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CIVIL SOCIETY, SECOND SOCIETY AND THE BREAKDOWN OF COMMUNIST REGIMES IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE: POLAND, CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND ROMANIA

By

Tracey Judson

A Doctoral Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements
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Civil Society, Second Society and the Breakdown of Communist Regimes in Central and Eastern Europe: Poland, Czechoslovakia and Romania.

Abstract

This thesis proceeds from the premise that the demise of the Communist systems of rule in Eastern Europe is not fully explicable using "traditional" theories of transition or democratisation. This thesis is, therefore, concerned initially with the limitations of existing theoretical frameworks. It proposes a line of enquiry that accounts for the breakdown of Communism through an analysis of a domestic variable: second society. In particular, it addresses the question of why the former European Communist regimes experienced differing modes of breakdown in 1989. The thesis adopts a comparative approach and focuses on the three different cases of Poland, Czechoslovakia and Romania. By comparing them, it analyses the extent to which variations in the modes of breakdown can be explained by the second society variable. The case studies are divided into three sections. The first considers the historical issues and factors that conditioned the nature of the Communist regime and of emerging opposition. The second analyses the development of second society within each country and the third section considers the impact of second society on the mode of regime breakdown in 1989. The thesis concludes that the case studies demonstrate a causal relationship between the second society variable and the mode of breakdown experienced by the Communist regimes.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ALRC	Romanian Committee for the Defence of Freedom of Religion and Conscience
CC	Central Committee (of the Communist Party)
CCP	Czechoslovak Communist Party
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
COM	Workers' Council, Romania
COMECON	Council for Mutual Economic Assistance
CSCE	Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe
GDR	German Democratic Republic (East Germany)
ICPA	Information Centre for Polish Affairs
KKW	National Executive Commission of Solidarity
KOR	Committee for the Defence of Workers, Poland
KOS	Circles of Social Resistance, Poland
KSS-KOR	Social Self-Defence Committee – KOR, Poland
MKS	Interfactory Strike Committee, Poland
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NPP	National Peasant Party, Romania
NSF	National Salvation Front, Romania
OF	Civic Forum, Czechoslovakia
OKO	National Resistance Committee, Poland
PPN	Polish Coalition for Independence
PPR	Polish Workers' Party
PPS	Polish Socialist Party
PRON	Committee of National Salvation, Poland
PSL	Polish Peasant Party
PZPR	Polish United Workers' Party (Communist Party)
RCP	Romanian Communist Party
RFE	Radio Free Europe
RKK	Regional Co-ordinating Committee, Poland
RMP	Young Poland Movement
RPR	Romanian People's Republic
RWP	Romanian Workers' Party
SAP	Short Action Programme (28th October Manifesto), Czechoslovakia
SKS	Student Solidarity Committee, Poland
SLOMR`	Free Trade Union of Romanian Workers
SMCC	Socialist Movement of Czechoslovak Citizens
TKK	Provisional Co-ordinating Committee, Poland

TKN	Society of Academic Courses ("Flying University"), Poland
TNC	Transnational Contact
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
VONS	Committee for the Defence of the Unjustly Persecuted
VPN	Public Against Violence, Czechoslovakia

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

THE REGIME BREAKDOWN AND TRANSITIONS LITERATURE

The years 1989-1991 witnessed one of the momentous events of the twentieth century and probably the greatest turning point in post-World War II history: the dissolution of Communism in Eastern Europe and the subsequent disintegration of the USSR itself. Variously described as "the end of history,"[1] and the "anus mirabilis of the post-war era in Europe,"[2] The electrifying collapse of Eastern Europe's Communist regimes heralded the end of the post-1945 ideological division of the European continent between East and West, and signalled an end to the forty-five-year-old Cold War confrontation. Furthermore, 1989 symbolised the triumph of democracy over Communist ideology, as the former Communist safe houses began to adopt democratic principles in their political, social and economic lives. Neither the East European leaders nor Mikhail Gorbachev – nor, indeed, many Western observers – foresaw that the June 1989 elections in Poland would be followed by the rapid unravelling of the Hungarian Communists' attempts at controlled reform or the revolutions spreading at a giddy speed to East Germany, Czechoslovakia and, finally, to Romania. Only one month prior to Czechoslovakia's "velvet revolution," the Communist Party leader, Milos Jakes, for example, was telling foreign visitors that there was no prospect of imminent trouble in his country.[3]

In 1989, then, academics were caught unprepared for the striking changes that took place. Certainly, the global wave of transitions away from authoritarian rule that began with Portugal's "Revolution of the Carnations" in 1974 and which crested with the collapse of the Communist regimes across Eastern Europe in 1989,[4] has spawned many, and often conflicting, theories of regime transformation and democratisation. The fact that the rich diversity of countries and their respective, and very much individual, modes of transition has, to an extent, precluded the development of broad models. Indeed, the search for a standard set of preconditions or facilitating events and factors is being increasingly recognised as futile.[5] Although representing the

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[1] F Fukuyama, 'The End of History,' The National Interest, Summer 1989, pp.3-18.

[2] G Schopflin, 'The End of Communism in Eastern Europe,' International Affairs, Vol 66 No 1, January 1990, p 3

[3] The Observer, Tearing Down the Iron Curtain, 1990 London, Hodder and Stoughton, pp 8-10

[4] S P.Huntington, The Third Wave: Democratisation in the Late Twentieth Century, 1991 Oklahoma, University Press, Introduction.

