian and Romanian case a strong anti-communist trend remained as a cohesive force amongst the opposition. In Bulgaria, anti-communism was virtually all that held the factions of the UDF together during the first four years of post-communist parliamentary relations. In Romania it took six years for politicians to enter into positive debates about down to earth issues such as economic performance, salaries and pensions. In the 1996 Romanian electoral campaign political leaders finally moved away from the moralising themes previously employed, in which the "necessity of a moral process of communism" and the "fight against neo-communism and neo-communists" played important roles.362

In all four countries opposition parties had difficulty in breaking away from an anti-communist mentality. Even in Poland, where the socialists were identified as relatively Western and social democratic, the 1997 election campaign was still couched in

361 In Poland the SLD percentage vote increased from 20.4% in 1993 Sjem elections to 27.1% in 1997. The MSP vote remained approximately the same with almost 33% of the vote in 1994 and 32.3% in the first round of the 1998 parliamentary elections.
communist/anti-communist terms. However, there was far greater ideological diversity within and amongst the parties than the campaign rhetoric might suggest. In Hungary this form of polarisation was less evident; it was acceptable for the "oppositionist" SzDSz to enter into a coalition with their former rivals in 1994.

Political Traditions and Symbols

As the new and reformed political parties began to search for new identities, many traditional and inter-war identifications re-emerged. Religion was never removed from Polish politics, and although suppressed in the pre-1989 period, also became evident in Romania after 1989. In Poland Catholicism played a major role within anti-communism and remained prominent within post-communist politics. In Romania Christian Orthodoxy appeared to provide a substitute for the ideological gap left with the demise of Marxism. For example, in Romania political candidates on all sides displayed their religious feelings in the electoral campaign of 1996. Monarchism was also revived and became a prominent phenomenon in Romania and Bulgaria. However, the most salient notions for the mass of the population appeared to be those which supported ideas of nation.

Nationalism

Nationalism was an underlying ideological force of many political parties, movements and political personalities of the inter-war and early post-communist periods. Indeed, many communist regimes also adopted increasingly nationalistic stands emphasising historic animosities. This was especially the case in Romania, but also evident in Poland, Hungary and Bulgaria. East-Central European nationalism was often seen as only marginally tolerant of ethnic, national or religious diversity at best. At worst it was regarded as xenophobic and anti-Semitic. However, it must also be recognised that this negative

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364 For example, several monarchist organisations existed in Bulgaria, see Troxel, L., "the Political Spectrum in Post-communist Bulgaria," in Held, J., (1993) pp.191-202
perception was partly due to the culture bound Western perception of the "East" as to
differences between Eastern and Western nationalism.365

In all four countries many post-communist political elites relied on traditional national
symbols emphasising such values as national culture, authority and discipline, which also
often involved promotion of the established church. Even the Hungarian MDF - which
under Antall was apparently modelled on a Western christian democrat party - remained
truer to traditional national values than it outwardly professed. More overtly nationalist
parties also emerged amongst the post-communist parties. For example in Hungary, Istvan
Csurka's Hungarian Justice and Life Party (a breakaway faction of the MDF) became
aggressively nationalistic and openly anti-Semitic.

In Poland several strands of nationalism which owed their origins to the inter-war years
could be discerned. For example, the Endecja and Pilsudskite traditions re-emerged within
several new parties. In Poland most parties that displayed nationalism also emphasised a
christian dimension alongside their nationalist ideas and orientations.366 There was also a
trend in which Catholicism was the governing political concept; only Catholics could claim
the right to be Poles and all secular political movements were illegitimate. An important
group representing this authoritarian populist trend was the Christian National Union
(ZChN).

In Bulgaria there was less a revival of inter-war nationalism - which had an outward,
expansionist focus - and more growth in inward looking organisations. Apart from the
party which represented the Turkish minority, the small number of Bulgarian nationalist
movements received little support from the electorate. The main reason for this appears to
be that the Bulgarian socialists co-opted most of the nationalist vote. Continuing the
traditions of the communist party, the BSP ran a national assault on the ethnic Turks and

365 For an interesting discussion of this, and for arguments suggesting it was the
"weakness" of Eastern "nation" that provided salience for Eastern nationalists, see
Chicago & Illinois, especially Chapter 8
366 See MacDonald,O.. "The Polish Right", Labour Focus on Eastern Europe No.2, 1990,
pp.17-23
their party in the 1991 election campaign, and joined a pre-election coalition with several nationalist parties, such as the Fatherland Party of Labour.\textsuperscript{367}

The NSF chose a similar strategy in Romania. In spite of their self-professed centre-left ideological declarations, their promises of social protection were not fulfilled (as we have seen in Chapter 4). In fact the NSF embraced positions far more reminiscent of the Ceausescu period, especially in relation to the Hungarian minority. This was particularly evident in the local elections of 1992, when the NSF ran on joint lists with the extremist PRNU and GRP.

The PRNU and GRP were both radical nationalist parties. The PRNU was a regional party: the political arm of the extreme nationalist anti-Hungarian \textit{Vatra romaneasca}. The GRP was less regional but it was anti-Semitic and anti-Gypsy. It strove to re-evaluate the communist regime's achievements, even promoting a predominantly military government to "safeguard the nation".\textsuperscript{368} Both parties became influential during the coalition with the DNSF after the 1992 national elections. The government was perfectly willing to use and tolerate nationalists who offered simple solutions to complex problems by focusing attention on a range of "internal enemies".

\textit{Populism and Populist Leadership}

Another traditional aspect which re-emerged in various forms was populism, and an associated use of populist symbols and rhetoric by some political leaders. Especially within the Balkan context, populism was often closely associated with nationalism, and a false or pseudo-egalitarianism. Historically, populism helped to unite the nation against real and "unreal" enemies both within and outside the state. After 1989 traditional populism was most prominent in Romania, especially in the immediate aftermath of the December revolution. Iliescu's popularity - mainly amongst the rural population - was based in the

myth of the NSF as "the child of the revolution against Ceausescu." Iliescu consistently promoted the NSF as a product of a popular revolution. The NSF utilised communist methods of misinformation and rumour to mislead the more isolated rural communities into seeing any opposition to the NSF as "counter-revolutionary". The Bulgarian BSP was less explicit in its tactics, but like the NSF was able to appeal to the less educated rural population who were politically apathetic and ideologically disinterested.

In all four countries some political conflicts were based in personal animosities. Traditional values of religion, nation and community were often used to disguise personal bids for power, or to defend personal privileges. For example in Romania, Vatra's rhetoric disguised a number of bureaucrats and officials with a record of manipulating the state to serve their own interests. In Poland, the initial break-up of Solidarity into the Democratic Union and Centre Alliance were by-products of the contest between Mazowiecki and Walesa for the presidency. Much of the apparent ideological divisions between the two camps were a sham. The divisions stemmed from personal and social animosities.

Many of the post-communist political leaders appeared to model themselves on prominent inter-war political actors and espoused populist rhetoric in attempts to enhance their appeal. For example, Walesa appeared to model himself on Pilsudski, and had an authoritarian style reminiscent of the inter-war leader. Walesa's Non-Party Bloc to support Reform also suggested a parallel with a similar bloc set up by Pilsudski in 1927.

Antall also looked to the pre-communist years, seeking to remould the Hungarian system in the spirit of nineteenth century reform statesmen. His role models were Ferenc Deak, Jozsef Eotvos and Count Bethlen. He reputedly embarked on an ideological mission of what he saw as Hungary's main intellectual traditions: populist radicalism, Christian

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369 Almond, M., (1990) p.487
373 See Garton Ash, T., 1990, We the People, Penguin, pp.34-35
democracy and nineteenth century liberalism. His initial political style - as a "compulsive micromanager" of all issues that came before the cabinet - yielded poor results. He retreated into the office of Prime Minister. He attempted to stay aloof from daily politics to protect his image as a national leader. In doing so, he managed to recreate a secretive and unaccountable system reminiscent of Kadar's Central Committee apparat of the 1970s. Some parts of government operated on the bases of top secret executive orders. Despite the government's record of continuing and supplementing the previous reform communist's generous social policies, Antall's popularity declined rapidly after 1991, mainly as a consequence of his style of leadership.

In all four countries elements of pre-war ideology resurfaced to fill the vacuum left by the demise of Marxism-Leninism. Pre-modern values articulated by the more conservative intellectuals and politicians were based in traditions surrounding nation, religion and community. Within some extremist parties national-populism manifested itself as anti-Europeanism. While many traditionalist centre-right parties failed to "Europeanise" internally, reducing their Europeanism to simplicities for the consumption of the less educated masses. The superficial perception of many ordinary people concerning the realities of Western liberalism and capitalism created an opportunity for some populists and nationalists to exploit a moral concern for the selfishness of consumerism and perceived "enemies" of the nation. Especially in Romania and Bulgaria, the rural populations were susceptible to populist rhetoric and traditional leadership symbolism.

Conclusion

The effects of such factors as electoral systems and institutional contexts on political parties and party systems cannot be dismissed. For example, the timing of the semi-free and first free election in Poland, and presidential-parliamentary conflicts played their part in producing the factionalism of the formerly cohesive Solidarity movement. In many respects patterns of difference in party developments were not clear cut, and it remains

376 ibid. p.426
difficult to attribute outcomes to any particular factors. There were many general similarities across the cases, and particular differences within the cases which are not easily explained. However, the type of communist system and differing forms of revolution appeared to contribute to some overall differences between the cases.

In all four countries communist rule virtually eradicated the social bases for traditional political parties. Only the peasant parties retained any residual electorate. Where these parties remained as "satellites" during the communist period - as in Poland and Bulgaria - some continuity from the pre-communist to post-communist period was discernible. Yet, the Hungarian Smallholders Party also re-emerged without communist "satellite" status. The issue of land restitution after 1989, and the populist leadership of Jozsef Torgyan, played a part in providing the party with a support base, and a measure of popularity in the countryside. In Romania the peasant party had little electoral success as a separate independent party. Although the type of communist regime enabled some traditional parties to retain organisational structure and some social linkage, in none of these countries were "historic" parties able to establish any significant electoral success as independent parties after 1989. The only other significant social bases for parties after 1989 were the ethnic minority parties, especially the Turkish and Hungarian parties in Bulgaria and Romania. This might be partly attributed to the persecution of these groups during the communist period.

In all four countries new political parties suffered from factionalism, personal rivalries, and difficulty in defining their ideological identity once the old communist regimes collapsed. However, where the anti-communist organisations were well established prior to 1989 (in Poland and Hungary) new political parties gained the most electoral success in the first post-1989 elections, and were able to form lasting (although not necessarily stable) governments. These parties also encountered the most difficulty in terms of ideological representation as they moved rapidly from anti-communist movements to governing political parties. Poland's party system was the most fluid initially, partly due to the

377 For a discussion of neo-traditionalism and national-populism, and the kinds of parties associated with these ideas, see Agh, A., (1998), especially pp.62-66
original diversity of the Solidarity movement, the particular form of change during 1989, and resulting presidential-parliamentary conflict. Post-1989 "opposition" parties in Poland also reflected the involvement of workers and the grass roots nature of communist opposition, especially in the development of the Union of Labour. Hungary's opposition movements had already formed distinctive groupings by the time of the National Round Table negotiations, and new political party formations reflected these distinctions, and the intellectual and elite roots of Hungarian communist opposition. The more pragmatic form of change during 1989 and early 1990 also aided greater continuity within the party system. In both these countries there were contradictory processes at work. On the one hand the former oppositions were able to form governments and attempt further system change. On the other hand their sudden rise to power created the potential for internal party strife and disagreements over processes of change.

Despite the UDFs early - but short-lived - parliamentary electoral success in Bulgaria, the tendency in Bulgaria and Romania was for anti-communist "bloc" movements to continue well into the post-communist period. The late formation of opposition movements, and the lack of "negotiations" with the communists during 1989 led to a delay in party development processes. On the one hand the new parties lacked resources, and had difficulty in establishing electoral bases of support, especially amongst the rural population. Conversely they did not need to establish individual party identities whilst remaining in opposition to former communists; they could retain a relatively cohesive anti-communist bloc identity.

Again in all four countries the former communist parties were able to retain elements of their past organisational and social links. However, the marginalisation of communists from political power in Poland and Hungary, and the dislocation and partial restructuring of these communist party-states prior to 1989 contributed to more rapid and complete reformation and reorientation of the parties in this case.

Although Bulgaria is something of an interim case, and Romania an extreme case, the more centralised communist states and closer patron-client networks had its effects on former communists. The reformed communist parties did not relinquish their communist identities or move towards social democracy as quickly as their Polish and Hungarian counterparts. The form of political change in 1989, which involved little or no "opposition"
influence, enabled relatively unchanged former communists to retain and utilise much of their organisational and social links from the communist past.

In Bulgaria, the 1994 election saw a partial undermining of the bi-polar party system which emerged from the revolutionary events of late 1989 and early 1990. Yet, a mainly "communist" versus "anti-communist" polarisation remained evident. Similarly in Romania, a mainly bi-polar system emerged. Decline in support for the NSF in elections was not necessarily contingent with a decline in power and central control. The form of revolution in Romania assisted the former communists in maintaining power over the state. The complete lack of organised anti-communist opposition movements in the pre-1989 period, and lack of any real oppositionist participation in the revolution, led to a severe delay in the success of any opposition parties after 1989.

Especially in Romania, populist and nationalist rhetoric was often used at elections with some effect. Many politicians saw traditional and moral issues as a means to appeal to the electorate. However, the remnants of communist structural conditions were often as important as ideological programmes in determining the success or failure of political organisations. Even in Poland and Hungary, despite the handicap of affiliations to the old regime, trade unions which had their basis in communist organisations - such as the Hungarian MSzOSz and Polish OPZZ - retained considerable membership in the early stages of political change. The organisational structure of the reformed communist parties also gave them an advantage against new and historic parties which were often disorganised, and had minimal memberships. This was especially the case in Romania and Bulgaria where the communist structures were dismantled at a slower pace, and where oppositionists lacked resources to promote themselves.

Historic and cultural symbols were certainly significant during opposition to the communist regime. In the euphoria of 1989 and early 1990, spontaneous mass movements, the growth of political organisations and certain events - such as the reburial of Imre Nagy in Hungary - were symbolic of the changes taking place. Events and personalities were identified with the struggle for freedom and democratic rights. However, as the euphoria abated so the effects of this kind of symbolism subsided. For example in Poland, Walesa became a symbolic figure in the struggle against communism. Yet, once censorship was lifted many people saw him as a coarse, uneducated man, unfit to hold Presidential office.
Ideology remained essentially the property of the intellectual and political elite. In fact, for most of the population the complexities of ideological programmes had little appeal. They became more interested in realising their expectations for improved living standards and a free lifestyle. In consequence they responded most positively to those parties perceived as providing economic necessities and protecting social welfare. We now turn to a fuller discussion of economic and social change. These factors need closer examination to fully understand the outcomes of the revolutionary processes.
Chapter 6 Economic and Social Change

All the communist systems were in crisis by the 1980s. Social mobility had slowed, economies were stagnating and in decline. All post-communist regimes had to address the problems of reforming economies, and appeasing societies. Political change during and after 1989 also meant the introduction of economic change, which had inevitable economic and social consequences. Some political consequences of economic change have already been noted (previously in Chapter 4). The differing forms of revolution had some impact as differences in proposals for, and pace of economic change will show. However, the economic bases from which each country began economic reform were also significant. In the short term, rapid economic change created political problems and economic "shocks" in all countries. Yet, economic conditions in 1989 provided very different "starting points" for economic outcomes. These differing bases had the greatest impact in the longer term as Poland and Hungary experienced general economic improvements over and above those of Romania, and especially Bulgaria. Patterns of difference in some aspects of social outcomes are less easily discerned. Yet, here too some differences between the cases can be highlighted. The domination of former communists in Bulgaria and Romania over political and economic reform processes also had an impact on social outcomes. Former communists retained political elite positions, and control over unrestructured, centralised states, which enabled them to manipulate greater benefits from system change. The rest of society in these two countries suffered harsher consequences, appeared to be more politically active, and yet less civil associations developed than in either Poland or Hungary.

This chapter will examine these economic and social outcomes. The initial part of the chapter will describe first, proposed and actual economic reforms; second, the problem of uncompetitive industry, especially with regard to state-owned enterprises and privatisation programmes; and third, the economic consequences of these reforms. The subsequent part of the chapter will outline the main social changes apparent in the early post-1989 period. There are four sub-sections, which examine change amongst the political and economic elites, and the major economic and political consequences of the revolutions for the rest of society.
In the section on economic change a comparison of the two cases will be undertaken. In all four countries new regimes initiated programmes to transform their economies from centrally planned to market economies. Many of the individual requirements for socialist economic reform were faced by developing countries, such as South American or African countries in the 1970s and 1980s. However, these economic transformations were less dramatic than those faced by East-Central Europe. "Under communist rule capitalism was destroyed and not merely suspended or distorted", and the new governments faced a range of serious economic problems in 1989. The four main problems they faced were: 1) the almost total nationalisation of the economy; 2) structural distortions stemming from monopolisation, administrative price regulation and centralised investment decisions; 3) the high level of social spending by the state relative to economic development; and 4) macroeconomic instability stemming from inflationary pressures and growing foreign debt. Additionally (as we have seen in Chapter 2) the decline in Soviet economic power had its effects on East-Central European economies. In the post-communist period a movement away from dependence on former Soviet economic links created economic and political pressures for the East-Central European region. For example, the change in trade patterns after the collapse of CMEA led to greater involvement with West European and American markets, increasing competitive pressures. These external factors will be addressed more fully in Chapter 7. This chapter will focus on internal economic change, and the longer term consequences for each economy.

It is more difficult to compare the cases in the section on social change, due to the lack of available information on relevant aspects of society in Bulgaria and Romania. Therefore a more general approach will be taken in this part of the chapter, while some anecdotal evidence will be utilised to draw out comparisons between the cases where possible. In all four countries the elites were the main benefactors of change, while the rest of society suffered the negative consequences. Some theoretical debates concerning the reproduction and circulation of elites will be addressed within the investigation of social elite change, while the latter aspect will be examined by looking at the growth in economic inequality. This inequality was especially apparent in terms of declining real wages for many sections

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of the population, and was mainly caused by unemployment and inflation. This increase in inequality was a source of discontent for much of society, which in turn put pressure on the post-1989 governments. However, as the section on society and politics will show this discontent did not necessarily result in greater political activity. Despite the euphoria experienced during 1989 and early 1990 many people were relatively passive in their approach to politics. Despite these general similarities across the cases, there were some differences between the cases which can be highlighted.