[5] B Zhang, 'Corporatism, Totalitarianism and Transitions to Democracy,' Comparative Political Studies, Vol 27(1), April 1994, p 110

viewpoint of a minority of scholars, Russell Bova claims that recent Communist transitions should not be regarded as special phenomena but, rather, as a sub-category of the wider global process of democratisation and that, therefore, a great deal can be learnt from earlier transitions in Latin America and Southern Europe.[6] Contrary to his opinion, Nancy Bermeo has stressed the uniqueness of the events of 1989. No Communist system of rule had ever previously collapsed, and many of the actions undertaken by a wide array of actors in both Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union were largely unprecedented and therefore unpredictable.[7] Consequently, she contends we should avoid too heavy a reliance on the literature on earlier transitions from authoritarian rule. Similarly, Gerardo Munck explains the difficulties encountered by those such as Samuel Huntington and Adam Przeworski in accounting for theory deviant cases – Poland and Hungary, for example – in their apparent willingness to explain Communist transitions via traditional and well-tested, yet ill-suited, theories.[8]

In light of these problems, this chapter is, therefore, concerned firstly with examining the limitations of existing theoretical frameworks with regard to the former Communist states of Eastern Europe. Secondly, whilst acknowledging that to search for the single cause of a regime transition is futile, it will propose a line of enquiry that accounts for the breakdown of Communist authoritarianism, via an analysis of a neglected domestic variable: civil society.

(1.1) Existing Theories of Democratisation/Regime Transition and their Predictive Limitations

Despite the recent growth of political and academic interest in democracy and the process of democratisation, there remain gaps in our understanding of the factors that facilitate or obstruct the emergence, establishment and subsequent consolidation of democratic government. In the existing literature on regime breakdown and democratisation, studies of regime transition tend to fall into two categories. The first emphasises variables of *context*,[9] whilst the second focuses on the actual *process*

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[6] R Bova, 'Political Dynamics of the Post-Communist Transition,' World Politics, Vol 44 No 1, October 1991, pp.113-115.

[7] N.Bermeo, Liberalisation and Democratisation, 1992 London, John Hopkins Press Ltd, pp.179-180.

[8] G L.Munck, 'Democratic Transitions in Comparative Perspective,' Comparative Politics, April 1994, p 361 See also· G Sartori, 'Concept Misinformation in Comparative Politics,' American Political Science Review, No 4, 1970, p 1034.

[9] Larry Diamond, Juan Linz and Seymour M.Lipset, for example, See their article, 'Comparing Experiences with Democracy,' in L Diamond, J Linz and S M Lipset (eds), Politics in Developing Countries, 1990 Colorado, Lynne Rienner Publishers Ltd, pp 1-37.

under examination.[10] The former *prerequisites* approach explains transition via certain objective conditions, such as the level of economic development, and of literacy amongst the population, transformations of the class structure – in particular, the growth of a politically-active middle class – and other environmental factors, which trigger a process of democratisation as a more or less predetermined and unintended consequence of wider structural change.[11] Conversely, the latter – the *generic* or *process* approach – focuses on the scope and significance of human choices and preferences and, thus, emphasises the role of specific political actors and their conscious decisions to change a country's political system.[12]

(1.2) Prerequisites Approach

The central argument of the prerequisites approach to the transition process is that democratisation is likely to occur in a society if certain preconditions or prerequisites are present or emergent. The approach represents the quest for a set of universal conditions that can explain the presence or absence of a democratic political system. Factors generally taken to be central to a process of change are summarised below.

(1.2.1) Economic Wealth and Development

Economic development and a rising income per capita, it is argued, will be accompanied by a number of factors – particularly social – which are conducive to, and supportive of democracy: higher rates of literacy, for example, widespread higher educational opportunities, and an urbanisation of the workforce. Such socio-economic development extends individual and group political consciousness, multiplying political demands and broadening participation. As countries develop economically, they move into a "zone of transition,"[13] of which democracy is the probable outcome. Thus, a process of democratisation is conceived as the natural concomitant of a complex amalgam of social and economic prerequisites, the transition of a regime being largely determined by certain specific socio-economic levels or indicators.[14] Expressed succinctly, for example:

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[10] G O'Donnell and P.Schmitter, Transitions From Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions About Uncertain Democracies, 1986 Baltimore, John Hopkins University Press.

[11] A Przeworski, 'Some Problems in the Study of Transition to Democracy,' in ibid, p 47.

[12] T.Vanhanen, Strategies of Democratisation, 1992 London, Taylor and Francis Ltd. The distinction between prerequisites and process is developed in. S.Huntington, 'Will More Countries Become Democratic ?' Political Science Quarterly, 99 (1984), pp.193-218.

[13] L Diamond et al, op cit, p 19

[14] D E.Neubauer, 'Some Conditions of Democracy,' American Political Science Review, Vol 61 No 4, December 1967, pp 1002-1006.

> "The more well-to-do a nation, the greater the chances that it will sustain democracy."[15]

In support of this statement, Lipset concluded that a society characterised by economic poverty would support either an oligarchy or a tyrannical form of rule. Employing indices of wealth, education, industrialisation and urbanisation, his study demonstrated that their respective levels were much higher in democratic countries than non-democratic ones. In recognition of the fact that transitions theory has evolved in new directions since the late 1950s, Lipset's later 1993 study did conclude that the relationship between wealth and democracy was not as deterministic as previously thought.[16] However, the study represented an amendment of his initial approach rather than its abandonment. In a similar study, Cutright posited a linear relationship between socio-economic and political or democratic development;[17] whilst Abbas Pourgerami formulated a wealth theory of democracy, emphasising the mutually reinforcing process of economic, political and cultural development.[18]

(1.2.2) Social Structure and Cultural Context

The existence of certain associational groups and social classes within a widely differentiated social structure consistently favours democracy, whilst a highly centralised or state-dominated society is likely to produce a system based on absolute monarchy or authoritarian dictatorship. Barrington Moore, for example, has stated that the foundations of democracy generally rested on a politically active middle class bourgeoisie.[19] In addition, the existence of a supportive political culture – for example, one that fosters a natural and accepted willingness to tolerate diversity and conflict, or that recognises the legitimacy and benefits of negotiation and compromise – will provide fertile ground for the germination and subsequent growth of

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[15] S M Lipset, 'Some Social Requisites of Democracy,' American Political Science Review, Vol 53 No 1, March 1959, p.71.

[16] S M Lipset, K R Seong and J C.Torres, 'A Comparative Analysis of the Social Requisites of Democracy,' International Social Science Journal, No.136, 1993, p.170.