6.1 Economic Change

In each country new regimes introduced some form of marketisation and privatisation programme, but there was considerable controversy over how these changes were to take place; whether to implement changes quickly (the "Big Bang" or "shock therapy" approach) or whether to take a more cautious approach. There were also significant differences between proposed economic change and actual policy implementation. An inter-related issue was the economic basis from which each country began reform. Restructuring of industry to compete in both internal and external markets was particularly important for long term economic success. Although the initial effects of economic reform were broadly similar in all four countries, the structural conditions in Poland and Hungary in 1989 provided better potential for a more successful economic outcome in the longer term.

Proposals for and Implementation of Economic Reform

All the post-communist governments were essentially committed to replacing command economies with western style market systems. In Poland and Hungary, especially among more liberal intellectuals, the influence of Thatcherism and "neo-liberal" economic ideas was prominent. For example, in Poland many academics studied at Western universities during the early 1980s, uncritically accepting an oversimplified version of liberalism, and were convinced that "the theory and practice of liberalism" would solve the country's problems. It was not until theory was put into practice that disillusion set in. Equally, and probably more important, western cultural influence upon the masses led politicians to
react to economic demands. The main difference in economic reform proposals was in terms of the pace of economic change. As soon as the Mazowiecki government was appointed in Poland, a shock therapy approach to economic change was immediately initiated. Hungary also began to move towards similar marketisation and privatisation programmes, but took a more gradual approach.

Before 1989 in Romania and Bulgaria "Thatcherite ideas" appeared to be "inaccessible ideals" for those living within the Soviet bloc. However, after 1989 the new governments were ostensibly committed to similar economic programmes. Bulgaria was something of an interim case. In some areas, such as price liberalisation, Bulgaria was quite radical. However, in both Romania and Bulgaria actual movement towards a market system was comparatively slower and implementation more piecemeal. The two cases will be compared in order to examine differences in proposals for change and implementation of programmes.

**Poland and Hungary**

In Poland a "shock-therapy" program associated with Deputy Prime Minister, Leszek Balcerowicz was swiftly introduced. The Balcerowicz plan, devised in co-operation with the IMF, was initiated on January 1st 1990. The program aimed to stabilise the economy through eliminating excess demand and reducing inflation. By freeing prices, liberalising trade (which included instantaneous internal convertibility of the zloty) and controlling the money supply, the government intended to move rapidly through the shock of inflation and end consumer shortages. The package also included cuts in government spending and a restrictive incomes policy. During the 1980s the government had already relaxed central control over enterprises, and a 1990 law extended this by providing for the transformation of state enterprises into joint-stock and limited-liability companies. A Privatisation Law

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380 Dr. Adam Chmielewski, Institute of Philosophy, Wroclaw University, interview with Ruth Rodda, 31/3/99.
See also Chmielewski, A.J., "Rationality, Values, Traditions", in Society and Economy in Central and Eastern Europe, Vol.XVII, No.5

381 Dr. George Voicu, Faculty of Political and Administrative Sciences, Bucharest University. e-mail conversation with Ruth Rodda, 20 June 1998
(1990) created a centralised Ministry of Ownership Transformation to oversee a proposed mass privatisation programme.

Hungary considered a gradual approach to economic change more appropriate. Steps towards a market economy had already been implemented. The New Economic Mechanism had already introduced a market type approach to certain sections of the economy (see previously in Chapter 2). For example, prices had been gradually liberalised over the years since 1968, and from 1974 foreign companies were able to establish joint ventures with Hungarian enterprise. Further reforms in the 1980s encouraged private enterprise, joint stock companies and competitive banking. After the 1990 elections the new government accelerated the reforms begun by the communists, and in March 1991, the finance minister, Mihaly Kupa, presented a five year programme for conversion and development of the economy. This long term strategy included measures to accelerate trade liberalisation and redirect trade from the former CMEA region towards western markets.

In Poland, the radical economic reform programme continued more or less unabated during the early 1990s, despite changes in government. Price liberalisation and cuts in subsidies to industries continued, but privatisation was modified. In Hungary, price liberalisation went ahead on a smaller scale. A proportion of prices continued to be subject to mainly indirect government controls. Privatisation was relatively moderate. Proposals to sell off large state enterprises made little headway, although a sizeable number of state-owned enterprises were successfully transformed into treasury-owned corporations with public share offers. Substantial progress was made in foreign investment and foreign trade liberalisation, although proposed targets were by no means achieved.\(^{383}\)


Romania and Bulgaria introduced their own versions of "shock therapy" programmes, but actually followed more piecemeal approaches to marketisation and privatisation. In Bulgaria Lukanov did little initially to break with the economic policies of Zhivkov. Economic considerations were less prominent than political matters during debates in the run up to the June elections of 1990. During the first months of post-communist government decree 56 remained in force with minor amendments (see previously in Chapter 2). In March 1990 an economic programme was introduced which proclaimed a market economy to be the goal of reform. This supposedly included goals to change economic conditions and regulators to satisfy market requirements, property reform, gradual liberalisation of prices and measures to ensure minimal standards of living for certain sections of the population. By the end of 1990, as a result of reforms initiated by the Lukanov government, 20% of the prices of goods and 50% of the price of services were liberalised. This partial price liberalisation without accompanying monetary, bank or enterprise reform stimulated a process whereby state managers in the unreformed state owned enterprises started channelling resources and large portions of state companies into their own private companies. A further reform programme, approved by the IMF, was launched in February 1991. This envisaged a reduction in the budget deficit, the unification of the exchange rate and the attainment of a current account surplus. Prices on over 90% of goods were immediately liberalised, interest rate management was entrusted to the newly independent National Bank and foreign trade restrictions were relaxed. In 1992 a Privatisation Law provided for a conversion of state and municipal enterprises into joint-stock or limited-liability companies, and a new law on Economic Activity of Foreign Persons and Protection of Foreign Investment allowed foreign citizens greater rights to enter domestic economic activity. Parliament quickly created the Privatisation Agency, the


body responsible for privatisation. Small scale privatisation, with regard to small shops, the
restitution of factories and renting municipal properties began immediately. Land
restitution also went ahead, but large scale industrial privatisation was postponed. It was
politically more controversial, and required the consent of government. This proved
difficult when governments were unstable and politicians were involved in continuous
political wrangles.

In Romania, Ceausescu's last years in power had produced chronic shortages of basic
consumer goods alongside heavy cuts in hard currency imports. These austerity measures
left Romania with one of the most tightly controlled and centralised economies in Eastern
Europe. The immediate goal of Petre Roman's revolutionary government was to restore
living standards and working conditions, and gain support for the forthcoming elections.
This was accomplished by increasing imports and halting exports of foodstuffs, lowering
the price of and derestricting the use of energy, reducing working hours, and removing
price controls on sales by peasants. Nearly all the newly constituted political parties gave
lip service to a speedy conversion to a market economy. The newly elected government
(May 1990) announced an economic program which would move Romania rapidly and
irrevocably towards a market economy. A "bold and comprehensive reform package" was
to be implemented. Commitments were made to dismantle central planning bodies,
reduce controls on prices and wages, privatise state enterprises and provide a social safety
net. Laws enacted between 1990 and 1992 provided for large scale reorganisation of state
enterprises and co-operatives. However, the economic reform path chosen by the new
government conformed to the leftist platform of the NSF, which remained more committed
to consolidating its own power than to designing a comprehensive reform package capable
of stabilising the economy. Considerable restrictions on private and foreign ownership
remained. Public sector enterprises continued to be governed by rules typical of a centrally
planned economy. This aided the steady decline in efficiency of industry which in turn was
offset by constant price rises. The state was also heavily involved in overseeing any re-
organisation that did take place through such bodies as the Romanian Development
Agency (which regulated foreign investment) or the National Agency for Privatisation

*Romania after Tyranny*. Westview, Boulder & Oxford
388 see Stan,L., "Romanian Privatisation: Catching up with the East," in Stan,L., (ed)

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(responsible for co-ordinating, guiding and controlling the privatisation process).\textsuperscript{389} After the forced resignation of Petre Roman and the interim leadership of Theodor Stolojan, reformers in the ruling NSF were marginalised. A conservative faction of the NSF ascended to power under Vacaroiu, a former middle-ranking central planner, who was appointed Prime Minister in November 1992. This government reluctantly moved the economic transition forward reacting to economic crises rather than establishing the pace of change.

The Problem of Uncompetitive Industry

In all four countries the introduction of a successful market economy depended not only on the willingness of politicians to initiate and implement reform, but also what kind of economic bases existed at the time reform was undertaken. Privatisation was initially seen as a swift and effective way to encourage movement away from centrally controlled, monopoly enterprise. However, it quickly became clear that the quality of privatisation and general restructuring of enterprises was more important for producing competitive and successful market economies. The more open economic systems of Poland and Hungary provided better potential for the restructuring of companies and privatisation of state owned enterprises. However, the initial enthusiasm for privatisation programmes were considerably modified as the effects of price and trade liberalisation came into effect. Nevertheless these two countries did succeed in creating more effective restructuring of industry, partly because they were starting from a more adaptable economic context in 1989. Comparable evidence of industrial restructuring (especially for Bulgaria and Romania) is patchy and difficult to obtain, but a comparison of the two cases will be undertaken to indicate how enterprise restructuring progressed.

Poland and Hungary

There is evidence to suggest that privatisation in Poland and Hungary was relatively successful as a means of restructuring. A variety of performance indicators - such as

\textsuperscript{389} see Frydman, R., et al (1992) pp.219-262
profitability and labour productivity - suggested that privatised firms were more successful than state owned enterprises. However, there is also evidence that countries which were successful at privatising industry were also the countries which had the administrative skills and political capacity to run state owned firms in "an effective and efficient manner". An indication of successful industrial restructuring can be seen in the improvement in industrial production. Initially industrial production fell in both countries (see table 6.1 below). State-owned enterprises were especially likely to see a decrease in output. However, production steadily improved from 1991. Although planned privatisation slowed, the private sector increased and aided competitiveness in both countries. For example, in Poland the output of state industry fell by 6-7% in 1993. but the output of private industry rose by 35-40% in the same year. In Poland the share of the private sector steadily increased after comprehensive reform was introduced. According to official estimates, the share of private sector GDP rose from 31% in 1990 to 56% in 1994. In Hungary government figures suggested that approximately 80% of GDP was generated by the private sector by 1999. However, this official data was likely to exaggerate the extent of private sector industry, as many partly state owned firms were included. In 1994 the actual size of the private sector was more likely to be 12 to 15%, rather than the 60% reported in official data.

390 see for example, a study by Pohl, G., et al, "Privatization and Restructuring in Central and Eastern Europe - Evidence and Policy Options", World Bank Technical Paper, No.368, 1997, Washington, DC. Their conclusions were based on a sample of 6,300 firms in seven countries.
393 Country Profile - Poland'96, electronic source
394 The Hungarian Ministry of Economic Affairs. March 1999, electronic source
Table 6.1 Industrial Production (% change) 1990-1997 (selected years)

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>-24.2</td>
<td>-8.0</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>-10.2</td>
<td>-16.6</td>
<td>-9.7</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>-16.8</td>
<td>-22.2</td>
<td>-15.9</td>
<td>-10.9</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>-7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>-19.0</td>
<td>-22.8</td>
<td>-21.9</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>-4.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


There is further evidence to suggest that Poland and Hungary were relatively more competitive to start with, and more effective in restructuring firms during the 1990s. A sample survey of firms indicated that in 1992 37% of firms in Poland, and 59% of firms in Hungary were profitable. By 1995 49% and 70% respectively had become profitable.396

The growth in labour productivity was also relatively good with an increase of 18% in Poland, and 34% in Hungary between 1989 and 1995.397

Some "commercialisation" of industry had already started during the communist period in both countries. Nominally bankrupt state industries were turned into commercial companies, or insider elites created private companies which often utilised state resources, foreign partners and foreign investment as a means to support enterprise.398 Although this unregulated or "spontaneous" form of privatisation became a political issue (especially in Poland) after 1989, it provided some potential for enterprise restructuring before the more radical privatisation plans were introduced. The so-called "second economy" also provided a basis from which small private sector enterprise could grow relatively rapidly within the post-1989 economic context. Although commercialised and small private enterprises were not necessarily successful within the new competitive markets, these features apparently

398 See for example, Meaney, C.S., "Foreign Experts, Capitalists, and Competing Agendas: Privatisation in Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary", *Comparative Political Studies*. Vol.28, No.2. July 1995, Sage Publications, pp.275-305. More will also be said about the role of foreign investment in the following chapter
provided Poland and Hungary with a better basis for restructuring industry and creating a competitive market economy.\(^{399}\)

**Bulgaria and Romania**

As in Poland and Hungary industrial output in Bulgaria and Romania fell sharply in 1990 (see table 6.1 above). Although production improved between 1992 and 1995, it fell again in 1997. Bulgaria was in an especially difficult position. The country was dominated by large state industries. In 1992 97% of industrial output came from the public sector. This was only reduced to 86.4% by 1996.\(^{400}\) Privatisation was difficult to undertake - partly because of centralisation during communism and post-1989 political conflict - but also due to the country's concentration of heavy and energy intensive industries. A private sector was virtually non-existent during the 1980s, but did emerge, and begin to grow quite rapidly during the 1990s. The private sector grew to account for approximately 41% of total employment by 1995. However, the vast majority of private enterprises were small trading and service entities employing less than five people.\(^{401}\)

Similarly Romania began economic reform with a high density of inefficient heavy industry with poor production technologies and low levels of managerial skills. In both Bulgaria and Romania the profitability of firms was low in 1992. Profitability increased in Bulgaria by 1995, but decreased in Romania.\(^{402}\) There was also a considerable decrease in labour productivity in Romania between 1989 and 1995.\(^{403}\) However, there was evidence

\(^{399}\) Other factors, such as banking reform, institutional reform, foreign investment, and trade patterns were also important. Some of these factors will be touched on below and in the following chapter.

\(^{400}\) Bulgarian Statistical Yearbook 1997, National Statistical Institute, electronic version


\(^{402}\) A survey of sample firms indicated that in 1992 28% of firms in Bulgaria and 30% of firms in Romania were profitable. By 1995 45% of Bulgarian firms and 24% of Romanian firms were profitable. See Pohl.G., et al (1997), p.6

\(^{403}\) In Romania labour productivity decreased by 14%, while Bulgaria's decreased by 1%. Figures adapted from Hunya.G., "Large privatisation, restructuring and foreign direct investment", in Zecchini,S., (ed) (1997) p.277, Table 1
of growth in the Romanian private sector. Private sector GDP was around 16.4% in 1990, and rose considerably to 58% by 1997.\textsuperscript{404}

Despite these improvements in private sector growth, both countries suffered from continuing difficulties with industrial restructuring. In particular delayed or slow reform of the banking sector, as well as a generally slow economic reform process, resulted in considerable subsidising of unprofitable state owned enterprises.\textsuperscript{405} Privatisation required capital which was not readily available from within the country, and the general economic climate did not encourage foreign investment. As already noted (in the previous section) partial reform gave many former communists the opportunity to profit from unrestructured state industries by hiving off profitable resources. Both countries lacked either the structural conditions or sufficient economic or political incentives for rapid industrial restructuring.

\textbf{Some Economic Consequences of Economic Reform}

In all four countries economic reform had immediate effects. The economies went into steep decline as the previous semi-protective trade with the Soviet bloc was swept away, and each economy was exposed to international markets. Even when economic reform was more gradual, there was a shock effect as the economies adjusted to the new context. In the short term there was little difference between the cases, but in the longer term Poland and Hungary adjusted more quickly and suffered less. Where there were differences initially it was as much to do with the bases from which the economies started as from how their reforms progressed.

\textsuperscript{404} Private Sector Development Yearbooks: Romania, World Bank Group, electronic version
Poland and Hungary

Despite the different approaches to economic reform in Poland and Hungary (and 1989 economic conditions), the results of economic change had similar effects. Both suffered from a steep decline in output in the early 1990s (as we have already seen). Inflation was also initially high, and especially acute in Poland, although this later dropped (see Table 6.2 below).

Table 6.2 Inflation (%) 1989-1997 (selected years)

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>251.1</td>
<td>553.6</td>
<td>70.3</td>
<td>35.3</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>15.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>28.2</td>
<td>18.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>338.5</td>
<td>72.8</td>
<td>62.1</td>
<td>1083.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>170.2</td>
<td>256.1</td>
<td>32.2</td>
<td>154.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In Poland the "Big Bang" approach to economic reform resulted in a rapid decline in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and living standards in 1990 to 1991, whilst inflation soared in 1990. Public sector workers and social security recipients suffered in particular. However, Poland started from a much less favourable position than Hungary in 1989, and "by the fourth quarter of 1992 was enjoying many elements of an export-led recovery with declining rates of inflation". By 1995 Poland had one of the strongest performing economies of the region in terms of GDP growth, especially within manufacturing (see Table 6.3).

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Table 6.3 GDP (% change) 1989-1997 (selected years)

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>-11.6</td>
<td>-7.0</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>-3.5</td>
<td>-11.9</td>
<td>-0.6</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>-1.9</td>
<td>-9.1</td>
<td>-11.7</td>
<td>-1.5</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>-7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>-5.6</td>
<td>-12.9</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>-6.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In Hungary, despite the more gradual approach to economic change, the economy unexpectedly contracted and negative growth continued into 1993. Inflation did not reach the heights of Polish increases, but was nevertheless a cause for concern. Hungary's early movement towards market reform and opening of the economy to the West (before the collapse of communism) did not initially aid economic recovery. Recession was not as acute as in other East-Central European countries, but the decision to maintain payments on external financial obligations (caused by the high level of external debt inherited from the communist period), meant the domestic economy strained under an increasing budget deficit.

In both countries unemployment was not that high considering the slump in production and restructuring of the economy (for unemployment figures see Table 6.4 below). There was a tendency for enterprises to maintain a slower pace of production in the face of recession, rather than cut their work force. The decline in output also hid a substantial increase in the setting up of small private enterprises (as we have seen in the previous section) which provided increasing employment opportunities. In addition governments were reluctant to force a large wave of bankruptcies (and hence redundancies) within the state owned enterprises for political reasons. State sector workers increasingly demanded that governments prevent erosion of wage differentials. A social safety net was also difficult to maintain whilst implementing austerity measures under budget constraints; another reason for the initially slow movement towards restructuring state enterprises.
Despite these difficulties in the initial post-1989 period, all the macroeconomic indicators show a steady improvement in economic conditions. This is especially noticeable in terms of average monthly wages (see Table 6.5 below). Set against the gradual reduction in inflation (see previously in Table 6.2) living standards in Poland and Hungary slowly but steadily increased.