[17] Philips Cutright, 'National Political Development Its Measurement and Social Correlates,' in: N.Smith (ed), Politics and Social Life, 1963 Boston, Houghton Mifflin Co , pp.569-582.

[18] A Pourgerami, 'The Political Economy of Development· An Empirical Examination of the Wealth of Democracy,' Journal of Theoretical Politics, 3(2), 1991

[19] B Moore, Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy, 1967 London, Allen Lane. See also· J Fermia, 'Barrington Moore and the Preconditions for Democracy,' British Journal of Political Science, 2, 1972, pp 21-46

democracy.[20] Conversely, traditionally hierarchical or highly centralised and state-controlled societies will generate accepted values and norms inimical to democracy.[21]

(1.2.3) The External Environment

In large measure, it is argued, the international context – that is, the standing or credibility of democracy on a global scale – is reflected in either the rise or decline of democratic political systems.[22] The global spread of democracy post-1945, for example, mirrored the relative rise and pre-eminence of the United States; whilst the waning of democracy in Latin America in the 1970s was in part a reflection of the decline of American influence.[23] Simultaneously, the popularity and legitimacy of authoritarian ideologies and political systems, such as Communism, appeared to decline parallel to the evident deterioration of the economic, social and political systems of the Soviet Union. In addition, regional influences can have a significant effect on political development. The encouragement by West European states of the process of democratisation in both Spain and Greece is evident, as were the economic attractions of European Community membership. Finally, the impact of regional trends should not be overlooked. Huntington refers to the influence of factors such as simultaneous regional socio-economic growth and development, as occurred in Latin America; the impact of a common external factor, such as the influence of the United States in the case of Latin America; and the triggering of a trend of democratisation, or a demonstration effect of one society on another.[24]

To summarise, structural prerequisites favourable to a process of democratisation have long been the object of considerable scholarly attention. In theory, if certain preconditions are present, a process of transition to democracy is likely to occur. No single factor, in particular, is sufficient to lead to democratic development however, some combination – which will vary from one country to another – may facilitate the onset of a process of democratisation. We should be aware, however, that democracy has not always corresponded to our understanding of its supposed prerequisites.[25] Taking economic development as an example, it is

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[20] G Almond and S Verba, The Civic Culture, 1963 Princeton, University Press

[21] S.Verba, 'Comparative Political Culture,' in L Pye and S.Verba (eds), Political Culture and Political Development, 1965 Princeton, University Press.

[22] L.Whitehead, 'International Aspects of Democratisation,' in G O'Donnell and P Schmitter, op cit, pp.3-46.

[23] S P Huntington, 'Will More Countries Become Democratic ?' Political Science Quarterly, Vol 99 No.2, 1984, pp 206-7.

[24] Ibid, p.207.

[25] R.Bova, op cit, p.132.

important to recognise that a strong correlation does exist between such factors as a nation's wealth and political democracy.[26] Neubauer, to an extent, confirms the conclusions of Lipset and Cutright agreeing that, as countries become more advanced economically and socially, they also tend to become more advanced politically. However, he proceeds to qualify this by contending that, as countries experience socio-economic development, they merely move into a "developmental mode" or "threshold" from which democratic political development is only one of a number of possible outcomes, and not necessarily the automatic one.[27] Moreover, whilst it is undeniable that most democratic countries are also relatively wealthy, it cannot be said that all wealthy nations are democracies. This is important when analysing political transition in Eastern Europe. The Communist countries were united by economic crisis and stagnation, foreign debt and rapidly rising inflation. Although certain individual countries were identified as occupying a position in the "upper middle income" bracket supposedly supportive of democratisation – notably, Yugoslavia and Poland – regime transition occurred despite the existence of differentiated levels of socio-economic development. Why, then, did an economically and technologically backward Eastern Europe undergo a blanket transformation of existing regimes?

Similarly, it remains unclear whether a supportive political culture is a cause or, rather, an effect of democratic practice.[28] Relatively poor traditional societies, characterised by the existence of illiterate rural populations and parochial political cultures, do experience considerable difficulty in establishing and maintaining democratic political systems; and Eastern Europe did represent a relative vacuum of relevant experience in competitive pluralistic politics. However, the absence or presence of specific cultural or economic factors – at least based on the evidence presented by the East European examples – cannot be taken as the sole or main determinants of the onset or existence of democracy. In support of this, O'Donnell and Schmitter state that "it is fruitless to search for some international factor or context which can reliably compel authoritarian rulers to experiment with liberalisation much less which can predictably cause their regimes to collapse."[29] In

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[26] J B Londregan and K.T.Poole, 'Does High Income Promote Democracy ?' World Politics, Vol.49 No 1, pp 1-30, 1997; and B Kiernan, The End of Soviet Politics, 1993 Oxford, Westview Press Inc., p 6

[27] D E Neubauer, op cit, pp 1002-3

[28] T.Lynn Karl and P.Schmitter, 'Modes of Transition in Latin America and Southern Europe,' International Social Science Journal, No,128, 1991, p 270.

[29] G O'Donnell and P Schmitter, op cit, pp 18-19.

effect, the catalyst for a process of transition could not have come from a positive economic indicator of a certain level of development.

To summarise, a prerequisite approach assumes democratisation to be a likely outcome of economic development and specific cultural patterns. Undeniably, such factors do play a contributory role in delineating the general boundaries for regime change and, therefore, should be considered in transition studies. They do not, however, determine the direction or outcome of regime change.[30] Prerequisite factors can be decisive in restricting or increasing the options available; however, a research strategy founded entirely on an attempt to identify a set of standard determinants would be incomplete and questionable.