Table 6.4 Unemployment as a % of labour force 1990-1997 (selected years)

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Key Data, Business Central Europe, electronic version

Table 6.5 Average Monthly Wage (US$) 1990-1997 (selected years)

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>108.4</td>
<td>166.0</td>
<td>215.7</td>
<td>285.5</td>
<td>352.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>212.8</td>
<td>239.8</td>
<td>295.2</td>
<td>309.5</td>
<td>310.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>157.5</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>116.9</td>
<td>113.1</td>
<td>na</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>138.6</td>
<td>97.6</td>
<td>103.1</td>
<td>138.3</td>
<td>121.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bulgaria's average monthly wage for 1997 was not available, but dropped to 75.5 in 1996


All other figures - Key Data, Business Central Europe, electronic version
**Bulgaria and Romania**

A major economic problem for Bulgaria in the post-communist period was the foreign indebtedness inherited from the end of communist rule and the collapse of CMEA trade. The stabilisation programme introduced in 1991 helped to avoid hyperinflation, kept wages under control and maintained external trade balances for much of the period to 1994. However, economic performance was weak, and inflation and foreign exchange rates became an increasing problem.

As can be seen from tables 6.1 to 6.5 above, real GDP and industrial production declined considerably during the period 1989-1993. Inflation averaged 4.5% per month from 1991, unemployment reached a peak of over 16% in 1993, whilst average monthly wages remained relatively low. Failure to reach an early agreement with the IMF on assistance in paying back foreign debt and service obligations exacerbated Bulgaria's problems. Trade was also restricted while the United Nations embargo against Serbia - as a result of the Bosnian conflict - blocked one of Bulgaria's main export routes (also see the following chapter). By the spring of 1996 the country was in the midst of a severe foreign exchange crisis. Wages and living standards rapidly declined while inflation soared. By early 1997 appalling economic conditions within the country led to mass social protests and government crisis (see more in following sections). 407

In Romania the initial economic conditions in 1989 made any economic reform difficult. The legacy of Ceausescu's policies, underlying state-oriented structure, complex bureaucracy, and inefficient production created a shortage economy with little capacity for market economics. The slow progress of reform in all economic areas resulted in rising unemployment, rising inflation, a negative balance of trade, and continuous erosion of consumer purchasing power up to the end of 1993. Several critical policy decisions at the end of 1993 which introduced "interest rate shocks" and devaluation of the leu, coupled with an austerity budget in 1994 implemented to counteract the poor state of the economy,

407 For socio-economic conditions and resulting political crisis, see for example Krushelnycky.A., "Street revolt driven by prices, not principles", The European, 16-22 January 1997, p.6
resulted in a surprising economic recovery by 1995.\textsuperscript{408} Inflation was substantially reduced and economic growth began to improve quite rapidly (see tables 6.1-6.5 above). However, this improvement did not last. By 1997 the economy suffered a further downturn.

Despite the different approaches towards economic reform, and different implementation of policies, all four countries had limited success in achieving robust economic recovery and in implanting market mechanisms initially.\textsuperscript{409} However, Poland and Hungary were able to adjust more readily to marketisation and western trade. As we shall see (in the following chapter) relative economic success was partly due to their geographical and "ideological" proximity to Western European trade partners. It was also due to these two countries' pre-1989 attempts at economic reform, and the structural bases from which they began more radical reform in 1989. Bulgaria and Romania were not only relatively economically and ideologically isolated from the West during the communist period which had its effects, but also began the process of economic change from a structurally weaker and poorer economic base.

6.2 Social Change

This section will examine social change in three main areas. In the first section continuity and change amongst political elites and economic elites will be examined. In the second section some important effects of the post-1989 context for the rest of society will be discussed in terms of economic consequences, and political activity and attitudes. In all four countries the political and economic elites of the post-1989 period adapted - to a greater or lesser extent - to the new political and economic context whilst most of society remained mainly "outside" and/or in opposition to political processes. This will be the main focus for describing and interlinking societal change with the political and economic variables already examined.


\textsuperscript{409} For more detailed accounts of approaches and the economic consequences of economic transition, see for example. Zecchini,S., "Transition approaches in retrospect", in Zecchini,S., (ed) 1997 pp.1-34
Most of the data utilised in this section regarding social structural change from communism to post-communism relates to Poland and Hungary. Few (if any) empirical studies of such aspects have been done in Romania and Bulgaria. A comparison of social change between the two cases is therefore restricted. However, by utilising the examples of Poland and Hungary in some depth, and referring to what is known about Romania and Bulgaria, certain trends can be discerned and interpreted across the cases.

**Elite Change and Continuity**

In order to examine the change in elite structure it is first necessary to differentiate between different types of elite. Elites of communist and post-communist societies have been classified in various ways. In this section a possibly simplistic differentiation is made between communist and post-communist political and economic elites. People may belong to more than one category, but this categorisation will suffice for the purpose of describing social change in this area. Within existing East-Central European literature there is considerable argument over whether there has been a "circulation" or "reproduction" of elites. Information from these debates will be utilised, and although it is not the purpose of this section to enter into the "circulation" or "reproduction" arguments in any depth,

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410 Sociological studies were not encouraged in Romania and Bulgaria during the communist period and are slow to appear in the post-communist period. Some attitude surveys were done in these countries before 1989 - for example, in Bulgaria - but studies were often not published due to the "embarrassing nature of the findings", see Karasimeonov, G., "Conceptions and Misconceptions of Political change in East-central Europe", in Bull, M.J., & Ingham, M., (1998), p.67 and footnote 5. There are some post-1989 studies appearing which are mainly concerned with economic elites, their behaviour and attitudes, see for example Toneva, Z., "Research on economic and political elites in Bulgaria in the period 1990-1995", in Best, H., & Becker, U., (eds) (1997) Elites in Transition, Leske & Budrich, Opladen, pp.91-106. In Romania even after 1989 few past nomenklatura positions and connections of elites were made public, the press especially often suffering "self-censorship". See for example, Carey, H.F., "From Big Lie to Small Lies: State Mass Media Dominance in Post-Communist Romania", East European Politics and Societies. Vol.10. No.1, pp.16-45 & pp.34-35


412 For definitions and debates on this subject see especially the articles in Theory and Society, Vol.24. No.5, October 1995, also referred to below

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some theoretical issues are confronted, and implications for defining the 1989 events addressed as a result (see Chapter 8, section 2).

The reproduction of elites thesis dominated early literature on post-communist societies. According to this theory pre-1989 communist cadre were able to convert political assets (or capital) into economic capital and become the new propertied "class", thereby continuing to occupy the most privileged positions in post-communist societies. The circulation of elites thesis is less clearly formulated, but generally implies that the elite was radically transformed. The conversion of political assets into economic capital was difficult, and often unsuccessful. A circulation of elites thesis suggests that there was significant downward social mobility for those who held assets key to elite status under the old regime.

Much of the empirical research undertaken so far in East-Central European countries focuses on the characteristics of individuals and their social mobility, and does not establish whether the nature of social structural positions have changed. A third approach to elite change suggests that a change in personnel does not constitute significant social change as long as the elite continues to have the same degree of power, or is selected on the same criteria as under communism. These three approaches provide a background to the following section where certain aspects of elite change and continuity are addressed.

**Change in Political Elites**

It is clear that there was a change of political elites in the first post-communist governments; a change of regime occurred. Even in Bulgaria and Romania where former communists initially remained in power, it tended to be the younger, technocrats who replaced the previous "old guard" political elite. In all four countries the state remained

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413 For more detailed accounts of these theories, and empirical research findings, see Szelenyi, S., Szelenyi, I., & Kovach, I., "The making of Hungarian postcommunist elite: circulation in politics, reproduction in the economy", and other articles in *Theory and Society*, Vol.24, No.5, October 1995.

414 For the importance of differentiating between regime and state in this context, and the example of Hungarian separation of state and regime 1988-90, see Fellegi, T.L., "Regime
relatively controlled from the centre (although not necessarily strong in terms of power or authority); administrations were transformed to a greater or lesser extent, but many personnel were not replaced (see previously in Chapter 4). Many communist personnel remained within the state bureaucracies both during the revolutionary period and subsequently. In all four countries many former members of the communist nomenklatura and state bureaucracy retained their positions within state structures, and were the people with the knowledge, wealth, skills and adaptability to potentially infiltrate, and take advantage of, the post-communist political and economic structures.

There are three levels of elites within the political arena that can be examined. First, the elites in government; second, state bureaucrats; and third, regional and local politicians. In Poland and Hungary the electoral success of "opposition" parties in 1989 and 1990 led to significant personnel change within government, and the possibility that recruitment of supportive personnel to positions of authority would follow. Despite this general similarity there were some differences within this case which reflected the particular nature of the pre-1989 communist systems.

With the change of government in 1989 and 1990 it was not surprising that amongst the new political elite in 1993 over 50% of personnel in Hungary and nearly 70% of personnel in Poland had never been members of their respective communist parties.\textsuperscript{415} However, it was also interesting to note that amongst the political elite of 1988 nearly 79% in Poland and only 68.5% in Hungary \textit{were} members of the communist party. Therefore the change from communists to non-communists within the political elite was not totally dependent on the events of 1989 and the subsequent success of opposition parties in elections. The fact that there was a considerable percentage of non-communists already present among the

\textsuperscript{415} Statistics used in this section (unless otherwise stated) are taken from Szelenyi,I., & Treiman, S.J., "Social Stratification in Central Europe: Hungarian Elite Survey" and further surveys undertaken as part of "Social Stratification in Eastern Europe After 1989", see Szelenyi,I.,& Szelenyi. S., "Circulation or reproduction of elites during the postcommunist transformation of Eastern Europe", p.615, and other articles in Theory and Society. Vol.24, No.5. October 1995.

political elite of 1988 suggests that some elite change had already taken place within the state and party during the communist period. Much of this change took place during the 1980s.

In Poland the imposition of martial law and subsequent attempts to change recruitment practices within the communist party led to the party losing a third of its members between 1981 and 1982, whilst recruitment of new party members virtually came to an end.\footnote{See previously in Chapter 2, and Wasilewski, J., & Wnuk-Lipinski, E., (1995) p.674.} During the Solidarity and Martial Law period, and again in 1986 when attempts were made to introduce Hungarian type pro-market economic reform, many of the old cadre disappeared. Many "liberals" were recruited from outside party or government ranks into top nomenclatura positions. In Hungary a similar process took place, but rather than a decline in party membership, it was the co-option of experts into the state bureaucracy which led to a change in top political personnel. Between 1984 and 1988 there was a 53% turnover amongst ministers, deputy ministers, secretaries of state, heads and deputy heads of main departments. Also the 1985 multi-candidate elections led to some change in the composition of parliament. In Hungary during the 1980s many party apparatchiks were retired or pensioned off. The May 1988 communist party conference led to a replacement of one third of the Central Committee and speeded up the early retirement of scores of apparatchiks, replacing the old elite with reformist party members.\footnote{For more details, see previously in Chapter 2; and Tokes, R., "Hungary's New political Elites", Problems of Communism, Nov-Dec, 1990, pp.55,56 & 60.} By 1993 in both Poland and Hungary a substantial number of the old political elite were no longer part of the labour force.

Poland and Hungary saw significant changes in the “class” backgrounds of the political elite between 1988 and 1993. Many of the new post-1989 political elite were members of the former "opposition" groups, and to some extent their social backgrounds reflected the composition of those groups. In Poland in 1993 nearly 12% (as opposed to Hungary's 4%) of the new political elite were previously non-manual, skilled or unskilled workers, reflecting the workers and non-professionals involved in Solidarity.\footnote{See previously in Chapter 2, and Wasilewski, J., & Wnuk-Lipinski, E., (1995) p.674.} In both countries a large proportion of the new political elite were previously professionals (around 50%), and it is notable that in Hungary a high proportion had degrees in humanities. This reflected the
fact that many former oppositionist intellectuals in Hungary were philosophers, historians and writers, whereas the new Polish elite was more likely to hold technical qualifications.\textsuperscript{419}

Within the bureaucracies there was also considerable change of personnel at the higher appointment levels. Yet, this did not mean there was a complete change within the state administration. For example in Hungary, despite the electoral campaign rhetoric of "spring housecleaning" by the new political parties, by mid July of 1990 only 100 of the 700 old nomenklatura positions, and several hundred of the estimated 5000 to 7500 national and regional level executive positions, were filled with new appointees.\textsuperscript{420} Many of the top bureaucrats had skills and expertise which allowed them to move into the economic sector, but the majority of lower-level state bureaucrats had little alternative but to serve the new government, and it proved impossible for the new government to eradicate all levels of the old state bureaucracy.\textsuperscript{421}

In the initial post-communist period there appeared to be considerable change amongst the top political elite in Poland and Hungary up to 1993, some of which had begun before 1989. Yet, at local and regional level change was less apparent. In Hungary at the local level many former communist party members were elected as councillors. For example, in the local elections in Hungary in 1990 "independents" won a substantial number of seats in the rural areas, but at least 80% of independents were so-called "holdover" elites.\textsuperscript{422} 

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{419} Ibid. It is also interesting to note Rudolf Tokes comment that some parliamentary members may have "inflated" their professional and education credentials in order to promote their election prospects, see Tokes, R., \textit{Problems of Communism}, 1990, p.60, footnote 22.
\item \textsuperscript{420} Tokes, R., \textit{Problems of Communism}, 1990, p.61.
\item \textsuperscript{421} For more on the "convertible skills" of old state managers see below in the section on economic elites.
\item \textsuperscript{422} For example, in 2758 villages 82.9% of elected mayors were independents. Tokes denotes "holdover elites" as mid-level members of the old regime who continued to serve
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
Additionally after the 1993, 1994 and 1995 national elections, with the return of the post-communist parties to prominence, many top government posts were filled by former communists. A prime example was Kwasniewski - the Polish President - who joined the Polish communist party in 1977, was a member of the executive committee of the Council of the Socialist Union of Polish Students, from 1985 held government ministerial posts, and was a leading figure amongst the PUWP negotiators at the 1989 Round Table meetings. Also with the return of post-communist parties many state managers of "commercialised" enterprises (i.e. still partly state owned Joint Stock Companies,) were replaced. However, this was not a restoration of the "old" elite. Many post-1993 government appointees came from former communist and satellite parties, but most did not belong to the pre-1989 communist elite.\footnote{Wasilewski, J., "Poland", in Best, H., & Becker, U., (eds) (1997) p.26}

Certainly within the top governing ranks a form of elite circulation appeared to take place in Poland and Hungary. There were not only changes in personnel, but also social and generational changes taking place. However, there appeared to be less change within the state bureaucracies or at the local and regional level.

In Bulgaria and Romania it is more difficult to examine in any depth the change in political elites, due to the lack of surveys and data.\footnote{In Romania de-communisation was not initially discussed at all, and there was an implicit agreement amongst the press not to discuss past nomenclatura positions because of the mass of informer networks and numbers of Securitate collaborators. See Carey, H.F., "From Big Lie to Small Lies: State Mass Media Dominance in Post-communist Romania", \textit{East European Politics and Societies}, Vol.10, No.1, pp.16-45, p.35} However, it is possible to look at change within government and elected officials where political elite change was initially more limited than in Poland and Hungary. Connections of the immediate post-1989 personnel to the old regime were clearly evident among top government posts.\footnote{For example the leaderships of the National Salvation Front and the Bulgarian Socialist Party were dominated by former communists. See also previously in Chapter 4.}

In Romania, the particular conditions of the Ceausescu regime made it difficult for anyone wishing to pursue their career to survive outside the communist party. It is therefore unsurprising that many former communists remained within government, administration the new post-1989 governments. Tokes, R., "Democracy in Hungary: The First Hundred Days and a Mid-Term Assessment", p.177, in Volten, P.M.E., (ed) (1992) p.158
and economic institutions after 1989. Even opposition party members who were mainly professionals (lawyers, doctors, or academics) would have been members of the communist party. Many, including members of the new government after 1996 (for example, Prime Minister Ciorbea - formerly a lawyer and military prosecutor - and President Contantinescu - a former faculty Communist Party Secretary) were part of the rank and file of the Romanian Communist Party; career-wise nobody could move without party membership. 426

In Romania the opportunity for any kind of counter-elite to emerge was virtually impossible before 1989 (see previously in Chapter 3), and severely restricted in the immediate post-89 context, where the National Salvation Front dominated and controlled the political scene. Historically the intellectuals were dependent on their political masters and associated themselves with authority. 427 Deprived of any personal or institutional autonomy during Ceausescu's rule, and severely limited by their general historical attitude towards other social strata, anti-communist opposition groups that emerged in late 1989 and early 1990 had difficulty in forming cohesive, social-based associations. 428 The post-communist political elite was therefore dominated by former communist apparatchiks; a group which inherited the apparatus, networks and support of the state bureaucracy from the old communist party. There were some changes amongst local political elites in Romania after the local elections of 1992. However, where mayors of the opposition parties were elected in important cities, they generally failed to replace local bureaucracy and had to rely on the old administrative machinery. Thus attempts to initiate change in personnel or policy were invariably blocked by pre-1989 personnel and associated networks.

427 The development of intellectuals, both ideologically and institutionally, was particular to the Romanian historical context, and was not just a result of the peculiarities of Ceausescuism. See for example, Mungiu, A., & Pippidi, A., "Letter from Romania", Government and Opposition, Vol.29, No.3, Summer 1994, pp.348-361, especially pp.352-354.
428 Historically intellectuals claimed to represent the interests of the peasantry or workers, but in reality they tended to be rather patronising towards these social strata. Michael Shafir. Radio Free Europe, interviewed by Ruth Rodda, Prague, March 1998.
In Bulgaria the formation of a political counter-elite faced similar problems, but the post-1989 elite formation was of a more intermediate nature. Despite the rapid growth of opposition movements in 1989, and the relative success of the Union of Democratic Forces in the national election of October 1991, the groups which made up the anti-communist opposition were prone to internal divisions and personal rivalries like their Romanian counterparts, the Democratic Convention. Bulgaria's anti-communist opposition lacked a well-educated strata prepared to fully participate in politics and relied on former communist "turncoats", and non-communist professionals who invariably lacked political competence.\textsuperscript{429} Although the state in Bulgaria did not remain under such tight control by former communists as in Romania, the successor to the communist party (Bulgarian Socialist Party - BSP) was advantaged both in organisation and personnel. The BSP inherited organisational structures and networks from the pre-1989 communist party. The removal of the old guard communists allowed a younger generation of better educated, more experienced professionals to maintain strong influence, especially within political, economic and media spheres.\textsuperscript{430} The adaptability of the former communist elite was particularly evident within the BSP which did not formerly disband, and avoided serious splits. The "old guard" elite surrounding Zhivkov was removed and many older conservative members retired, yet diverse groups were evident within the party ranging from the Union of Social Democracy to the Marxist Platform. The former communist political elite appeared able to adapt to the post-1989 political context.