(1 3) Processes

The alternative *process* approach focuses on more subjective phenomena than levels of literacy or economic development. Underlying the analysis is the knowledge that "democracy does not fall from heaven," rather, its initiation and consolidation depends on a vast range of less tangible factors including individuals, groups and organisations, and their respective decisions, alliances and opinions.[31] Studies do tend to vary in their emphases however. Przeworski, for example, advocates a theory founded on the interests and perceptions of key political actors;[32] whilst Linz writes of the significance of "political crafting" and the crucial role that political leadership plays in the crafting of democratic strategies.[33] Dror agrees that political leaders and their visions of society are central in the transition stage of democratisation, when a considered and viable selection between possible alternatives may have to be made.[34] O'Donnell and Schmitter, also, analyse the "making" of political democracy, focusing on relatively short-term developments and the reactions of key actors to them.[35] Rustow suggests that, from the single precondition of national unity, a viable democracy could be established through a process of polarisation, crisis and compromise;[36] whilst Levine claims that analyses should examine the independent

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[30] A Przeworski, op cit, p 47.

[31] G Sorenson, Democracy and Democratisation, 1993 Oxford, Colorado Press Inc., p.29.

[32] A Przeworski, op cit, pp.33-4.

[33] J Linz, 'Transitions to Democracy,' Washington Quarterly, Summer 1990, pp 143-164. Also, B Zhang, op cit, pp 108-136.

[34] Y Dror, 1988.

[35] G.O'Donnell and P Schmitter, op cit, pp 17-19.

[36] D A Rustow, 'Transitions to Democracy: Toward a Dynamic Model,' Comparative Politics, April 1970, pp 350-361.

role played by political variables – leadership, organisational strengths and weaknesses, and institutions, for example – in determining political outcomes, and emphasises the role played by a re-emerging civil society and that of popular groups.[37] Di Palma explains Communist breakdown from the different angle of a process of delegitimation of the entire system paralleled by the strengthening of a civil society;[38] which supports Sorenson's analysis founded on the ruling elites' crisis of faith in its own legitimacy.[39]

With specific regard to the application of a process approach to Eastern Europe, however, particular emphasis has been placed on three, to an extent, interdependent factors, Firstly, the role of the existing ruling elite in the process of transition; the shifting alliances therein; and their attitude toward democracy, with particular relevance to the levels of legitimacy of the Communist regimes. Secondly, the role of external influences, especially the decisions made by the Soviet political elites, which had a direct impact on the East European Communist systems; and such as the "Gorbachev factor." Lastly, emphasis has been placed on the role of civil society.

(1.3.1) The Elite Factor and Delegitimation

There has been a long-standing tendency in the scholarly literature on democratisation to emphasise the primary role of elites in leading, crafting, negotiating (or imposing) democratic transitions, and to emphasise the divisions, choices, calculations and strategic alliances among elites in both the authoritarian regime and its democratic opposition.[40] With specific regard to the Southern European and Latin American transitions in the 1970s-80s, O'Donnell and Schmitter have advanced a model based on the assertion that "there is no transition whose beginning is not the consequence – direct or indirect – of important divisions within the authoritarian regime itself, principally along the fluctuating cleavage between the

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[37] D Levine, 'Paradigm Lost Dependence to Democracy,' World Politics, Vol 40 No.3, April 1988, pp 380-385.

[38] G.Di Palma, 'Legitimation from the Top to Civil Society. Politico-Cultural Change in Eastern Europe,' in: N Bermeo (ed.), op cit, pp 49-80.

[39] G Sorenson, op cit, pp 29-30.

[40] See: G O'Donnell and P.Schmitter, op cit Treatments of the role of elite pacts in transition are also found in D Share, 'Transitions to Democracy and Transitions Through Transaction,' Comparative Politics, Vol 19, 1987, pp 525-548; M G Burton, 'Elite Settlements,' American Sociological Review, Vol 52, 1987, pp 295-307, and J Higley and M G Burton, 'The Elite Variable in Democratic Transitions and Breakdowns,' American Sociological Review, Vol 54, 1989, pp 17-32.

hard-liners and soft-liners."[41] Once the soft-liners (reformers) have sufficiently prevailed to widen the space for independent political expression and activity, then civil society is "resurrected" and a "general mobilisation likely to occur [that pushes] transition further than it otherwise would have gone."[42] This view is also supported by Huntington:

> "Almost always democracy has come as much from the top down as from the bottom up; it is as likely to be a product of oligarchy as of protest against oligarchy."[43]

Similarly, in Rustow's thesis it is elites who opt for democracy and end the previous era of struggle, and it is the elites who decide the terms on which conflicts are resolved.[44] Bova, also, focuses on those transitions from authoritarian rule in which elements of the old regimes have played an important role in the initiation and/or direction of systemic change.[45] With a focus on change within the Soviet Union, he seeks to illustrate issues of regime transition in the Communist world from a comparative perspective, using earlier transitions in Latin America and Southern Europe as a benchmark. In that respect, independent movements such as Solidarity in Poland are identified as potential partners in pact-making negotiations. However, Bova's principal concern is with the centrality of regime elites to the process of transition. With specific regard to Eastern Europe, transition analyses have overwhelmingly focused on the actions of the leadership and key elites, and their response to an increasingly evident lack of popular legitimacy in the late 1980s.[46]

From the outset, Communist regimes had demonstrated minimal success in acquiring genuine political legitimacy. Only in Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia were the regimes established on the basis of a national acceptance of socialism. Elsewhere in Eastern Europe, Communism developed little normative power over populations and encountered recurrent problems in surviving systemic tests.[47] A secondary or quasi-legitimacy, underpinned by the Soviet military presence and an ideological

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[41] G O'Donnell and P.Schmitter, op cit, p.19.

[42] Ibid, pp.48, 54 and 56.

[43] S P.Huntington, 'Will More Countries Become Democratic?' op cit, pp.193-218.

[44] D.A.Rustow, op cit, pp 355-7.

[45] R.Bova, op cit, pp.116-117.

[46] For example, see H A.Welsh, 'Political Transition in Central and Eastern Europe,' Comparative Politics, Vol 26 No 4, 1994, pp.379-394.

[47] P.G Lewis (ed.), Eastern Europe: Political Crisis and Legitimation, 1984 Beckenham, Croom Helm Ltd., p.71. See, also, J Linz, op cit, pp.146-8.

belief in their right to rule, increasingly depended, not only on the continued success of regime economic performance, but also on, as Przeworski has illustrated, the absence of preferable alternatives.[48] With no apparent or viable alternative to Communist rule, even an electorally illegitimate regime could survive amid apparent popular rejection.

By the late 1980s, however, Communist reserves – economic, political and material – had been exhausted. In the late 1970s, looming economic crisis, in particular, meant that East European populations began to withdraw their tacit acceptance of the parties' justifications for society's regulations, so much so that leadership calls for economic self-sacrifice, and for the attainment of Communist internationalist goals in the early 1980s, fell on deaf ears.[49] It is also significant that, during the same period, Communist regimes faced increasing independence in society, and the example of Poland, in particular, illustrates the depth of the problems faced by the Communist elites in sustaining belief in the validity of their authority. Consequently, the 1980s witnessed a period when Communist authorities across Eastern Europe – with the exception of Romania and Bulgaria – began to acknowledge public demands and preferences, and to recognise the necessity of an earned instead of assumed public trust. As elites were necessarily forced to implement measures aimed at a degree of regime liberalisation in order to bolster systemic legitimacy, a loss of self-belief or legitimacy within the leaderships themselves began to affect the stability of the entire system of rule.

Two observations, however, need to be made here. Firstly, the legitimacy argument is limited by one crucial factor, namely the fact that East European regimes had lacked effective political legitimacy since 1945 and, therefore, its loss could not have been sufficient cause, in itself, for the regimes to break down at the end of the 1980s. Certainly, a quasi-legitimacy, underpinned by continued economic success, was by then faltering and, in that respect, the legitimacy argument undoubtedly contributes to a fuller understanding of the processes at play in 1989. However, it cannot fully explain the timing of the revolutions. Secondly, some of the elite-oriented transitions literature is applicable to Eastern Europe in identifying disunity within ruling groups as a decisive stage in the opening of Communist regimes toward democracy, and without doubt, political elites are indispensable to bringing about democracy and its subsequent consolidation. However, although elites may be pre-

[48] A Przeworski, op cit, p.53.

[49] D.N Nelson, 'The Rise of Public Legitimation in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe,' in: S.Petra Ramet (ed.), Adaptation and Transformation in Communist and Post-Communist Systems, 1992 Oxford, Westview Press, p 31

eminent at certain stages of the democratisation process, they are not the whole story. That said, much of the literature still sees mass protest as a consequence of elite disunity rather than its source, as it was throughout much of Eastern Europe.[50] Yet, the question does have to be posed: why did Communist elites feel pressed to consider liberalisation; what was the root cause of their apparent loss of faith in their ability to rule? In this respect, the role of independent organisation in society, and evidence of the re-emergence of civil society, and their effect on the Communist regimes in presaging the introduction of reform measures should not be overlooked, as the upsurge of civil society appeared to generate divisions within the ruling elites.

(1.3.2) External Influences and the Gorbachev Factor

Literature analysing the democratisation process in Latin America and Southern Europe during the 1970s-1980s, with the particular exception of the Spanish transition, attributed a peripheral role to external factors or influences in the course of regime transition.[51] In contrast, the international dimension was central to democratisation in Eastern Europe.[52] The respective roles of the European Union, the Council of Europe and the CSCE process cannot be discounted in any assessment of the factors contributing to 1989.[53] Moreover, the position of the Soviet Union was essential to the success or otherwise of the transition processes. For many, the process of reform within the Soviet Union and its subsequent transition towards a form of pluralistic politics and, in particular, Mikhail Gorbachev's renunciation of the long-standing Brezhnev Doctrine[54] in favour of allowing East European countries to pursue their own paths of development in 1988-9 and beyond,[55] is the principal factor

[50] D McSweeney and C.Tempest, 'The Political Science of Democratic Transition in Eastern Europe,' Political Studies, Vol.16, 1993, pp.408-419.

[51] Here, as distinct from pp 4-5 above, external influences are understood to be the policy decisions and actions of political elites, particularly in Moscow, which were external to the individual Communist countries concerned, but which had a specific impact on the internal affairs of the East European regimes.

[52] G Pridham et al (eds), Building Democracy? The International Dimension of Democratisation in Eastern Europe, 1994 London, Leicester University Press, p 1. Also, P Brogan Eastern Europe 1939-1989· The Fifty Years War, 1990 London, Bloomsbury Publishing, Ch.7 '1989. The Gorbachev Factor '

[53] A.G.V.Hyde-Price, 'Democratisation in Eastern Europe the External Dimension,' in G Pridham and T.Vanhanen (eds), Democratisation in Eastern Europe, 1994 London, Routledge, pp.220-221.

[54] The Brezhnev Doctrine was formulated by Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev in the aftermath of the 1968 Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia. Supporting the theory that socialist states had limited sovereignty and that all had an "internationalist obligation" to intervene in the defence of socialism, his principal purpose was to ideologically justify the invasion and to publicly delineate the extent of the Soviet Union's tolerance of reform amongst the satellite states In effect, it amounted to a public declaration of the USSR's intention to defend socialism if threatened by internal or external forces

[55] During his March 1988 visit to Yugoslavia, Gorbachev forswore any "interference in the internal affairs of other states under any pretext whatsoever," and further stated that all nations had the right to

differentiating the year 1989 from, say, 1968 in Czechoslovakia or 1980-81 in Poland.[56] Certainly, reform in the East does owe a debt of gratitude to the process of perestroika initiated in the Soviet Union post-1985. Poland and Hungary, for example, appeared to have reached the limits of permissible reform within the prevailing systems, and needed an alternative to maintain systemic stability. And without a doubt, Gorbachev's successive pronunciations throughout 1987-8, stressing the independence of all Communist parties and the need for reform throughout Eastern Europe were significant – sometimes decisive – factors in hastening the transition of Communist regimes, particularly in the case of the former GDR. Overall, the degree of external influence does distinguish East European transitions from earlier examples of authoritarian breakdown and transition to democracy.