The most interesting point to note about post-1989 change amongst the political elite is that in all cases there was considerable generational change. For example, in Poland "the new elite [was] ten years younger on average".\textsuperscript{431} Although there are no pre-1989 figures for comparison, even in Bulgaria it can be noted that between 1991 and 1994 40% of the parliamentary members were aged between 35 and 45 years, with only 24% over 55. It is unlikely that there were so many members of the younger generation amongst the top

\textsuperscript{430} This new "clientura" coupled with the legacy of the Zhivkov years, instability of post-1989 governments, and slow institutional reform created conditions within which disrespect for the law and corruption could grow unchecked. For a discussion of these issues see Meininger,T.A., & Radoeva,D., "Civil Society: The current situation and problems", in Zloch-Christy,I., (ed) (1996) pp.45-76.
politicians of Zhivkov's political entourage, or that there were so many from professional backgrounds.\footnote{Between 1991 and 1994 25\% of parliamentarians were in law related professions, 42\% were doctors, teachers or other professionals, and 14\% were engineers. 97\% had a university education. Karasimeonov,G., "The Legislature in Post-Communist Bulgaria", in Olsen & Norton (1996) p.57.

It is also worth noting that the post-1989 political elite were not necessarily better educated, but certainly in Hungary, they were more likely to have had a better quality education, with less likelihood of Marxist majors. See for example, Szelenyi,S., Szelenyi,I., & Kovach,I., "The making of the Hungarian post-communist elite: circulation in politics, reproduction in the economy", Theory and Society, Vol. 24, No.5, October 1995, p.712


This generational change was especially noticeable amongst former communists. It was the younger generation of former communists who transformed and adapted the parties to the post-1989 context. The Polish and Hungarian post-communist parties both attempted to distance themselves from their respective communist legacies and formally disbanded. Although there was more discontinuity within the Hungarian HSP than the Polish SdRP in terms of both personnel and organisation, both parties were successfully restructured and reoriented. The Bulgarian post-communist party was something of a hybrid which attempted to preserve much of its legacy from the pre-1989 party. In Romania the NSF held on to most of the resources of the old party apparatus. The section of the pre-1989 communist elite which took over in 1989 initially suffered little opposition from any kind of counter-elite, only moving towards social democratisation after 1992.\footnote{Karasimeonov,G., "Conceptions and misconceptions of political change in East-Central Europe", in Bull.M.I., & Ingham,M., (1998) pp.68 & 69}

In contrast to the changes apparent in Poland and Hungary, it appears that less political elite change occurred in Bulgaria and Romania. Although there is insufficient empirical evidence to verify theory, it is most probable that the reproduction thesis is the most salient for this case. There may well have been some generational change as the "old guard" was removed from high-ranking positions, and those with more professional and technocratic expertise replaced them. However, the evidence available suggests that little significant change in social background could take place due to the closed nature of communist societies in these two countries.
Change in Economic Elites

There appears to be general agreement that in Poland and Hungary there was greater continuity overall within economic elites than within political elites.\textsuperscript{434} Evidence from the data shows only small differences in the basic characteristics of pre-1989 and post-1989 economic elites. For example in Hungary, members of the new economic elite were significantly younger than their 1988 counterparts, but almost as many 1993 elites as 1998 elites were members of the communist party in 1988.\textsuperscript{435} It was initially thought that where some private economic activities had been allowed during the communist period, that the new entrepreneurs would have an advantage. However, even in Hungary where the "second economy" was most developed before 1989 very few managers of large firms in 1993 had previously been entrepreneurs in the "second economy" in 1988. It was the communist managers who gained most from the post-1989 changes to the economy. In Hungary over 42% of the new economic elite in 1993 were low-level managers in 1988 and over 31% were previously elite nomenklatura. In Poland slightly more (48.7%) of the new economic elite were elite nomenklatura and slightly less (31.3%) were low-level managers in 1988.\textsuperscript{436} The age differential suggests that many of the 1988 low-level managers were promoted after 1989 when their superiors were forced to leave by the new governments. Additionally most of the new economic elites remained part of the state sector. The relatively low level of privatisation amongst the large state-owned enterprises was reflected in the small percentage of businesses where managers claimed any ownership. For example in Hungary in 1993 only 2.1% of managers of enterprises with over 100 employees were reported as owning 50 to 100% of the business.\textsuperscript{437}

Turning to Romania and Bulgaria there is less statistical, but much anecdotal evidence to support a similar if not more pronounced process whereby many of the former communist political elite initially transferred themselves into a "new" economic elite, mainly via


former communist networks. In particular the slow process of privatisation in both countries enabled former political elites to acquire assets in the reforming economy.

In Romania, most state owned industry managers were the first to profit from the beginning of privatisation, starting businesses and illegally transferring state property to themselves. The establishment of the State Privatisation Funds also gave the governing party control over the whole privatisation process.\textsuperscript{438} Privatisation often became a means for rewarding political loyalty and strengthening elite power. Government officials from the ruling coalition parties were rewarded with highly paid positions.\textsuperscript{439}

Alleged corrupt business practices and unregulated scam savings schemes which often involved senior party members or close associates of the political elite were also seen as evidence of corruption and inefficiency within government.\textsuperscript{440} After the 1996 elections there was a greater attempt to confront the past and open government practices and politicians to public scrutiny. For example a bill was passed in April 1998 allowing people to check if journalists or public officials worked for the former communist secret police, and efforts were initiated in order to discover the truth about the events of 1989.\textsuperscript{441}

In Bulgaria, despite a law which was intended to divest the former communist party of property and financial resources, the party was able to pump its assets into new companies and create its own economic concerns.\textsuperscript{442} Many new businessmen "amassed their wealth as party leaders and as former employees of the security services".\textsuperscript{443} Privatisation in Bulgaria

\textsuperscript{440} A major example was the Caritas affair - a pyramid investment scheme promoted by Funar a leading member of the Party of Romanian National Unity - which, despite the failure of many small investors to recoup their money when it collapsed, ironically did not result in immediate criticism from the electorate for Funar or his party. See for example Gallagher, T., (1995) especially pp.220-223
\textsuperscript{441} See for example "Romanian Senate passes bill on securitate files" and "Romanian President wants to know the truth about 1989 uprising" \textit{RFE daily report}, 10/4/98, electronic version
was slow, state enterprises predominated, and executives of state-owned enterprises were
appointed by each new government for political rather than economic reasons. As a result
executives were more interested in short-term personal gains than any long-term enterprise
management. Also many government officials overseeing state-owned enterprises were
appointed to boards of directors or supervisory boards. As a consequence such officials
were likely to oppose any privatisation rather than lose the income and prestige gained
from these appointments.\textsuperscript{444} Many state enterprises were asset stripped by managers and
private businessmen with close ties to the former communists.\textsuperscript{445}

In all four countries it appears that certain sections of the former communist apparatus
were well placed to find elite positions within the new economic context. They had the
necessary skills, experience and connections to at least maintain their status if not promote
themselves. Even with the change of government in 1989 in Poland and Hungary, they
were the people with the political, economic and cultural capital who could readily adjust
and adapt to the post-1989 political and economic conditions.\textsuperscript{446}

It appears that a greater reproduction of economic elites took place in both cases. However,
in Poland and Hungary this was not a simple power conversion of the pre-1989 communist
elite into a "new" economic elite. There was downward as well as upward mobility as
former state managers were removed or took early retirement, and significantly younger,
formerly lower-level managers took their place. Additionally, political assets were not
necessarily converted directly into economic capital. Few former communists became
owners of large businesses; most private businesses were small and high-risk operations.
However, it is apparent that former communists were in positions to maintain some control

\textsuperscript{444} See for example, Pamouktchiev, H., Parvulov, S., & Petranov, S., "Process of
privatisation in Bulgaria", in Jones, D.C., & Miller, J., (1997) \textit{The Bulgarian Economy:
Lessons from Reform during Early Transition}, pp.205-230, especially pp.205-6
\textsuperscript{446} Cultural capital is used here in terms of power or influence principally based on
knowledge and expertise, see for example Szelenyi and Townsley's use of the term in "The
pp.60-92. It is also worth noting that there were others with cultural capital who
maintained there positions. For example, a change of ownership of print media often left
"holdover" journalists and editors in place within newspapers which continued to have a
wide circulation, see for example Tokes, R.L., "Hungary's New Political Elites," \textit{Problems of
Communism}, Nov-Dec 1990. pp.44-65
over economic assets, especially within the former state sector, where either only nominal privatisation took place or companies were asset stripped in some way. Yet, it is not clear that former communists had the same degree of power or were selected on the same criteria in the post-1989 context. Even in Bulgaria and Romania, where former communist networks provided the main means to social advancement, neither political nor economic elites could fully control outcomes once reforms were initiated (see especially the political consequences of economic change previously in Chapter 4, section 2).

Social Change and Society

Social change amongst the rest of society is potentially more complex to examine. However, there are two main areas which can be focused on to indicate what consequences the events of 1989 had for the majority of society. First, some of the social consequences of economic change can be discussed; and second we can examine some effects of political change on society. This will be done by first, looking at some indicators of social inequality which resulted from the post-1989 economic shock. Secondly, some evidence of political participation, and societal attitudes will be discussed to see how political activity changed, and how people perceived the post-1989 conditions.

The Social Consequences of Economic Change

In all four countries the movement away from central planning towards market oriented economics had considerable affects on society. Although one result of efforts to liberalise the economies was that a wider variety of consumer goods became more readily available, it was also the case that few people could initially afford to buy those goods. Although the economies steadily improved over time for many Poles and Hungarians (see previously in this chapter), in general, most people suffered an initial decline in living standards. If this decline was not directly through lower incomes, it was at least as a result of the withdrawal of subsidies on basic goods, and the gradual reduction in social benefits provided via the state or state-owned employers, such as holidays, health and child care. Notable effects of these changes were the previously officially unrecognised phenomenon of unemployment, and an increase in income inequalities.
As we have seen (previously in tables 6.1, 6.2, 6.3 & 6.4) unemployment was substantial in all four countries, and was highest in 1993 and 1994. Bulgaria and Poland suffered the worst rates of unemployment with over 16% in 1993. Social benefits were generally eroded as governments were pushed towards tightening public spending. Although there were variations in the effects, which were often hidden by general unemployment figures - for example, the differences in the numbers suffering long term unemployment, regional disparities or the number of people unrecorded in official statistics - the result was a general impoverishment for many families which would previously have received relatively generous social benefits.

Unemployment was only one aspect which led to greater social inequalities. In all four countries policies of price liberalisation launched at the beginning of the economic reform process tended to lead to inflation.\footnote{Price liberalisation was not the only cause of inflation, nor was it the only policy which affected wages or poverty levels. Inflation was also a result of the inherited situation, the elimination of subsidies, commercial, currency, fiscal and credit policies. Additionally a variety of policies specifically related to wages (such as income policies, various forms of wage bargaining, and setting of minimum wages) had various effects on income levels. See for example, Vaughan-Whitehead,D.,(ed)(1998) Paying the Price; The Wage Crisis in Central and Eastern Europe, Macmillan, London & St. Martin's Press, New York} It was generally the case that as a result of price liberalisation wages lagged behind consumer prices and real wages fell rapidly. In Romania, and to some extent also in Bulgaria, the governments did not immediately liberalise prices on some basic goods - such as bread, milk, public transport and housing rents - in order to protect the most vulnerable groups in society, such as pensioners. Also in Bulgaria many managers and full-time production workers initially continued to receive considerable fringe benefits from industrial firms.\footnote{Benefits such as subsidised housing, severance pay, child care, transport and clothing allowances were still received in 1992-3 by some workers. Temporary and civil contract workers received far fewer benefits, if they received any. See Klinedinst,M., & Rock,C.. "Fringe benefits in transition: evidence from Bulgaria", in Jones,D.C., & Miller,J., (1997), pp.329-340} However, as the Romanian and Bulgarian economies were relatively impoverished, these factors did little to help the majority of people on low incomes.

To illustrate the decline in the purchasing power for most consumers we can examine the fall in average real wages. In Poland real wages fell sharply in 1990 and continued to fall
more moderately over the next three years. They then rose again in 1994 and 1995, but overall during 1990 to 1995 real wages fell by over 25%. In Hungary real wages declined every year except 1992 and 1994, declining nearly 20% between 1989 and 1995. In Bulgaria after price liberalisation in 1991 real wages fell initially by nearly 40%, and again fell sharply in 1994. Despite wages keeping pace with prices in 1992 and 1993, between 1990 and 1996 real wages fell overall by nearly 48%. Also in Romania there was a sharp fall in 1991 of nearly 20%. Real wages also fell in 1992 and 1993, but began to increase in 1994 and substantially increased in 1995 giving an overall decline of over 23%.449

In all four countries the pay levels of workers were well below the levels they had received before 1989, whilst the additional social benefits and services they had previously received - such as education, holidays, housing and health - were invariably being reduced. Coupled with increases in unemployment, these factors led to substantial growth in the number of people living below the poverty line. For example, in Hungary in 1994 around 33% of the population were living on incomes below the subsistence level.450 In Poland, 35.8% of the population were below the poverty line in 1993.451 In Bulgaria the share of people with incomes below the subsistence minimum rose from 36% in 1992 to 67% in 1994.452

In addition to this general decline in incomes there was substantial growth in wage differentials between regions, sectors, occupational and social groups. The largest disparities in relative wages opened up between regions within each country. The regions which suffered the most were those where heavy industry had previously predominated. Also many rural areas were affected as the relative wages of agricultural workers declined. One sector where wages grew the most was the banking and financial sector. Foreign enterprises and joint ventures were more likely to pay higher average wages. Those working in the public sector were likely to suffer reductions in relative wages, especially those working in education, health and culture.

For example, in Hungary there were significant differences between industrial and occupational wages in the 1980s, but there was still some growth in differentials after 1989. The widest difference developed between those in the public sector and those in competitive spheres. Public employees and teachers tended to be relatively the worst off with earnings of 55-60% the national average, although judges and lawyers exceeded the national average by 70%. Wages in industrial enterprises provide contradictory evidence. In 1992 wage levels in privatised firms were twice as high as in state owned enterprises, but in 1994 and 1995 in industries where the state was still the main or majority owner, earnings were between 10 and 14% higher than the average in the competitive sector. However, enterprises with a foreign stake provided wages 25% higher than the national average.\footnote{453}

In Poland the main losers amongst employees were those in education and health, whilst the main winners were in finance, insurance and state administration. Wage differentials increased between 1991 and 1995 by more than one quarter. Managers gained considerably: real relative wages rose the most in joint venture companies, followed by private enterprises, and increased the least amount in public enterprises. Although miners and those workers in coal, electricity, gas, water, wood and paper industries were winners compared to other industrial workers, many workers and especially smallholders were living below the poverty line.\footnote{454}

Similarly in Bulgaria, employees in education, health and culture generally became worse off. Between 1990 and 1994 employees in these sectors suffered an erosion of real wages of over 50%. Only in the financial and banking sector was there any real wage growth, whilst agricultural workers were the main losers.\footnote{455} In Romania more than 80% of employees received wages below the national average in 1993 and 1994. Those most affected were employed in light industry, commerce, agriculture and the wood industries. A very small number of employees received very high wages of 10 times the minimum

wage. Again those working in financial services were most likely to have the highest incomes.456

There appear to be many similarities between the two cases in terms of growth of income inequalities and a general decline in living standards, especially for certain industrial and public sector workers. One notable difference between the two cases can be seen when looking at average monthly wages (see tables 6.1 - 6.4 in previous economic section). Bulgaria and Romania had fluctuating levels and the lowest levels of average monthly wage for the whole of the 1990 to 1996 period. In comparison Poland and Hungary had steadily growing, and much higher levels indicating steady improvements generally in their economies and gradual improvements in living standards after the initial post-89 economic shocks. Although social inequalities grew, in this case the partial restructuring of economy and society prior to 1989 alongside more complete regime change, and comparatively rapid movement towards a market economy after 1989, resulted in steady improvements in economic conditions by the mid 1990s.

**Politics and Society**

This section will examine the consequences of post-1989 politics for the majority of people in society in terms of political participation and attitudes towards politics. Within recent literature on East-Central Europe there is much concern for "civil society", or the lack of it. It is not the intention here to evaluate "civil society" or delve into complex notions of post-communist political culture, but to point out that for most of society so-called democratisation meant little change in society's political relationship with the state; the "us" (society) versus "them" (the ruling elite group) of communism tended to continue into the post-communist period. This can be seen by first, noting the considerable number of strikes and protests which took place after 1989, which were mainly directed against the new post-1989 governments; second, examining some developments within autonomous groups in society; and third, looking generally at some apparent trends in peoples attitudes towards politics and politicians. There are some differences between the cases in terms of political activity, but reasons for these differences cannot be substantiated.

456 Pert, S., & Vasile, V., "Romania: Introducing Wage Bargaining in a Monopolistic
People were of course free to join political parties and associations, take part in free elections and could strike and protest on the streets without fear of being locked up for "counter-revolutionary" activities (except perhaps on some occasions initially in Romania). After the initial euphoria of 1989 and early 1990 there were signs of discontent within society; a discontent directed mainly towards the post-1989 governments, and in some respects towards the new political system. As we have seen (in Chapter 4 regarding political consequences of economic change) there were a considerable number of strikes and protests in all four countries, especially as a result of the early post-1989 economic conditions. For example, in Poland in 1992 a fall in wages led to trade union action and subsequent disruption and strikes amongst teachers and employees in public education who received salaries below the minimum wage. In Romania there were strikes and protests throughout the post-1989 period. Workers protests became less dramatic in 1995, but strikes and rallies were staged in that year by students from various university centres to protest about miserable living conditions and a controversial education law. Also in Bulgaria, the severe economic crisis of 1996 led to street protests in the major cities across the country; protests that finally brought down the socialist government. This kind of spontaneous action in protest to conditions and specific reforms was prevalent in all four countries, although Hungarians were probably the least active.

However, despite these visible signs of discontent, large numbers of people apparently never participated in political protest action. A 1991 survey indicated that in Bulgaria 48% of those surveyed had not participated in any political action. In Poland 72% had never participated, whilst in Hungary 84% had never protested. The Hungarian figure might not be so surprising as little political protest action was visible even in 1989. However, Poland's high figure of non-participation does appear more surprising - even when the reduction in Solidarity activity in 1989 compared to 1980-81 is taken into account. It appears that relatively few members of society were politically active in this way, and far less were active in Poland and Hungary than in Romania or Bulgaria.