Consequently, reliance on the external dimension as the principal explanatory factor is, to an extent, understandable. However, it would be a mistake to conclude that the revolutions of 1989 were the consequence only of external causes. The Gorbachev factor is an essential ingredient of a full understanding of the transition process – especially with regard to the withdrawal of unconditional support for established Communist leaders – and is important in delineating the wider environment of change. Furthermore, in the East European cases, the timing of the transitions would have to be partly explained by external factors. The fact that Eastern Europe both originated and disintegrated as a bloc means that the changing Soviet role in its sphere of influence cannot be avoided as an explanatory factor. Equally, however, the significance of such factors should not be over-estimated. International factors should not be regarded as the *cause* of revolution in 1989 but, rather, interpreted as complementing the processes of change already occurring within the individual East European systems themselves. In that sense, such factors as the fundamental reform of the Soviet-East European relationship or the political and economic pull of the West, encouraged and permitted a process of democratic reform already being propounded by opponents of the regimes throughout the Communist bloc.

"their own roads of social development." Later in 1988, he told the UN General Assembly that "freedom of choice" for all nations to decide their own path "is a universal principle that allows no exceptions." And in 1989, the final communiqué of the Warsaw Pact annual meeting confirmed "there are no universal models of socialism " See: G Roskin, The Rebirth of Eastern Europe, 2nd Edition, 1994 New Jersey, Prentice-Hall, pp 132-3. Also, R F.Starr (ed) 1988 Yearbook on International Communist Affairs, 1988 New Jersey, Hoover Institution Press, p 343

[56] P Schmitter, 'The International Context of Contemporary Democratisation,' Stanford Journal of International Affairs, Vol.2, 1993, pp.1-34. Also, L.Whitehead, 'International Aspects of Democratisation,' in G O'Donnell and P.Schmitter, op cit, pp 3-46

(1.3.3) Civil Society

Within the existing transitions literature, research focused on civil society and Eastern Europe has addressed the hypothesis that an active and institutionalised civil society is a necessary requirement for democratic consolidation.[57] Consequently, a number of studies employing the civil society concept as explanatory tools have tended to focus on the development of political parties and parliaments.[58] Although these acknowledge the importance of civil society, such studies operate within a narrow conceptual framework.[59] For example, concentrating only on the development of institutionalised indicators of the onset of a process of democratisation, such as the emergence of coherent political parties or the establishment of recognised parliaments and accompanying political processes, neglects important contributory factors inherent within civil society. Although these processes are essential foundations of any democratic system, rather than being interpreted as a feature of regime breakdown they should, instead, be viewed as an indication of the completeness – or incompleteness – of democratic consolidation. Consequently, in order to fully understand the course of regime collapse and transition in Eastern Europe, such studies must be supplemented with a discussion of the civil society concept as an explanatory factor for the entire process of breakdown and transition, rather than the "end-game" only.

The unexpectedly swift collapse of the Communist regimes throughout Eastern Europe has given a new relevance to the concept of civil society. Its reappearance on the intellectual scene, though, was not due solely to the increasingly overt methods of opposition employed by East European dissidents during the 1970s and 1980s. Autonomous organisations and movements have contributed to democratic transitions since the beginning of the third wave of democratisation in the mid-1970s. In Latin America, Southern Europe, Asia and Africa, the role of civil society organisations in fostering democratic transitions is a palpable fact. With specific regard to Eastern Europe, throughout the last two decades of Communist rule, and into the 1990s, references to contemporary civil society had figured in discussions, first of Solidarity in Poland, and the of all the European Communist countries.[60]

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[57] See, for example, articles on Poland, Hungary, the former GDR and Yugoslavia in: R F Miller (ed), The Developments of Civil Societies in Communist Systems, 1992 Sydney, Allen and Unwin.

[58] P.Lewis, 'Civil Society and the Development of Political Parties in East-Central Europe,' The Journal of Communist Studies, Vol 9 No 4, 1993, pp 5-20

[59] A Fagin, 'Incorporating Community: Complications to Theories of Democratic Transition in East and Central Europe,' op cit, p 146.

[60] M.Weigle and J Butterfield, 'Civil Society in Reforming Communist Regimes: the Logic of Emergence,' Comparative Politics, Vol 25 No.1, 1992, p.3; and C.Bryant, 'Social Self-Organisation,

There are, inevitably, many who hold doubts as to the applicability of the civil society concept to the Communist systems. Prominent here is Staniszkis who argues that the existence of a civil society in a Communist system was impossible due, essentially, to the collective forms of ownership and near total lack of possibilities for free association.[61] O'Donnell and Schmitter stress that the beginning of authoritarian breakdown is essentially a function of internal splits within the authoritarian regime.[62] Bermeo addresses the concept of the survival of a civil society within a Communist "dictatorship," and poses the question: if the people are silenced by dictatorship, how can we possibly assess the popular will? What becomes of civil society?[63] Certainly, if individuals and groups lack the right to seek alternative political representation or even to express their ideas, it is uncertain how institutionalised their powers can be, or will remain even if established. It is not clear that civil society can operate effectively on the organs of the state when the Communist system denies the existence of autonomous interests in society. This begs the question: can civil society develop in a one-party system, where its very existence is contradictory to that system's overarching organisational principles? In response, however, one only has to look briefly at the vast literature on dissent in Eastern Europe to conclude that, inspite of Communist claims to the complete monopolisation of society, civil society can survive, even in highly coercive settings.

As early as 1979, Vaclav Havel recognised that the invincibility of Communist regimes had been undermined by independence in society and foresaw that these could be toppled by a "social movement," an "explosion of civil unrest," or a "sharp conflict inside an apparently monolithic power structure." In other words, by the force of the individual and people power.[64] Anticipating Bermeo's statement that early signs of the survival of civil society can be seen not on the "public political stage" but, rather, in "off-stage" forms of struggle and everyday forms of resistance,[65] Havel

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Civility and Sociology: A Comment on Kumar's Civil Society,' British Journal of Sociology, Vol 44, 1993, p.397.