Survey undertaken in 1991. Protest action included ten variants from writing to a newspaper or signing a petition to joining a strike or blocking traffic. Romania was not
A further trend was apparent which also suggests a lack of political participation: a decline in voter turnout after the first competitive elections. Initially voter turnout in elections was fairly high, especially in Romania and Bulgaria in 1990. However, in later elections voter turnout dropped considerably. Relatively low voter turnout was most evident in Poland and Hungary. In the first parliamentary elections of 1990 in Romania and Bulgaria turnout was 86% and 83% respectively. In the Bulgarian 1994 election the turnout dropped to 75%, whilst in Romania the turnout for the second round of the Presidential elections of 1992 was 73%, although it was still relatively high in the 1996 elections at 75%. Turnout for the first ballot of the first free parliamentary election in Hungary in 1990 was comparatively low at 63%. In Poland in 1991 and 1993 elections turnout was only 43% and 52% respectively.\textsuperscript{458} The Polish in particular appeared "inactive in political life ... and [were] reluctant to join political organisations and so on".\textsuperscript{459} Whether these voting trends were due to voter apathy, dissatisfaction with the political system, or because people felt unable to influence politics was to some extent dependent on the context, and is of course open to debate.\textsuperscript{460}

Another indication of participation is membership of political organisations. Most political parties and other social movements did not have large numbers of members or strong social bases. The reform communist and peasant parties were the main exceptions. For example, in Poland membership of the Polish Peasant Party was estimated at 190,000 in

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\textsuperscript{460} Low electoral turnout is probably due to all three, Professor Ryszard Herbut, Institute of Political Science, University of Wroclaw, interview with Ruth Rodda, 3/4/98.

Also indicative of a combination of factors was a Bulgarian opinion poll after a 1994 local election (where the turnout was only 34%) which suggested that the low turnout in Veliko Turnovo was due to disillusion with government performance and fear that, because of the
1995, the reform communist party (SdPR) had approximately 60,000 members, while other parties had from a few hundred to a maximum of 25,000 members.\textsuperscript{461} Yet, in total only around 2 or 3\% of the population belonged to political parties.\textsuperscript{462} Similarly in Hungary after the 1990 elections "a small minority of citizens - perhaps 100,000, or less than 2\% of eligible voters - became declared and dues-paying party members".\textsuperscript{463} Political parties were - in general - poor at mobilising much of society. This was partly due to the considerable "blurring" of roles between political parties, representative organisations and other social movements. For example, business parties - such as the business Bloc in Bulgaria, or the Republican Party in Hungary - became parliamentary representatives of entrepreneurial interests. Similarly Solidarity in Poland and Podkrepa in Bulgaria, initially formed as trade unions took on party-type roles within the anti-communist opposition. However, political parties tended to be unrepresentative of much of society. As we have seen (in Chapter 5) many historic and "new" parties generally lacked social bases or salience, especially for the main "losers" of economic change.\textsuperscript{464} It might not be surprising then that political parties were one of the least trusted organisations in political life.\textsuperscript{465}

There was some greater evidence of political participation within trade union organisations. There was considerable growth in the numbers of trade unions in the post-1989 period. This was especially the case in Romania where there was an explosive growth in the trade union movement from early 1990. Within a relatively short space of time three trade union confederations emerged at national level.\textsuperscript{466} In Poland, Hungary and Bulgaria the old "official" unions claimed the bulk of union membership, while the newly

electoral system, many of the votes cast would be wasted, see Crampton, R.J., (1995) p.238
\textsuperscript{461} Most marginal parties did not have more than 100 members and many only a few dozen. See Gebethner,S., "Parliamentary and Electoral Parties in Poland", in Lewis,P.G., (ed) (1996) pp.120-133, especially p.130, Table 6.2
\textsuperscript{462} Professor Andrzej Antoszewski, Institute of Political Science, University of Wroclaw, interview with Ruth Rodda, 3/4/98
\textsuperscript{464} The main "losers" were those who suffered the most from the increase in inequalities generated by movement towards marketisation, see previously in the section on Social consequences of Economic Change
independent unions also claimed substantial numbers of members. However, as a percentage of the labour force membership of unions was relatively low, and much lower in Poland and Hungary than in Bulgaria and Romania. In 1992 to 1993 union membership was 23% in Poland, 39% in Hungary, 48% in Bulgaria, and 46% in Romania. It was suggested that none of the unions initially took on the role of mass mobilisers of protest action against governments, or became clearly identified as autonomous politically influential groups which could successfully liaise with, or lobby government on behalf of their members. Indeed in the early 1990s in all four countries trade unions were involved in forms of tripartite negotiations involving unions, business groups, government, and other interested parties (although in Poland no official tripartite structures were set up). This was seen as "insider" bargaining which invariably resulted in unions accepting wage restraints or non-strike action and allowed governments to proceed unchecked with their economic programmes in exchange for some extensions to union rights and promises of some form of wage indexation. However, unions did become more pro-active, especially in Romania from 1994. This indicates that unions became an increasingly useful means to organise social protest, especially against perceived government ineptitude.

There were many social movements, such as ecological, peace and student organisations often founded in the late 1980s, which continued to flourish in the post-1989 period. For example, in Hungary the number of registered "civil associations" increased from 8,574 to

467 In Poland and Hungary the former communist union organisations were not identified with the "old regime" in the same way as the communist parties initially were. The "successor" trade union membership figures of 70-100% were probably exaggerated, but they certainly outweighed the newer organisations. Even Solidarity only appeared to have organised around 20% of employees in 1991. See Myant, M., & Waller, M., "Parties and Trade Unions in Eastern Europe: The Shifting Distribution of Political and Economic Power", in Myant, M., & Waller, M., (eds) (1994) Parties Trade Unions and Society in East-Central Europe, Frank Cass, UK & US, pp.161-181, p.173
469 Myant, M., & Waller, M., (eds) (1994) p.177
470 See previous footnote 23, and for example, Borger, J., "Strike adds to Romanian government's troubles", The Guardian, 28 February 1994
19,950 between 1989 and 1992.\textsuperscript{471} These groups were mainly supported by younger urban members of society. The hard core of professional organisers only slowly adjusted from "underground" activists to pressure group mobilisers.\textsuperscript{472} Nevertheless, there is some evidence that the most active civil society groups (mainly non-governmental organisations and foundations) were to be found in Poland and Hungary. In Bulgaria and Romania self-organised activities tended to be weaker, and more often confined to closed groups of intellectuals. It is suggested that this difference between the cases could be associated with the fact that Bulgarian and Romanian society was more concerned with the sheer struggle for survival.\textsuperscript{473} However (as we shall see in the following chapter), Bulgarian and Romanian society also received less support from international organisations which promoted such associations. It appears that despite the evidence to suggest that Polish and Hungarian societies were less politically active in terms of direct political participation, there was a greater expansion of "civil" associations in this case.

In all four countries there appeared to be contradictory perceptions in play. On the one hand the general attitude of the populations suggested a cynicism of politics and politicians. On the other hand the state was still seen as the main provider of social and economic benefits. For example, when asked about the role of government in the economy, respondents gave substantial support to questions asking whether government should guarantee everyone a minimum standard of living and provide jobs for all who wanted them.\textsuperscript{474} Surveys have indicated that most people did not want to return to the communist past. For example, in Poland, despite a the historic tradition of strong political leaders, and a considerable percentage of Poles who approved some kind of dictatorship, "the evaluation of the past is fairly negative.... and there is a low percentage of support for a
return to communism". Although often dissatisfied with economic reform and performance of post-1989 governments, they were still generally in favour of continued reform of the system. Yet, most political institutions were held in low esteem. Even in Romania, despite high voter turnout and relatively strong support for the post-communist successor party, around 72% of those polled were dissatisfied with the work of parliament by 1994.

In all four countries post-communist political organisations were generally poor at mass mobilisation. As seen above, post-communist political parties mainly lacked social cleavage bases. Even in Poland and Hungary, where "new" parties formed governments, most of society perceived politicians as elitist, and politics as separate from society. All four societies were disillusioned after 1989. This was partly due to the unrealistic expectations of what marketisation and democracy would bring. Western images before 1989 led to false conceptions for both masses and elites. The intellectual elites absorbed their own "idealistic" and "utopian" conception of free markets and democracy. This alongside promises made by post-1989 politicians - which included quick and easy solutions to problems - did not match society's conception of freedom and consumerism. In any case such aspects as freedom to travel, or a variety of goods in the shops, were of little use without relative increases in incomes. The people rejected the old regimes in 1989, but still wanted the social welfare protection of the old system.


475 "Around 40% of Poles may approve some form of dictatorship – but not communist dictatorship", Professor Andrzej Antoszewski, Institute of Political Science, University of Wroclaw, interview with Ruth Rodda, 3/4/98


478 Even for social groups whose incomes were increasing the perception was often that they were worse off. For this and some interesting discussions of the lack of communication between the "new" political elite and the masses, see Winiecki, J., (ed) (1996), especially Chapter 8
There appeared to be a dualistic division within society - a distinctive feature of communist socio-political relations - where "us" (society) was contrasted with "them" of the paternalistic state. This was especially evident in Poland where initially the first Solidarity government for a short time became "ours" rather than "them", but the old stereotype soon returned. An “us” and “them” attitude “is still present in [the Polish] mentality, but “them” at the moment are quite another than “them” in communism. The distance between governing and governed is still very high”. Even the Catholic Church in Poland, which became a symbol of society against the state during communism, lost popularity as an institution in the post-communist period. Although the impact of the Church on politics increased after 1989 - through affiliated political parties and associated policy proposals and implementation - there was evidence that support for the Church declined. Despite a general consensus that the new political system and reforms should continue, in all four countries much of the old "state versus society" attitudes were generally retained; system change appeared to do little to alter elite-mass linkages.

Nevertheless (as we have seen above), there were some differences between the cases in terms of political participation. It is not entirely clear why similar dissatisfaction should be articulated in different ways, although some suggestions can be made. Agh for example, suggests that the masses in (what he terms) East-Central European states (who prior to 1989 had links to the counter-elite) became disillusioned and pessimistic because the "transitional" elite tried to demobilise previously active and optimistic societies. Whereas in Balkan countries elite-mass linkages were more antagonistic; the masses were mobilised after 1989 through reaction to elite manoeuvres to "steal the revolutions". Rising mass dissatisfaction followed "normal channels for articulated political pressures" in East-Central European states, whereas in the Balkans "sharper confrontations" were evident. This may be a partial explanation for differences in political activity between the two cases. However, there is some evidence to suggest that the forms of revolution in Poland and Hungary did little to alter political activity in society. For example, most Poles were

480 Professor Andrzej Antoszewski, Institute of Political Science, University of Wroclaw, interview with Ruth Rodda, 3/4/98
relatively apathetic towards formal politics during the communist period, and became increasingly so during the 1980s. The 1987 referendum on economic reforms when too few people voted to enable the government to win the required majority of eligible voters was an example.\textsuperscript{483} After the semi-free elections in 1989, which acted as a referendum on the communist regimes, most people may have merely returned to this apathetic approach to politics. "The rapid disintegration of Solidarity....and the plethora of political parties - the confusing differences between the electoral appeals" also may have confused voters and contributed to the lack of political activity. Additionally, in Poland "politics is viewed as something for a small group of people...[it] is reserved for professional politicians...who should govern effectively – and should be totally responsible for all the actions. The Polish people are reluctant to take part....we don't see action in political life".\textsuperscript{484}

There is one further indication as to why there were differences between the cases. Surveys suggest that those who were politically active were more likely to have experienced political injustice.\textsuperscript{485} It may be that more Bulgarians and Romanians felt they had suffered injustice due to the harsher nature of the communist systems, and continued to feel some injustice after 1989. Although the evidence presented here cannot completely verify these notions, there are indications that the form of revolution in Poland and Hungary did little to alter political participation in the longer term. In Bulgaria and Romania the revolutions may have unleashed feelings of injustice; feelings which were previously suppressed by system conditions.

\textsuperscript{482} Agh,A.. (1998) p.73
\textsuperscript{483} See previously in Chapter 2; and for this and further evidence of Polish political apathy, see for example, Mason,D., "Public opinion in Poland's transition to market democracy", in Deacon,B., (ed) (1992) \textit{Social Policy, Social Justice and Citizenship in Eastern Europe}, Avebury, Hants, UK & Ashgate, Vermont, USA, especially p.193
\textsuperscript{484} The views of Professor Andrzej Antoszewski, Institute of Political Science, University of Wroclaw, interview with Ruth Rodda, 3/4/98
\textsuperscript{485} 40% of those who claimed to be politically active had experienced injustice compared to 17% of those who were politically inactive. See Mason,D.S., "Attitudes toward the Market and Political Participation in the Postcommunist States", \textit{Slavic Review} 54, no.2. Summer 1995, p.398
Conclusion

In all four countries some form of marketisation and privatisation was introduced. All post-1989 governments modified reforms as economic "shock" effects were encountered. As economic decline produced social discontent and consequential social pressures, incumbent governments were blamed for mishandling economic reform. Each country suffered political consequences which tended to result in modification of radical reform proposals, and marginalisation of the more radical economic reformists.

Despite these general similarities, there were some notable differences between the cases. The different proposals for economic reform made little difference to longer-term economic outcomes. Poland's "shock therapy" approach, and Hungary's more gradual approach, both resulted in longer-term economic improvements. Bulgaria and Romania took similar piecemeal steps to reform with different outcomes. In fact Romania made considerable short term progress considering the country started with one of the most impoverished and centralised economies. Bulgaria suffered the worst long-term economic consequences with similar sector by sector reform efforts. External conditions had the most damaging effects for this country (see more in Chapter 7).

What appeared to make the most difference to outcomes was the condition of the economies by 1989, and regime change. The Polish and Hungarian economies were already partially decentralised prior to 1989, and greater infiltration of "liberal" economic ideas was evident within the new regimes' proposals for marketisation and privatisation. Poland and Hungary were also more successful at industrial restructuring. Despite the initial negative consequences of implementing relatively rapid economic liberalisation, both countries made a slow but steady economic recovery. Romania and Bulgaria began economic change with relatively poorer economies, the regimes were generally slower to take up free market economic ideas, and implement reform. Both countries had greater adjustments to make for successful industrial restructuring, and suffered far more damaging fluctuations in economic progress.

In terms of social change there were again similarities across the cases. Amongst the elite an element of generational change took place, especially amongst the former communist elite. Most of the "new" economic elite emerged from the pre-1989 communist elite.
Economic change also resulted in an increase in social inequalities. State managers, banking and financial sector employees made the greatest gains, whilst agricultural and certain public sector workers (mainly teachers and health workers) were the main losers. All four communist parties provided the means to social status prior to 1989 (see previously in Chapter 2). Many former communist party members, and administrative state personnel, were those with the skills to remain at the top of the social strata after 1989 indicating some continuity from the pre-1989 to the post-1989 social systems.

However, it is apparent that the basic “reproduction” and “circulation” of elites arguments are not totally adequate in explaining social elite change, especially in Poland and Hungary. The recruitment of personnel into new elite positions was much more complex than either thesis suggests. Some reproduction of economic elites took place, but this was not a simple power conversion. The basic characteristics of economic elites did not change to any degree, but a significant number of low-level managers were promoted, while former high-level managers took early retirement or were forced out of their former positions. Equally, the circulation of political elites was not complete. Many lower level state bureaucrats and local politicians remained in similar positions to those occupied before 1989.

Differences in social change between the cases are most apparent when looking at changes to the communist parties. It is evident that change had already occurred within the Polish and Hungarian communist parties during the 1980s. Much of the "old" communist elite was no longer part of the political elite by 1989. This, coupled with regime change during 1989 and 1990, led to greater political elite restructuring after 1989 in this case. Former communists were still able to reposition themselves as "new" elites within the post-communist systems (especially within the economies), but political marginalisation of the parties initially, along with pre-1989 party and personnel changes, enabled these parties to adapt relatively successfully to the post-1989 environment. In the Bulgarian and Romanian case there is little evidence of any similar pre-1989 changes within the communist parties. Neither communist party was strongly affected by either the changes going on within the Soviet Union, or by Western cultural and ideological penetration prior to 1989 (as seen previously in Chapter 2). The post-1989 changes to the parties were as much symbolic as real. The form of revolution left strong elite ties to the old system in place after 1989, which enabled many former communists to continue to transfer communist party assets
and practices into the reforming political and economic systems well into the 1990s. In the Bulgarian and Romanian case a reproduction of political and economic elites was much more likely. There appears to have been little change in recruitment patterns to the party prior to 1989, and despite some disunity within the parties due to the effects of Soviet reforms in the late 1980s, there was little or no organised counter-elite to marginalise former apparatchiks immediately after 1989.

Evidence on the political activity of the rest of society is in many ways inconclusive. All four societies were quickly disillusioned by the changing systems, and elite mass-linkages were generally unaltered by regime change. It appears that where there were organised and "visible" opposition movements prior to 1989 involved in "negotiated" forms of political change (in Poland and Hungary) societies were less directly active in political processes after 1989. Yet, there was substantial growth in civil associations in these countries. The evidence available does not make it completely clear why this occurred.

No matter what arguments are invoked to explain the complex changes taking place, what the application of the comparative-historical method shows is that in both cases communists no longer held a monopoly of power, and the communist party-state no longer controlled the economy. The introduction of marketisation and privatisation (however poorly implemented) had effects. Many former communists were able to take advantage of the political and economic changes that took place, but not all former communists remained privileged or maintained high social status. There was considerable growth in social inequalities and organisations independent of the state grew. The difference between the cases highlights that in Poland and Hungary significant economic and social change had already occurred prior to 1989, and that the economic and social "starting points" were as significant as political forms of change for developments after 1989.

This chapter concludes the examination of internal variables. We have seen that there are significant patterns of difference between the cases in terms of internal conditions. However, there is one further aspect that needs to be discussed to complete the comparison of outcomes. Western influences played their part in pre-1989 conditions, and continued to have influence in the post-communist period (as we shall see in the following chapter), not only indirectly through cultural and ideological penetration, but also more directly, especially on economic and political outcomes.
There are significant differences between the cases in terms of the way political, economic and social change took place after 1989. In part these differences were a result of the differing nature of the communist systems and forms of revolution. However, the international context was also integral to shaping outcomes. The desire for East-Central European countries to be integrated into Western institutions and associations, and the reliance on Western finance and trade to bolster their economies was of particular importance to the post-communist regimes. Not only did they need to reposition their countries politically and strategically within the post-Cold War world, they also required economic and technical assistance from the West to compete within the world economy. Equally international organisations and Western states encouraged post-1989 regimes and societies to make changes that were acceptable to neighbouring West European states, and to the most influential members of international organisations. In this chapter it will be argued that all four countries were potentially "pulled" towards some form of democratisation and marketisation of their systems. Yet, Poland and Hungary were already advantaged in 1989. These countries were "closer" to the West and structurally more adaptable to the kind of change encouraged by the international context.

This chapter will address significant external economic and political influences during the early post-1989 period, and the important effects of these influences on each country. A comparison of the two cases will be undertaken within two sections: first, economic influences; and second, political influences. These influences are inextricably linked, but will be generally separated for the purpose of this discussion. The economic influences section incorporates the effect of foreign debt, the need for foreign direct investment and external trade, and the influence of international finance bodies on these countries. Political influences include these countries' attempts to become part of Western political and economic associations, such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and the European Community/European Union (EU), and the influence of other significant Western associations. The acceptance of these countries as members of Western associations and processes was partly based on how democratic and economically stable they were perceived to be by Western governments and institutions. This perception in turn affected internal policy options and the pace of change within each country. There is a potential "circularity" of argument here. It cannot be concluded that external influences
were any more the "cause" of forwarding or retarding change than were internal circumstances. However, it will be taken that the international context was influential in each country's marketisation and democratisation.

7.1 Economic Influences

None of the four countries were forced to accept specific economic programmes by outside organisations. For example, Poland and Hungary chose very different economic reform paths (see previously in Chapter 6). However, external economic constraints did affect each country's chances for economic success, and each government's room for manoeuvre regarding economic policy. The need to acquire financial assistance gave Western organisations potential leverage over internal policies, and often influenced government action. This section will look first, at foreign debt and how that affected the level of economic assistance available; second, the general effects on the economies of foreign investment and changing trade patterns; and third, the main international institutions which provided or co-ordinated financial assistance and their influence on each economy.

Foreign Debt

Poland and Hungary's foreign debt burden, associated balance of payments problems, and shortage of private investment was a central concern for the post-communist governments. The legacies of communist rule were compounded by the initial economic "shocks" produced by post-1989 economic reforms (see previously in Chapter 6), and it became apparent that significant financial support was required throughout the region.

Hungary had the highest per capita debt in 1989, and owed three quarters of this debt to commercial banks. Private banks were unwilling to provide debt relief. However, the economic reforms of the communist era, and the acceleration of reform in the late 1980s aided Hungary's competitiveness (see previously in Chapter 2). This allowed the Hungarians to secure extensive pledges of financial assistance during 1989 and 1990 from
external institutions.\textsuperscript{486} Poland was also indebted to Western creditors, but more of this debt came from Western donors who were willing to make concessions on debt payments in exchange for economic reforms. The Polish economic strategy of "shock therapy" was started in advance of any pressure from international financial institutions. Yet, the Polish government knew that in starting the adjustment program it was more likely to receive substantial external support. The Polish program found approval with the IMF and World Bank, which led to the provision of an internationally-financed stabilisation programme by the end of 1989, which in turn facilitated agreements on debt reduction.\textsuperscript{487}

In 1989 approximately four fifths of Bulgaria's foreign debt was owed to Western commercial banks. The main creditor countries were West Germany, Japan, the United Kingdom and Austria.\textsuperscript{488} Bulgaria's foreign debt continued to grow between 1990 and 1993. This caused the country considerable problems. Inability to service the growing debt impeded access to international financial markets and commercial credit, and inhibited exports. Even with the possibility of IMF loans and debt rescheduling the economy was put under serious strain (see the section below and also previously in Chapter 6).\textsuperscript{489}

Romania was the only country not facing a significant foreign debt burden in 1989. The extreme policy of paying off all external obligations undertaken by Ceausescu in the late 1980s virtually eradicated foreign debt, but at considerable cost to the Romanian population (see previously in Chapter 6). Although this factor potentially made Romania independent of external financial institutions, the substantial pressure on the regime after 1989 to revitalise the economy - especially in terms of consumer goods - resulted in a rapid increase in foreign debt. Romania was not as indebted to Western financial institutions as

\textsuperscript{489} For more detail of Bulgaria's economic problems see previously in Chapter 6; and for example, Angelov,I., & Doulev,S., et al "Economic Outlook of Bulgaria 1994-1996", Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Institute of Economics, Sofia, December 1993, printed in \textit{Bulgarian Economic Review}, No. 7, 1994, pp.5-12
Poland or Hungary - even by 1996 (see table 7.1 below) - but in order to raise the economy to a competitive level, Romania was potentially as dependent on Western technical and financial assistance.

Table 7.1 Foreign Debt (Sbn) 1990-1996 (selected years)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>49.4</td>
<td>47.0</td>
<td>42.2</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>28.5</td>
<td>27.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Business Central Europe, Statistical Database, Electronic Version, 21/5/98

Foreign Investment and Trade

With the opening of Eastern economies to international markets and the collapse of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) trading block from January 1991, it became essential for all four countries to reorient their trading patterns and encourage foreign investment as part of their economic recovery strategies. Poland and Hungary had greater inflows of foreign direct investment in the early 1990s than either Bulgaria or Romania (see Table 7.2 below). Only Hungary had any significant pre-1989 experience of foreign investment, and being the first to open up to foreign capital the country initially maintained its leading position. Poland had officially been open to foreign investment from 1976, but investors faced considerable constraints in the scale of operation and potential for profitability.\(^{490}\) However, Poland's "big bang" approach to economic restructuring in 1990 included lowering trade barriers and setting up a legal and tax framework which did not discriminate against foreign business aided investment.\(^{491}\) As a result of this relatively


\(^{491}\) Not all sectors were completely open to foreign investment. Some areas, such as radio and television, telecommunications and fishing were restricted to below 50% foreign ownership. Land was virtually excluded from foreign ownership because of fears for
liberalised approach to foreign investors, Poland experienced rapidly growing investment inflows during the early 1990s (see table 7.2). American investors accounted for the largest share of stock value of foreign investments by 1994 (23.9%), followed by Germany (22.2%) and the Netherlands (13.1%).\textsuperscript{492} Hungary’s largest investors at the beginning of 1996 were Germany (29%) followed by the US (24%) and Austria (10.5%).\textsuperscript{493}

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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>89.0</td>
<td>300.0</td>
<td>1875.0</td>
<td>5190.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>300.0</td>
<td>1500.0</td>
<td>1100.0</td>
<td>1790.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>105.0</td>
<td>125.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>73.0</td>
<td>347.0</td>
<td>212.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

na: not available
Source: Business Central Europe, Statistical Database, Electronic Version, 21/5/98

Poland and Hungary were the least reliant of the four countries on CMEA trade before 1989 and had significant trade with the West by 1989 (see Tables 7.3 and 7.4 below). Trade with the West was an effective means to expand competitive sectors within their economies. When the communist regimes collapsed in 1989 the European Community/European Union (EU) and the G24 countries moved quickly to liberalise quotas and grant tariff advantages.\textsuperscript{494} Initial restrictions on such products as iron and steel, chemicals, clothing and textiles, and agricultural goods did not allow adequate export competition with Poland’s small farms, and unease (especially in Western Poland) that there would be an influx of Germans taking advantage of relatively cheap land prices. Dr hab. Jaroslaw Kundera (European Chair, Research Centre on European Integration), Wroclaw University, interview with Ruth Rodda, April 1st 1998


potential. However, the early agreements with the EU and relatively liberalised trade with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries helped to stimulate the production of competitive goods, which in turn encouraged further foreign investment.

Table 7.3 Intra-CMEA Exports and Imports as a percentage of Totals 1989
(Imports rounded to the nearest whole number)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>CMEA Exports</th>
<th>CMEA Imports</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>40.7%</td>
<td>32.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>44.6%</td>
<td>39.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>80.9%</td>
<td>73.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>40.8%</td>
<td>55.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 7.4 Exports and Imports to and from the Developed West 1989
(percentages of total exports and imports)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Western Exports</th>
<th>Western Imports</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>48.7</td>
<td>53.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>43.1</td>
<td>49.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>15.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>27.7</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NB: Because of overvaluation of the transferable rouble to the dollar, trade shares are overestimated, and are greatest in those countries with the largest shares of trade - see Koves, A., (1992) Tables 5.3 & 5.4, pp.87 & 88

494 See more on this below in the following section, and in the Political Influences section. Also for example, Pinder, J., "The EC and Democracy", in Pridham, G., Herring, E., & Sanford, G., (1997) especially p.120
For both Poland and Hungary early economic liberalisation and reform progress, alongside closer political links and geographical proximity to European Union countries, provided relatively favourable conditions for improving trade and increasing investment. Although the amount of investment inflows were not huge in terms of overall product, this trade and investment aided recovery from the early post-1989 "economic shocks". 495

In Bulgaria and Romania, the relatively greater centralisation of the economic systems prior to 1989, more reliance on heavy, technologically outdated industry, a delayed process of economic reform, and weaker economic revival post-1989, all tended to discourage foreign investors. As we have seen (in the section above) Bulgaria's debt problem severely limited the country's economic restructuring. Foreign investment was the only means to obtain foreign capital. After considerable efforts debt rescheduling came into effect in July 1994 which contributed to some improvement in foreign investment. 496 Romania's agreement to restructure debt to commercial banks in 1994 also partially removed barriers to foreign investment. However, in both countries relatively slow privatisation, the slow pace of reform, and continuing political tensions (see previously in Chapters 4, 5 and 6), did not create an encouraging environment for foreign firms. The largest share of foreign investment in Romania at the end of 1994 came from Germany (38%), whereas Bulgaria's largest share was from South Korea (13%). Germany's interests in Bulgaria were much smaller, at only 8%. 497

495 Foreign direct investment assets as a percentage of GDP in 1993 were 14.5% in Hungary and only 3.6% in Poland. Figures from Ladyka,S., "Foreign Direct Investment in the World Economy" in Biskup,J., Chojna,J., et al (1996), Table 7.4, p.128. Trade with the EU grew steadily. Hungarian exports to the EU were 71.2% of total exports by 1997; Polish exports were 64.2%, while imports were 62.8% and 63.8% respectively. Regular Report from the European Commission on Progress towards Accession, <Poland> <Hungary> Annex, Statistical Data, 1998 (electronic version)


External trade was also affected by the weaker, more inefficient, and less competitive aspects of the Bulgarian and Romanian economies. Romania's trade with CMEA in 1989 amounted to just over 40% exports and 55% imports. Exports to the West were 27.7% in 1989, but grew substantially. By 1994 Romania was exporting 48.2% of total exports to the EU countries. Bulgaria was the most reliant on CMEA trade in 1989, suffered the most from the collapse of CMEA, and started with the lowest percentage of Western trade (for a comparison of exports and imports in 1989, see Tables 7.3 and 7.4 above). The official figures suggest that over 80% of Bulgaria's exports went to CMEA countries in 1989, while CMEA accounted for 73% of the country's imports. These figures were probably biased due to overvaluation and were - in real terms - more likely to be around 62% and 52% respectively. For Bulgaria especially, the high percentage of fuel imported from the former Soviet Union, and the more than doubling of prices for this fuel between 1989 and 1991, had particularly detrimental effects. Also, with regard to trade with the European Union, Bulgaria was at a disadvantage. The barriers to free trade on certain sectors (see above with regard to Poland and Hungary) affected Bulgaria more profoundly. Products in these sectors accounted for 50% of Bulgaria's exports to the EU, and growth in trade was slow. Restrictions on access to EU markets denied Bulgaria opportunities to expand trade and reduced incentives for EU firms to invest. Although Romania's share of EU markets increased substantially between 1989 and 1997, both Bulgaria and Romania lagged behind Poland and Hungary in terms of Western investment and trade.

Western organisations and financial assistance

Western governments tended not to be as forthcoming with financial assistance as the statements they issued suggested. Between January 1990 and June 1991 around $45 billion of aid disbursements went to the region. However, this was a relatively small amount

498 Imports from the EU were also 48.2% as a percentage of total imports. Exports steadily increased to 56.6% by 1997. *Regular Report from the European Commission on Progress towards Accession*, Romania, Annex, Statistical Data, 1998 (electronic version)
considering the estimated financial need. The United States (US), Japan and EU countries provided around 90% of aid to Eastern Europe in 1990 to 1991, around 50% of the total going to Poland and Hungary between 1989 and 1991. Germany played a leading role through a range of assistance from projects and export credits to private investment support. A number of Western and international organisations were involved in co-ordinating financial aid, including the European Union (EU), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. The EU and its member countries were East-Central Europe's key trading partners. As a consequence much of the assistance given was geared towards promoting trade and investment. The G7, G24 and Paris Club were also involved in co-ordinating Western assistance. G24 initially consisted of representatives from OECD countries which agreed in August 1989 to co-ordinate food aid for Poland, investment promotion through joint ventures, improved access to Western markets, cooperation in environmental protection, and vocational training. The European Commission was given the administrative task of providing these support measures.

The European Commission's first action plan involved the Poland/Hungary Aid for Restructuring Economies (PHARE) programme which focused on immediate needs, for example agricultural supplies and credits, environmental protection and human resource development. In December 1989 extension of the programme to other East-Central European countries including Bulgaria was agreed, and put into action in July 1990. Romania was considered in February 1990, but not approved at that time. In 1991-92 the PHARE programme was expanded to include support for privatisation, joint ventures and small and medium sized enterprises. Within this wider framework of support for economic and social reform other PHARE programmes were initiated. For example, the PHARE

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501 Sentiments reiterated in speeches by ministers and leaders suggested that a high level of support for Eastern Europe was desirable for the security and stability of the region. G 30 estimates of total financial need from 1991 through 1995 were $237 and $252 billion which included an overestimation of potential contributions from the private sector of approximately $160 billion. See for example Haggard,S., & Moravcsik,A., in Keohane,R., et al(1993) pp.251,252 & 257
502 ibid p.273
504 For more detail regarding the Association or "Europe" Agreements and EU assistance see for example, "The Europe Agreements with Poland, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria and the Czech and Slovak Republics", The European Commission Background Report B11/95, September 1995
Partnership Programme which provided financial support to encourage economic development and institutional strengthening, launched in 1994.

Financial institutions associated with the European Union were also active in providing financial support. These included the European Investment Bank (EIB - the European Community development bank) and the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). The EBRD was set up in 1990 specifically to invest in East European transitions, and all four countries became members. Hungary in particular was an ardent supporter of the EBRD seeing it as a principal source of credits. The EIB had already started lending to Poland and Hungary between 1989 and 1990. However, the creation of the EBRD, alongside objections from France and Britain, meant proposed expansion of EIB lending to Bulgaria and Romania was initially blocked. The EIB works closely, and co-operates with the EBRD and World Bank, and since the Central European applications for membership to the EU, has become an increasing source for project loans. As part of the EIB's pre-accession strategy, loans are issued to aid development in areas such as communications, the environment, energy and industry. In order to receive loans the applicant countries' projects are assessed for consistency with EU policies. Criteria such as technical and financial viability, and environmental protection, are considered before a proportion of the necessary investment costs (usually up to 50%) is made available. Overall, loans were modest: in the region of 5.4 billion ecus for the whole Central and Eastern European region between 1993 and 1997.\footnote{Amounts loaned to each country vary from year to year. In 1997 Poland received 355 million ECU, Romania 142, Bulgaria 60 and Hungary 35. For amounts, and details of appraisal and supported projects see, European Investment Bank, Annual Report 1998, pp.35,36 & inside the back cover}

The IMF and the World Bank played a major role in promoting financial assistance. The IMF stepped in to assist in the management of balance of payments crises in East European countries in 1990-91. Poland and Hungary were members of the IMF before 1989, and signed stand-by agreements to support financial stabilisation in early 1990. Bulgaria joined in September 1990, and an IMF standby facility was approved in March 1991. Romania also negotiated its first post-1989 regular program in spring 1991. As economic crises deepened in 1991 the IMF provided additional resources to all four countries to fund energy imports. The World Bank was slower to respond than the IMF, but provided loans...
aimed at aiding structural adjustment such as privatisation, or financial sector development; for restructuring business, especially in sectors where export performance could be improved; and infrastructure improvements.

IMF and World Bank assistance - and the attached conditions - potentially aided investment and loans from other external sources. IMF funds enabled recipient countries to finance outstanding debts, and government policies - promoted under the agreements - encouraged other creditors and investors to commit funds. However, by complying with IMF-World Bank conditions each country was implementing domestic austerity measures which potentially created a decline in living standards. If a country did not comply with the conditions further loans and support were likely to be withdrawn. In Poland (where debt was partially written off) and Hungary (which continued to successfully service its debt) - domestic austerity measures paid off; economic performance gradually improved (as we saw previously in Chapter 6). The Bulgarian economy was caught in a vicious circle. The IMF remained the only source of external financing after the suspension of foreign debt servicing in early 1990. Foreign debt reservicing remained crucial to regaining creditors' and investors' confidence. Yet, servicing foreign debt alongside deepening economic crises impeded economic stabilisation measures required under IMF agreements. The cancellation of a fifth IMF loan tranche in 1993 - due to a breach of loan conditions - only served to compound Bulgaria's economic problems. After the severe economic crisis in late 1996, the IMF and World Bank approved substantial loans and projects to the caretaker government after commitments to a macroeconomic stabilisation programme and structural reform were made. In comparison, Romania was not caught in the same debt servicing

506 IMF-World Bank conditions of "structural adjustment" may include economic stabilisation (such as currency devaluation, price liberalisation and budgetary austerity measures) and structural reform (such as trade liberalisation, privatisation programmes and deregulation of the banking sector). For these conditions and their potential effects on domestic economies see for example, Chossudovsky, M., (1997) The Globalisation of Poverty: Impacts of IMF and World Bank Reforms, Zed Books Ltd., London & New Jersey, USA.


508 In April 1997 the IMF approved a $657 million standby loan and financial package, and the World Bank approved $300 million worth of projects if Bulgaria introduced a currency loan board which linked the lev to foreign currency reserves in an attempt to end the financial cycle which permitted commercial banks to drain state money through government bailouts. See "Report on Bulgaria's Parliamentary Elections", April 19, 1997.
trap in the early post-1989 period, but by making agreements with the IMF was potentially pushed towards similar domestic austerity measures. For example, in order to receive structural adjustment loans in agreements signed in 1991 and 1992, subsidies to state owned enterprises were dramatically cut. Subsequent increases in inflation can partially be attributed to such measures.\textsuperscript{509} Several instalments of agreed standby loans were not paid due to slow reform progress. Further IMF deals were reliant on the introduction of an austerity budget and restructuring of the banking system.\textsuperscript{510}

7.2 Political Influences

The association of East-Central European countries with Western organisations and governments provided indirect as well as direct political influences. By moving towards the West, and some form of liberal democracy, the Eastern countries were implicitly, if not explicitly, associating themselves with countries which were likely to condemn - what the West perceived to be - undemocratic political and social practices. Strategic and economic interests as well as political goals were a part of both Western and Eastern aims. However, in order to become members of Western "clubs" each Eastern country's democratic status was particularly important.