[61] J Frentzel-Zagorska, 'Patterns of Transition from a One-Party State to Democracy in Poland and Hungary,' in: R.F Miller, op cit, p 41.

[62] G O'Donnell and P.Schmitter, op cit, p 48

[63] N Bermeo, 'Surprise, Surprise: Lessons From 1989 and 1991,' in: N Bermeo (ed), Democratisation, 1992 London, John Hopkins Press, pp 184-6.

[64] V Havel, The Power of the Powerless Citizens Against the State in Central-Eastern Europe. 1985 London, Palach Press, pp 23-96.

[65] N Bermeo, op cit, p 185.

described how opposition, in general, and civil society, in particular, were manifested in the "private lives of individuals" long before they emerged on the visible surface of society.[66] The decade of the 1980s proved that autonomous action – both individual and group – an essential ingredient of a surviving and active civil society independent of state sponsorship, could and did emerge. Throughout Eastern Europe, groups and individuals pursued goals independent of state directives or policies, and in some cases, as the year 1989 ended, were to achieve those goals within the Communist systems.[67] Thus, according to Birnbaum, what the revolutions of 1989 signify is the victory of the social movement, embedded in a reinvigorated civil society, over the established power structures of ruling Communist elites.[68] At all critical junctures, mass demonstrations appeared to be "tearing the fabric of the old state apart."[69] Kuran states that, facing the people in the streets, Communism fell "like a house of cards;"[70] and Genov, also, sees collective political action within a re-emerging civil society as having triggered the transition to democracy throughout Eastern Europe.[71] Waller specifically highlights the emergence of peoples' forums – Solidarity in Poland, Civic Forum in Czechoslovakia, Neues Forum and the Evangelical Churches in the GDR, and the Dialogue Group in Hungary – spearheading the reform movements within individual countries and contesting the Communist monopoly of political power.[72]

The existing regime breakdown and transitions literature, however, has not yet directed sufficient attention to the role of mass protest against authoritarian regimes. Scholars employing well-tested economic, political and military criteria have carried out endless post-mortems since 1989, but as Martz points out have failed to illuminate

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[66] V.Havel, op cit, pp 30-56

[67] C Sadowski, 'Autonomous Groups as Agents of Democratic Change in Communist and Post-Communist Eastern Europe,' in. L Diamond (ed.), Political Culture and Democracy in developing Countries, 1993 London, Lynne Rienner Publishers, pp.163-195.

[68] K Birnbaum, 'Civil Society and Government Policy in a New Europe,' The World Today, Vol 47 No 5, May 1991, p 84.

[69] N.Bermeo, op cit, p.179.

[70] T.Kuran, 'Now out of Never: The Element of Surprise in the East European Revolution of 1989,'in: N Bermeo, op cit, p 41

[71] N Genov, 'The Transition to Democracy in Eastern Europe· Trends and Paradoxes of Social Rationalisation,' International Social Science Journal, 128, May 1991, p.332

[72] M.Waller, 'Voice, Choice and Loyalty,' in: G Parry and M Moran (eds), Democracy and Democratisation, 1994 London, Routledge, pp 50-52. See also his articles: 'Groups, Interests and Political Aggregation in East-Central Europe,' in. R.J.Hill (ed), Beyond Stalinism Communist Political Evolution, 1992 London, Frank Cass Ltd , pp 128-147; and 'Groups, Parties and Political Change in Eastern Europe from 1977,' in: G Pridham and T.Vanhanen (eds.), Democratisation in Eastern Europe, Domestic and International Perspectives, 1994 London, Routledge, pp 38-61.

the overall importance of mass social movements.[73] Many articles and essays do appear to conclude that 1989 undermined the previously accepted contention that a civil society could not exist within a totalitarian-type regime, and that the late 1980s witnessed the emergence of long-suppressed and autonomous social activities.[74] The relative impact of such activities on the process of transition generally, however, remains under investigated.

Many have, in fact, highlighted that civil society as a specific area of enquiry has not been given due weight in casual accounts of regime breakdown. Levine, for example, concludes that much remains to be learnt from a close analysis of civil society, and this needs to be incorporated into transitions analysis in more systematic and specific ways.[75] Kuran and Martz identify the general lack of attention to the power of the individual, and the significance of organised crowds.[76] The transitions literature that does introduce the concept of civil society tends, therefore, to address the apparent limitations of parts of traditional theory. However, these studies leave many unanswered questions. Bermeo, for example, recognising the centrality of elite decision and pact-making to the transition process, notes that such elites are but one of several groups of actors affecting the course of transition.[77] Via a consideration of the role of the Soviet military elite in the August 1991 coup,[78] Bermeo identifies three specific areas which require further analysis by comparativists: the role of ethnicity and national identity; the role of the armed forces; and, most significantly for this study, the "common citizenry."[79] Although recognising the concept of civil society as a potential explanatory factor, the article is limited in scope, however, and does not proceed to consider the specific impact of civil society on the transition process in Eastern Europe, concluding that obstacles to measuring its potential exist in societies characterised by "hidden preferences."[80] Kiernan's analysis of the end of Communist rule in the USSR employs Di Palma's model of "political crafting" in the Soviet context to support his argument that clearly defined institutional forms are less

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[73] J D.Martz, 'Bureaucratic-Authoritarianism, Transitions to Democracy and the Political-Cultural Dimension,' in H J Wiada (ed), New Direction in Comparative Politics, p 207.

[74] G Di Palma, op cit, p.72.

[75] D H Levine, op cit, pp 377-394

[76] T Kuran, op cit, p 23. Similar sentiments are also expressed by G.Schopflin, op cit, pp 3-16.

[77] N Bermeo, 'Surprise, Surprise· Lessons from 1989 and 1991,' op cit, p 198.

[78] Ibid, pp 180-183.

[79] Ibid, p.198.