All four East-Central European countries needed to redefine their foreign and defence policies after 1989. The collapse of communism - and the ultimate collapse of the Soviet Union and associated organisations, such as the Warsaw Treaty Organisation (WTO) - left these countries with few options in terms of strategic alliances.\textsuperscript{511} None of these countries

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\textsuperscript{510} These were key prerequisites for a fifth IMF deal in 1999, see Central Europe on-line business news "Romania expects IMF Deal by the End of February", Thursday, February 18, 1999, London, Prague, New York

\textsuperscript{511} The Warsaw Treaty Organisation's military structures were not officially disbanded until April 1991. However, revision of the Pact from 1987 began a restructuring of the alliance, while German unification in October 1990 accelerated the process of disintegration. See Michta,A.A., (1992) East Central Europe after the Warsaw Pact:
were self-sufficient in terms of military defence, having relied on the Soviet alliance during the communist period for their main defence provision. To protect their newly gained independence from the Soviets - and remain independent within what was potentially in early 1990 an unstable Eastern and Central Europe - they needed to create new bilateral and regional pacts and become part of Western associations. They in fact made movements towards both bilateral and regional co-operation, whilst also pressing to join Western associations. 512

All four countries also favoured integration into European organisations which would enhance their economic prospects. However, Poland and Hungary were more committed to a closer Western relationship, and moved more quickly towards association with the West than either Bulgaria or Romania. Poland and Hungary's geographical proximity to Western Europe, and apparent rapid movement towards democracy and the free market, also encouraged greater penetration of both governmental and non-governmental organisations from the West. These are the main issues to be addressed in this section. The two cases will be separately discussed and compared in order to highlight some similarities and the main differences within and between the cases.

**Poland and Hungary**

The Council of Europe was the first of Europe's multilateral organisations to reach out to the former communist states in order to help them achieve swift democratic reforms. The Council's Parliamentary Assembly set up a "special guest status" for parliamentarians from reforming Eastern states that had applied for Council membership, but not yet met the body's stiff democratic criteria for entry. The Council secretariat's expertise in legal, human-rights and minority questions was used to advise candidate states on essential democratic reforms. In several cases Council experts worked closely with national

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512 Many bilateral and regional agreements were made in the early post-1989 period - both between Central and East-Central European countries, and between each country and bordering countries. Although important in terms of security in the early post-1989 redefinition of "East" and "West" Europe, only relevant agreements will be mentioned here. For more detail on foreign policy relations, see for example Michta, A.A., (1992)
governments in drafting new constitutions and basic laws. Advice was offered on matters ranging from the treatment of prisoners, through citizenship requirements, to dealing with government corruption.

The advice was often welcomed and even solicited by East European states, which came to regard the Council as the essential "gateway" organisation for integration with the EU and NATO. Each candidate knew that the sooner Council membership certified democratic allegiance, the sooner they would be accepted by other European organisations. Hungary was the first former Soviet satellite to become a member of the Council of Europe in November 1990. Poland's membership was slightly delayed as the Council did not regard Poland's 1989 general election as free and fair. 513

In 1989 a primary concern for Poland and Hungary was their strategic position. Neither country was keen to remain within a "buffer zone" between East and West Europe. Both countries were in the forefront of dismantling the Warsaw Pact (WTO). The Hungarians were the first former Soviet satellite to broach the subject of withdrawal from the WTO, and negotiate an agreement for the withdrawal of Soviet forces. Both countries sought close association with the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) as the most suitable alternative to their security dilemma. However, NATO itself was initially rethinking its own strategy. With the decline of the old East-West Cold War enmity and ultimate disintegration of the Soviet Union, NATO did not want to risk offending Moscow by rushing to redefine East-West divisions. A Partnership for Peace Programme created by NATO in 1994 was the first real movement towards strengthening military and political ties with Central and East European states (including Russia). It in fact took until July 1997 for NATO to invite Poland and Hungary (as well as the Czech Republic) to begin formal talks on accession. It was clear that their inclusion in the alliance would not take place before 1999. 514 Although the movement towards integration into NATO was slow, the


514 See NATO internet web site. Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic formally joined NATO on March 12th 1999.
commitment to joining the Western alliance, and the general acceptance by NATO countries that they would eventually become members, enhanced Poland and Hungary's credibility as "Western" style democratic states. This was seen as an important factor by all post-communist governments in furthering their independence as nation-states in strategic, political and economic terms.

Membership of the European Community/European Union (EU) was also an early goal for Polish and Hungarian post-communist governments. For Hungary a close relationship with Germany created informal channels to NATO and the European Union.\textsuperscript{515} Germany also gave Poland an indirect link to the EU by becoming Poland's major trading partner, and providing aid and capital.\textsuperscript{516} A Polish, Czechoslovak and Hungarian summit in Visegrad in February 1991 resulted in a treaty on economic and environmental co-operation, and these three countries became known as the Visegrad states. This regional co-operation was intended to stabilise relations between the countries, but was also a means of increasing their credibility as prospective partners of the EU, and a means of strengthening negotiations for entry.

The EU was initially quick to respond to the 1989 events liberalising trade, and negotiating trade and co-operation agreements with most Central and East European countries (as already discussed in economic influences above). Although the EU delayed granting full membership to these countries - mainly for economic reasons - associate membership and EU supported programmes provided economic, technical and political assistance. For example the Poland/Hungary Aid for Restructuring Economies (PHARE) programme launched in 1989, later extended to other East European countries, aimed to support economic reconstruction and democratic reform.

Other Western government and organisational support was also influential. For example, Western European and American political parties and foundations were involved in aiding East-Central European political parties, especially in the run up to the first free elections. Some financial assistance and a variety of organisational and political "expertise" was

\textsuperscript{515} A relationship initiated in 1989 through Budapest's help with East German refugees in keeping the Austro-Hungarian border open.
given. Transnational party links only provided limited support and did not necessarily result in the "Westernisation" of East-Central European political parties, but organisational techniques and contacts no doubt enhanced some party's election prospects and affected their status and identity. For example the ex-communist parties sought links with the Socialist International, which was not prepared to admit them until they demonstrated their commitment to democracy and human rights. This provided extra pressure on these parties to adhere to reformist tendencies, thereby providing a direct external influence on internal political processes.  

Other external political influences in the post-1989 period came more directly from Western liberal democratic governments. In effect Western governments had some potential to influence the formation of East-Central European governments through their support or disapproval of personnel or parties. For example, in Hungary a major issue after the 1990 elections was what form the coalition government should take. The United States appeared to favour a grand coalition, while Germany looked approvingly at a centre-right coalition. These differing external signs of support reflected the different Hungarian party identities. The Free Democrats with their more radical liberal ideas attracted the American freedom of spirit and enterprise; Antall and the Democratic Forum were more closely identified with Europe and the German economy.

More informal external influences came in the form of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) which began to operate in the region. These organisations were often supported by the West, and some were funded by Western governments. Between 1989 and 1992 the number of registered "civil associations" in Hungary increased from 8,574 to 19,950. In

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516 Polish-German relations were tense on occasion, particularly over border issues, see for example Millard,F., (1994) The Anatomy of the New Poland, Edward Elgar, England & USA, especially Chapter 8
Poland an estimated 20,000 non-governmental associations were operating by 1995.\textsuperscript{520} Encouragement of "civil society" and a more bottom up decentralisation of power also came from such organisations as the George Soros Foundation which initially helped fund and develop the Central European University (CEU) and Open Media Research Institute. The Soros Foundation initiated projects throughout the East-Central European region to promote market economies, the protection of minorities, and educational projects clearly aimed at promoting democracy and critical thinking in Western and American terms.\textsuperscript{521} Although such foundations and organisations operated throughout the region, Poland and Hungary were often amongst the first countries to become associated with these types of organisations, and experienced greater penetration of Western influences as a consequence.

**Bulgaria and Romania**

Both Bulgarian and Romanian post-communist governments were hampered in their applications for membership of Western associations. Western organisations invariably backed away from formal agreements, despite the rhetoric which implied that all the former Soviet bloc countries could be included.

Bulgaria and Romania gained full membership of the Council of Europe in 1992 and 1993 respectively. Both countries applied for NATO membership, but no movement towards incorporation was made. Prospects for membership were not aided by Russian objections to further enlargement, nor by the Bulgarian government's tentative proposals for an Eastern alliance with former Soviet Republics.\textsuperscript{522} Romania's human and minority rights policies were criticised by Western institutions, and the United States made it clear that the


\textsuperscript{521} Soros' objectives for the CEU and an example of the academic programme can be found in the CEU Prospectus, 1996, pp.5 & 119.

\textsuperscript{522} Palmer, J., "West carves up Europe in a new Yalta", The Observer, 21 April 1996, p.21
presence of extremists in the Romanian government in the mid 1990s did not boost their chances of joining NATO. 523

Both countries signed initial Europe Agreements with the EU in early 1993, two years after Poland and Hungary. The PHARE programme was extended to Bulgaria in 1990 and Romania in 1991. The Europe Agreements offered the prospect of full membership, but the likelihood of Bulgaria or Romania meeting the criteria (especially economic) within a short time were remote. Bulgaria's associate membership of the EU became effective in February 1995. Romania submitted its official application for full membership in June 1995. However, the EU "blacklist" of countries believed to pose a threat to security and immigration published in September 1995 included both Bulgaria and Romania, implying these countries were less acceptable as full members than some of their other East-Central European neighbours (notably the Visegrad countries).

Bulgaria probably encountered the most direct external governmental influence during the first free elections of 1990. The US Embassy actively supported the Union of Democratic Forces against the former communist BSP. A team of advisors arrived with $1.3 million dollars to aid their campaign. However, this did not result in a UDF win, and the public awareness of US involvement probably did more harm than good. 524

The United States' Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status was also influential in Romania. From 1975 to 1988 Romania enjoyed MFN status and considerable trade links. 525 The new post-1989 regime was keen to restore MFN, and relations with the Americans. Secretary of

525 On February 26, 1988, the State Department announced Romania's decision that it was no longer interested in MFN status, and noted that MFN would expire on July 3, 1988. In addition, Romania would be ineligible for any United States government export credits through programmes such as the Commodity Credit Corporation of the Eximbank. The loss of trade was considerable. In 1988, the two countries exchanged a total of $940 million worth of goods. By 1989 two way trade had dropped to $509 million. See Harrington, J., Karns, E., & Karns, S., "American-Romanian relations, 1989-1994", East European Quarterly, Summer 1995, vol.29, no.2, p.207-29
State Baker visited Bucharest on February 11, 1990. Although he promised President Iliescu humanitarian aid, he emphasised that the future of American-Romanian relations rested on Bucharest's willingness to move rapidly toward greater democratisation, religious freedom, protection of human rights and the rights of minorities. American observers were sent to the May 1990 elections. Although the observers reported no blatant fraud, some irregularities were recorded. However, the Tirgu Mures incident in March concerning the Hungarian minority, and the miners rampage in June 1990 provided the main evidence that Romania's democratic progress was far from acceptable to the Americans (for these incidents see previously in Chapter 5). Trade gradually increased between the two countries, but further agreements with Western institutions tended to rest on the perception of how democratic Romania was becoming - invariably measured by how free and fair each set of elections was perceived to be by outside observers. It was not until 1992, after Romania agreed to support UN economic sanctions on Yugoslavia (which was potentially detrimental to Romanian trade) that support from the West began to increase. Transnational political party links were also evident in Bulgaria and Romania, but most activity was centred on Poland and Hungary (and Czech and Slovak Republics). The only EU state to systematically develop links in Bulgaria and Romania was Greece. Leaders of the BSP established links with the Greek socialists. The Movement for Rights and Freedoms (the Turkish minority party in Bulgaria) also received campaign support from Turkey. 526

As already mentioned (above) indirect influences from NGOs, foundations and educational projects were in evidence throughout the region. For example, Western based voluntary organisations, such as the White Cross involved in the Romanian orphanage crisis, brought with them their own attitudes to child care, and children's rights. However, overall there tended to be less Western government or EU supported projects due to the delay in incorporating Bulgaria and Romania into Western programmes and associations.

Conclusion

The political and economic conditions imposed by external organisations were not the sole constraint on each country's policies. East-Central European government policies and internal conditions did not always take the direction preferred by the West. Equally Western governments and institutions were often slow or reluctant to give aid and incorporate East-Central European countries into Western "clubs". Nevertheless, Western organisations had significant influence throughout the region. Through association with Western institutions, East-Central European countries were encouraged to promote Western (liberal democratic) style policy directions and value orientations within their own internal programmes. For example, the EU's stated aims towards Central and Eastern Europe were: to support their movement towards market economies, pluralist democracies and international integration. EU policy statements distinctly specified elements of democracy - such as rule of law, respect for human rights, pluralism, and multi-party elections.\(^{527}\) The focus of programmes - such as PHARE - also changed from general promotion of private enterprise and democratic governmental practice towards "teaching governments to manage and regulate a market-oriented system by developing new institutions and non-governmental organisations....[which included] aiming to build democratic process at 'grassroots' level by encouraging the free media and independent NGOs".\(^{528}\) The development of "civil society", through encouraging non-governmental organisations, became an additional means for promoting and consolidating democracy. As a result of these kinds of external influences many East-Central European policies - not only economic and political, but also social policies (including minority and human rights policies) - were shaped by a wide variety of Western oriented international organisations, non-governmental bodies and charities.

Although Bulgaria and Romania moved towards integration into Western associations, it is noticeable that they were slower than Poland and Hungary in formalising agreements and joining Western "clubs". Internal economic conditions - especially the level and structure


\(^{528}\) The European Commission Background Report B/3/97 "The Enlargement of the European Union", February 1997

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of the Bulgarian and Romanian economies - not only meant that these countries were starting from different bases which made it difficult to compete within the world economy, but also made them less attractive to foreign investors, and impeded their integration into Western associations. Bulgaria was especially disadvantaged in terms of trade and investment. In both countries the initial post-1989 domination of former communists in government was also detrimental - especially for Romania - as their democratic credentials were called into question. These countries were not only perceived to be "lagging" behind Poland and Hungary politically and economically, but were also actively condemned and penalised for their perceived status. This may have encouraged more Western oriented democratic practices and policies to be introduced, but it also served to decrease their chances of becoming integrated into Western European and international associations, as they struggled to improve economic conditions with lower levels of external support.

Movement towards marketisation and democratisation by all four countries was generally encouraged by Western governments and international organisations. Yet, internal differences between the cases were reinforced by the aids and constraints of the international context.
Chapter 8 Conclusions

This chapter will conclude the analysis of the 1989 East-Central European revolutions by first, drawing together the patterns of difference between the cases already established in Part 1 and Part 2, and the argument these patterns imply. Second, a summary of the main theoretical issues confronted within the thesis, and implications for defining the East-Central European changes will be addressed. Third, the strengths and weaknesses of the comparative-historical method will be assessed, and the usefulness of its application to the East-Central European cases examined.

8.1 Patterns of Difference Between the Cases

The application of the comparative-historical method to the 1989 revolutions in Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania has shown that some factors were common to all four countries. It has been established that all the communist regimes faced similar crises by 1989. Each country retained structural and cultural elements from their respective communist systems. Each post-communist regime faced specific political, economic and social issues in attempting change from centralised political and economic systems to market economies and pluralist democracies. Certain aspects of change are not clear-cut. Nevertheless, the application of the method has also identified patterns of difference between the cases. Inferences have been drawn from these differences which suggest that the differing “nature” of the communist systems had an impact on the forms and outcomes of revolutionary change.

Part 1 examined contributing factors to the revolutions, and found that the conditions within the communist systems were very different by 1989. Common external influences had different effects in each case. These differing internal conditions, alongside regime action or reaction to the crises faced, appeared to result in differing forms of revolution. Table 8.1 below summarises significant aspects of the patterns of difference between the cases, highlighting the conditions evident by 1989.

The common external changes within, and foreign policy signals emanating from, the Soviet Union, alongside increasing Western economic, cultural and ideological
penetration, had significant influence on Polish and Hungarian regimes, opposition movements and societies by the late 1980s. These regimes, opposition movements and societies were partly a product of the liberalised, partially restructured states and economies that developed out of the post-1956 "normalisations". During the late 1980s political actors responded to external influences and internal conditions; their actions culminating in "negotiated" forms of revolution.

In Bulgaria and Romania the same external conditions had little, or no effect within the centralised states, hierarchical parties, and closed societies, until late 1989. Despite relatively poor and impoverished economies, and some penetration of utopian images from the West, no organised and focused opposition movements emerged to "negotiate" change. Regime leaders and "politicised" militaries remained entrenched until eventually forced to react to external and internal pressures.

In Part 2 the conclusion to each chapter has identified some similarities across the cases and differences within the cases in terms of outcomes. In particular political party developments do not show clear differences between the cases, while reasons for some aspects of social outcomes must remain partly speculative.

The post-1989 context itself provided political, economic and social constraints and effects for all four post-communist regimes. Political conflicts over the nature and pace of reform, unsettled institutional and constitutional matters, factional parties, unstable party systems, personal rivalries, and economic crises had potential to disrupt and delay processes of change in each country. Economic outcomes in particular were partly determined by internal and international factors which surrounded post-1989 regimes, moderating fast track economic policies and slowing privatisation plans. Post-1989 economic "shocks" also had severe consequences for societies, which in turn influenced decision-makers - particularly with regard to privatising large state industries - a process delayed even in Poland and Hungary despite initial intentions.

Nevertheless patterns of difference between the cases are apparent. Table 8.2 below summarises significant aspects of differences in forms and outcomes. In Poland and Hungary - where the communist systems were already partially reformed and restructured prior to 1989, and established opposition movements took part in "negotiated" forms of
political change - there was greater potential for more radical reform of post-communist systems, especially in terms of regime change, political elite change and change within the communist parties. Former communists were politically marginalised, there was relatively steady movement towards more complete system change, longer term economic improvements, and international integration. The political, economic and social conditions in Bulgaria and Romania in 1989, and the form of political change - with little or no organised opposition involvement - generally restricted and delayed post-1989 reform processes, including reform and reorientation of former communists.

Although each variable has been examined in relative isolation, the interaction of internal and external variables appears to be important for understanding the processes of change. The internal political, economic and social restructuring within the Polish and Hungarian systems prior to 1989 and the external influences during the 1980s, especially the effects of the Gorbachev reforms and Western influences, created a particular context and form of revolution. The context and form of revolution also appears significant for shaping the nature and pace of change after 1989. In contrast the highly centralised communist systems, close regime and party-state associations, and less penetration of external influences prior to (and after) 1989 in Bulgaria and Romania, resulted in incomplete regime change, and overall slower system change after 1989.

The comparative-historical method employed in this thesis has identified common factors across the cases (external pressures alongside similar internal economic and social crises). Following the logic of the method these similarities appear to be the crucial preconditions for the collapse of the communist systems. The method has also identified differences between the cases which suggest that the different political, economic and social “nature” of the systems created the contexts within which political actors and social forces could act or react to external and internal pressures for change. These contexts appear significant for the different forms of change that took place in 1989/1990, and also appear to have significance for outcomes.
8.2 Theoretical and Conceptual Issues

During the investigation of existing literature on East-Central Europe a host of theories were encountered, some particular theoretical issues were addressed, and debates entered into. Some main points from these encounters can now be drawn together. First, a crisis of legitimacy as an explanation for the collapse communism was addressed in Part 1. There is a lack of empirical evidence to substantiate the presence or absence of legitimacy during the communist period – especially in Bulgaria and Romania. However, the discussion presented in this thesis suggests that, although a lack of mass legitimacy and a loss of elite self-legitimacy may have played a precipitating role in the collapse of communism, this does not provide complete explanation. In itself, a lack of legitimacy may not destabilise the state or regime. The application of the method shows that a conjuncture of political, economic and social crises, alongside international pressures (albeit with differing consequences), appeared to be the main contributing factors to the collapse of communism.

A second issue that was addressed in Part 2 was the circulation and reproduction of elites theses. The dominant view in the existing literature was that marketisation and privatisation would benefit former communist elites, who would retain their positions at the top of the social strata with few constraints. The circulation of elites thesis suggests that the former elite would be able to maintain some positions at the top of the social structure, but there would be political limits determining the extent to which they would be successful at maintaining these positions.\(^{529}\)

It is evident from the examination of the East-Central European cases that there was a greater circulation of political elites in Poland and Hungary than in Bulgaria or Romania. A circulation that was already in progress prior to 1989. Whereas, in both cases, a greater reproduction of economic elites took place. However, neither a simple reproduction or circulation thesis is adequate to explain the complexities of elite social change that occurred in Poland and Hungary, while insufficient empirical evidence is available to fully substantiate theory in Bulgaria and Romania.

\(^{529}\) See Szelenyi, S., & Szelenyi, I., (1995) and Chapter 6, section 2 of this thesis
Nevertheless, the elite continuities evident are often seen within existing literature on East-Central Europe, and by many East-Central Europeans themselves, as producing a less than revolutionary outcome to the 1989 events.\textsuperscript{530} Although it is beyond the remit of this thesis to redefine the events of 1989/90, and for the comparative-historical analysis undertaken here unnecessary, some implications for defining and examining these events can be made.

To refuse to classify these events as revolutions on the basis of elite continuity is first, not attending to how revolutions are invariably defined. Second, it suggests a misreading and oversimplification of what revolutions entail and what took place in the so-called "classic" French, Russian and Chinese revolutions. On the first point, only Marxists and Marxist-oriented social scientists such as Barrington Moore require a change in social stratification as a necessary characteristic of revolutions.\textsuperscript{531} On the second point, although the "classic" revolutions may not be seen as comparable to the East-Central European events of 1989 – the historical and structural contexts are very different – there are some similarities, especially in terms of social change. For example, in the French revolution former elites were not completely overthrown. A bourgeois or capitalist class did not immediately emerge to replace the aristocracy or nobility. Middle ranking, educated, formerly marginal elites achieved career mobility as a result of the revolution.\textsuperscript{532} In East-Central Europe former communists were not completely eradicated from top economic or political positions. In this case, former middle ranking managers and a younger generation of better educated professionals and technocrats acquired social mobility as a result of the 1989/1990 events, which swept away the pre-1989 "old guard" communists. In addition, the expectation that capitalist social relations and a "new class" of private entrepreneurs would emerge quickly in East-Central Europe was a high expectation. After all the French revolution was only bourgeois in that it consolidated and simplified property rights, and only capitalist in that it cleared away barriers to the expansion of a competitive, national market economy. Although local antagonists of peasant communities were removed – institutionally speaking, the old collective customs survived leaving the peasants divided, while not all peasants benefited as a result. In fact, if we focus on changes in the state rather than on social structure, it was changes in the former that enabled a new class to

\textsuperscript{530}See for example, Szelenyi,S., & Szelenyi, I., (1995) p.616-617
\textsuperscript{532}Skocpol (1979) p.166
emerge in this “classic” revolution, and even then it took some considerable time. In East-Central Europe the domination and control of the party-state over the economy was removed by the events of 1989/1990, states are in the process of being de-centralised, and certainly in Poland and Hungary, there is evidence that complex patterns of social mobility are appearing. In all four countries new markets – both domestic and international – are being established, and there are winners and losers in society. None of these changes are purely determined by, or necessarily in the interest of, former communist elites.

There are, of course, also considerable differences between the East-Central European events and the “classic” revolutions. There are three main points to note. First, these were – in the main – not violent events. As we saw in summing up Part 1, the interdependence of the Soviet bloc, the attitude of the Moscow regime, and the international climate of the late 1980s was significant for the non-violence during the collapse of communist regimes in East-Central Europe. Additionally, in the least violent cases (Poland and Hungary) a less politicised, more professional military appeared less likely to intervene in political processes of change. Second, the communist party-states were dismantled or at least severely disrupted, but the basic state structures did not completely collapse. The communist systems already had urban, industrial and educated societies organised by state institutions, and already had in place (if only in façade form) the basic institutions required for some form of democracy to be established. Third, the trajectory of change was different. The “classic” revolutions incorporated a movement towards centralisation of the state, whereas in East-Central Europe the movement is away from centralisation, of both the state and the economy. Certain socio-economic conditions “carry over” in any revolution. In the East-Central European context, some continuity of elites and residual control over decentralisation processes (especially in economies with large state-run sectors) may be inevitable.

What the application of the comparative-historical method shows is that where there were smaller state bureaucracies, where political dislocation of the party-state and decentralisation of the state had already occurred, and where independent opposition movements were already established prior to 1989 (in Poland and Hungary), a greater circulation of political elites and reorientation of communist parties could take place after

533 Ibid. pp.179, 127-128
However, despite the intentions of "new" political elites, the existence of "second economies" before 1989 and the relatively advantageous "starting points" for economic restructuring, a similar circulation of economic elites has not - as yet - taken place. Instead, a significant number of elite nomenklatura and former middle-ranking managers maintain some control over economic assets, especially within the unrestructured state sector.

If we take Hungary as an example of the processes involved, it appears that Kadar's "goulash communism" altered dependence patterns within the Hungarian communist party hierarchy. This led to the party becoming less reliant on nomenklatura recruitment and contributed to considerable deconstruction of the party apparatus prior to 1989. The political and economic conditions in Hungary, coupled with declining social mobility, encouraged many communists to manoeuvre themselves out of the political power structure and into mid-level positions within the economic managerial sector before 1989 (see previously in Chapter 2, sections 3 and 4). Many of these mid-level managers achieved social mobility as a result of the 1989 events. Although in this case less than a third of the elite nomenklatura became part of the "new" economic elite, it is evident that certain sections of the former communist elite were those with the skills, experience and connections to adapt to the post-1989 political and economic conditions. There is evidence to suggest that similar social elite change took place in Poland before 1989. However, in contrast to Hungary the more bureaucratic Polish communist party-state enabled slightly higher numbers of elite nomenklatura to become "new" economic elites, while slightly fewer lower-level managers benefited from change (see previously in Chapter 6, section 2).

In Bulgaria and Romania, it appears that the highly centralised economies, the presence of a large state apparatus, and party hierarchies based on personalised patronage and corrupt practices did not enable any similar social elite change to take place before 1989. This could only begin in late 1989 and early 1990 when the party-state and communist parties were severely disrupted, and decentralisation of the state and economy initiated. Only then could alternatives for recruitment to either political or economic elite positions emerge. Although processes of change were delayed in Bulgaria and Romania, and the post-1989 internal conditions and international context appear to be constraining as much as supporting continued change, this does not mean that these countries will not continue moving towards some form of democracy and marketisation. In fact, the Polish and Hungarian example provides an account of how a departure from central planning and an
overly centralised state can erode party-state associations, alter previous patterns of
dependence and lead to further political, economic and social change. The 1989 and 1990
political changes in Bulgaria and Romania may indicate that such a process is in its early
stages. This thesis assumes that a similar dynamic is taking place in all four countries (due
to the similarities apparent, see also the following section). However, the different internal
conditions and post-1989 international context will have effects, and may result in slightly
different final outcomes for Bulgaria and Romania. The overarching trajectory may be the
same, but the location within that trajectory, timing of changes, and order of processes may
differ.

In short, this discussion highlights the need to focus attention not just on elite
characteristics, their social position or behaviour at the time radical political change occurs.
It is also necessary to investigate conditions within the state, the effects of the international
context and the inter-relationship of elite actions with political, economic, social and
cultural conditions before, during and after such revolutionary situations. The East-Central
European changes may well be unique, and may not be comparable to any other form of
change. They may equally require new methods of investigation, or new theories and
concepts to explain the ongoing changes that are taking place. The approach taken in this
thesis can at least highlight and potentially confront theoretical and conceptual issues of
the kind discussed above. Additionally, the application of the method can illuminate where
more research may be needed to fully explain the unique features of the East-Central
European events and processes of change.

8.3 The Usefulness of the Comparative Method

The application of J.S. Mill’s method of agreement has identified and highlighted patterns
of difference between the cases. As indicated in the introductory chapter, there are
problems in applying such a method. Despite the primary objective of illuminating causal
regularities across sets of cases, a main weakness of the method is that similarities and
differences can only suggest causal argument. The method cannot establish cause and
effect. For example, the common factors of the external effects of the international context,
and internal economic and social crises imply that these were the main causes of the
collapse of communism. However, without examining another country within a similar
context where communism did not collapse (using the indirect method of difference), this cannot be perfectly validated. Even with the use of the indirect method of difference some unidentified factor may have produced the effect. Some factors must be assumed to be relevant or irrelevant. History never produces perfect comparisons. Perfect controls for potentially relevant variables can never be achieved, and any conclusions drawn cannot necessarily be generalised to other cases. Yet, a specific set of conditions can be identified as being significant for a process to occur, even if slightly different combinations of causes are at work in that process. In the East-Central European cases it appears that common external cultural, political and economic pressures on regimes which were potentially already destabilised by internal economic and social crises created the preconditions for the collapse of communism in all four countries. However, the collapse was precipitated by slightly different combinations of conditions within each country. The general process was similar, but the form of change and outcome varied in each case. The method can illuminate such variations, and as a result lead to a better understanding of overall processes and the specific differences that are intrinsic to those overall processes.

It must also be acknowledged that the method alone is no substitute for theory. Theory informs the questions asked, and the selection of variables. The theoretical framework utilised in this thesis is very general in many respects, and is a reflection of the theoretical debates of the day. General theoretical frameworks in themselves create problems. The framework used has taken a range of variables, separated them in order to discuss processes of change, whilst attempting to acknowledge the interplay of factors. As mentioned in Chapter 1, efforts to incorporate further levels or variables to a catalogue of conditions without fully theorising components of processes, tends to result in a list of contributory factors, rather than complete explanation. Clear identification of the inter-relationship of variables is exceedingly difficult in any political science investigation. This is especially the case in the study of such revolutionary situations as the East-Central European cases where complex interactions between cultural, economic, social, and political variables took place. As a result it is impossible to identify determining factors. Each variable is potentially determining of, or determined by any other. The comparative-historical method can greatly assist in the identification of common and differentially specific causal variables, but exhibits far less merit in the clear determination of the relationship between them vis-à-vis cause and effect.
Despite these problems, the application of the method can stimulate new ways of looking at cases. Arguments may initially be disproved, and assumptions are often brought to the investigator’s attention. This can lead to reformulating or refining arguments as the investigation continues. An example can demonstrate this process. Initially, in investigating the East-Central European cases, it was assumed that opposition movements were a focus for attention. Theoretical discussion highlights “independent autonomous communities” or “popular mass mobilisation potential” as potential contributory factors to the breakdown of states. However, differences identified between the East-Central European cases suggest that established independent opposition groups were not a necessary condition for the collapse of communism. Such groups were not established in Bulgaria, and non-existent in Romania prior to 1989. Nevertheless, it does appear that the presence or absence of opposition groups had significance for forms and outcomes: whether negotiations for change took place and alternative political elites were in waiting (Poland and Hungary), or whether remnants of the old regimes remained dominant within 1989 and early post-1989 processes (Bulgaria and Romania). Additionally, by looking at differences within the Polish and Hungarian case, it is apparent that very different developments in opposition movements took place. In Hungary, the opposition developed from inside the state and ruling elite, rather than outside the party-state apparatus as in Poland. Yet, this difference did not prevent a generally similar political outcome. Such observations turns attention, not only to other political factors, such as the role of the communist parties, the military or party-state apparatus, but also to other economic and social variables, and their contribution to processes of change. The similarities within the Polish and Hungarian case suggest that smaller state bureaucracies, the effects of Western cultural penetration, relatively apathetic society and relatively adaptable economic “starting points” contributed to the overall similar outcome in this case.

Similarly when examining common factors across cases further investigation will often be undertaken. If no common factors were found, this might suggest that different types of change had occurred. Each case might then be investigated to establish new typologies for the events. In the East-Central European cases there are factors common to all the cases which suggest causal explanation. External pressures, and internal economic and social crises do appear to be significant contributory factors to the collapse of communism.

\[534\] See for example, Skocpol or Goldstone in Chapter 1
However, it is also apparent that these common features can differ in causal significance. In the cases studied here, international influences had very different effects. A search for reasons for these differences then takes place. When cases do not fit the assumed argument, other variables are examined, and new interpretations may be found. In the East-Central European cases it was discovered that the interplay of political factors - such as the smaller (or larger) state bureaucracies inherited from the communist system, pre-1989 restructuring (or not) of state institutions, and the presence (or absence) of alternative political elites (as established independent oppositions) - with economic and social factors - of a slow-down in social mobility, partially decentralised (or highly centralised) economies and partial political elite restructuring (or not) prior to 1989 - alongside differing penetration of external influences – contributed to the more (or less) complete, and rapid (or slow) system change after 1989. In other words the comparative-historical method encourages “process-tracing” of a wide range of factors throughout a historical period which can lead to a more comprehensive understanding of events. 535 This thesis has identified factors that have been recognised within existing literature on East-Central Europe as potentially significant to processes of change. However, this existing literature often identifies these factors separately or in isolated configurations, and often lacks acknowledgement to the overall context. The particular development of communist state structures, societies and economies provided particular conditions within which political elites and actors could act or react. Investigation of the interplay of such factors as economic conditions or social and state structures with political factors are important for understanding why apparently similar political changes take different forms, and have different outcomes. Narrow investigations of political regimes and actors, or such broad concepts as legitimation crisis, do not illuminate overall contexts, nor do they fully explain processes of change and differences between cases.

Thus, the comparative-historical method encourages investigation of a wide range of variables, often questions assumed arguments, and potentially generates new explanations. Neither the method, nor the theoretical frame of reference used in this thesis, can thoroughly “test” the inferences drawn. However, the analysis does suggest that a

535 Goldstone refers to “process-tracing” in comparative history as a means to validate findings which differentiates comparative history from correlation studies using many cases. The former can point out relationships that are - as yet - unrecognised or
comparative-historical approach to such unique phenomena as the East-Central European events of 1989/1990 is an appropriate method to use, and can add to understanding and explanation. The East-Central European cases highlight several factors and processes that could be taken up and investigated further as part of a comparative history “research cycle”. For example, the effects of external influences upon the “nature” of other communist systems could be demonstrated through a parallel comparative-historical approach. This might stimulate a contrast-oriented study that could draw out greater detail and identify further inter-relationships between factors. This in turn could lead to new explanatory arguments. Each “logic” has its own limitations, but together they can generate new arguments or theoretical leads. The test of comparative history is not whether it can precisely predict events or provide incontestable theories, but that it identifies and illuminates relationships in particular sequences of historical events.

Comparative analysis will always struggle with the sorts of problems highlighted here, but a comparative-historical approach, alongside a broad theoretical framework, can encourage cases and processes to be examined as wholes, put them in context, identify and acknowledge the interaction of a variety of structural, cultural and agency factors, and potentially generate new ideas.

misunderstood, while the latter provide limited generalisations that remain to be demonstrated. Goldstone, J., in Gans, H.J.. (ed) (1990) pp.275-292, especially p.290

536 See Skocpol, T., & Somers, M., (1980) and Chapter 1, p.9 of this thesis.
Table 8.1 Pre-1989 Conditions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>International context</th>
<th>Poland &amp; Hungary</th>
<th>Bulgaria &amp; Romania</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Influence of changes within, and signals from the Soviet Union.</td>
<td>Regimes act, and attempt reforms. Offers dissidents and opposition movements optimism</td>
<td>Regimes misunderstand or ignore. Little influence on those opposed to the regimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western economic, cultural and ideological penetration</td>
<td>Substantial influence on intellectuals and societies, heightens expectations for change</td>
<td>Utopian for intellectuals and society, but &quot;unrealistic&quot; Western images absorbed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internal conditions by 1989</th>
<th>Poland &amp; Hungary</th>
<th>Bulgaria &amp; Romania</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>political</td>
<td>Liberalised, semi-reformed states. &quot;Professional&quot; militaries and partial dislocation or restructuring of communist parties</td>
<td>Centralised states, &quot;politicised&quot; militaries and hierarchical, leadership oriented communist parties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>economic</td>
<td>Semi-reformed with &quot;second economies&quot;</td>
<td>Centralised, and relatively poor or impoverished</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social</td>
<td>Some social group autonomy; &quot;visible&quot;, organised opposition movements</td>
<td>Little or late social group autonomy; little or no focused or organised opposition movements</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 8.2 Political Form and Post-1989 Outcomes of the Revolutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>Poland &amp; Hungary</strong></th>
<th><strong>Bulgaria &amp; Romania</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Political Form of Revolution</strong></td>
<td>&quot;Outside&quot; and/or &quot;inside&quot; opposition involvement in &quot;negotiations&quot; with communist parties. No military intervention.</td>
<td>Little or no organised, focused opposition involvement in &quot;facade&quot; negotiations. Some military intervention.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>International context</strong></td>
<td>Close geographical, and perceived ideological, and cultural affiliation to Western Europe. Relatively rapid reorientation of trade, integration into world economy and international organisations</td>
<td>Perceived as less economically and politically acceptable to the West. Slow reorientation of trade, slow integration into world economy and international organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Internal conditions post-1989</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>economic</td>
<td>Steady economic adjustment and recovery</td>
<td>Relatively poor adjustment and recovery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social</td>
<td>Greater political elite change. Less direct political participation by society</td>
<td>Less political elite change with stronger ties to &quot;old&quot; system. Greater direct political participation by society</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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