[80] Ibid.

important than the crafting of an initial agreement between a country's civilian and political elites.[81] In identifying civil society as a principal element of the democratisation literature,[82] he does, however, concur with Levine's statement that the concept "is treated in general and abstract terms, with insufficient attention to specific groups" and their organised relations with the state, or the people in particular.[83] Kiernan's study is, however, concerned with the application of Di Palma's theories to the Soviet Union's experience of democratisation, rather than the applicability of civil society as an explanatory concept for Eastern Europe. Di Palma's study of dissidence in Poland and Hungary as a prime contributory factor in the decision of the regimes to liberalise and to open dialogue, he claims to be indicative of the strength of the civil society concept with regard to East European transitions.[84] His study is, however, oriented towards an analysis of the impact of civil society on regime elites, and the effect of its *absence* in, say, Romania or Bulgaria is not considered.

Pridham does compare the transitions in Communist Europe to those of Southern Europe.[85] His analysis is based on the hypothesis that there are three broad and interconnected levels of a process of transition: the state, inter-group relations and society, with the latter including specifically "civil society, associational life, social movements and participation in general."[86] These differing levels are analysed within an "environment" which considers historical factors and the mode of transition, such as the international framework, the state of the economy, and "simply events" which may affect the process of change.[87] Measuring the extent of interaction between these levels, Pridham's analysis claims that the more interaction between the three, the more likely that transition will be unstable, uncontrolled and subject to upheaval.[88] The differing degrees of interaction can then be employed to draw further conclusions, he argues, regarding the *style* and *scope* of transitions to liberal

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[81] B.Kiernan, op cit, p 30.

[82] Ibid, p 31.

[83] D H Levine, op cit, p.379.

[84] G Di Palma, op cit, Ch 1: Introduction.

[85] G Pridham, 'Democratic Transitions in Theory and Practice Southern European Lessons for Eastern Europe?' in: G.Pridham and T.Vanhanen, Democratisation in Eastern Europe Domestic and International Perspectives, 1994 London, Routledge, pp 15-37

[86] Ibid, p.20.

[87] Ibid, p 18

[88] Ibid, p 20

democracy. Following an analysis of transition in Spain, Greece and Portugal in the late 1970s, Pridham is able to offer some insight into the East European process. Stating that historical factors – such as Poland's traditional tendency towards authoritarianism – and environmental influences – Gorbachev's Moscow reforms; the necessary extent of reform in the Communist systems; and the rapidity of events, for example – were evidently at work, Pridham concludes that the society level "has indeed been very important, although it is difficult...to do justice to the complexities of each national case of transition."[89] Pridham's comparison of the South and East European transitions does suggest a much greater degree of society level, or "bottom-up" momentum in the latter, citing the existence of the Catholic Church in Poland, and networks of intellectuals and dissidents, in his justification of a *process* approach to democratisation. Despite the claim that significant cross-regional variants exist – Poland versus Romania, for example – his study, however, does not focus specifically on the development of civil society in individual Communist countries, or compare their respective impact on individual processes of transition.

Similarly, Ramet's main focus is the 1990 political transition within the Soviet Union. Drawing comparisons to historical examples of regime change – the Chinese Revolution of 1911 or the 1931 overthrow of the Spanish monarchy, for example – Ramet seeks to identify a predictable pattern of authoritarian collapse.[90] She identifies the construction of a civil society from below as one stage in the process of authoritarian political decay. Her article does raise the question of the differing levels of development of civil society and their respective impacts on authoritarianism and it is, therefore, of relevance to this study. The principal focus, however, is on the connection between the apparent chaos produced by system collapse and the existence, or otherwise, of an accepted set of values in society or of "real" systemic legitimacy, and the article, therefore, contains no systematic analysis of civil society as a broad concept or of the different levels of development in each country.[91]

Chilton and Di Grilli both identify popular mobilisation via social movements as being one of the dynamic processes underpinning transition that has not previously received due consideration.[92] Their studies focus on one particular feature of civil

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[89] Ibid. p.35.

[90] S P Ramet, 'When Systems Collapse: Toward a Theory about the Relationship between System Decay and Civil Strife.' In: S P Ramet (ed), Adaptation and Transformation in Communist and Post-Communist Systems, 1992 Oxford, Westview Press, p 279

[91] Ibid, pp 279-300.

[92] P.Chilton, 'Mechanics of Social Change: Social Movements, Transnational Coalitions and the Transformation Processes in Eastern Europe,' Democratisation, Vol 1 No.1, Spring 1994, pp 151-181,

society activity – the transnational contacts (TNCs) established between social movements – and assess its respective significance as a determining factor in the *outcome* of the 1989 revolutions. In that respect, the studies are significant here as they successfully demonstrate the explanatory value of domestic variables. For example, whilst acknowledging that the role of civil society must be considered alongside economic, leadership and military factors,[93] Chilton's comparative analysis of the democratisation processes in Eastern Europe assesses the role played by independent social movements in the transitions from authoritarian rule. Focusing on Hungary, East Germany and Romania as three distinct types of regime transformation (negotiated social contract mould, sudden collapse, and regime coup, respectively) the article establishes a comparative framework in which two independent variables – the domestic role of social movements, and the extent of TNCs - are analysed for their respective and combined effect on the mode of transition. In essence, Chilton contends that the capacity of social movements to establish successful TNC networks (in this instance, peace and human rights networks) was a determining factor in contributing to the 1989 transformation in terms of the manner and extent of regime change. The influence of these movements varied depending on the strength of civil society in each country. For example, in the absence of such contacts, she argues, there was no development of an opposition in favour of democratisation or human rights, and regime change was limited, violent and sudden, as in Romania. In contrast, in Hungary, where civil society and TNCs were deemed to have reached "higher degrees" of activity, change was gradual, comprehensive and non-violent.[94]

In one respect, therefore, Chilton's article does answer the criticisms of Share, who claims that there has been little effort amongst transitologists to develop a *typology* of democratic transitions, which is necessary for any examination of the conditions for democratic consolidation.[95] However, as with certain other studies, such as Arato's consideration of the impact of the Solidarity Union in Poland in 1980-81,[96] the treatment of the civil society concept is specific and limited. Chilton and di Cortona estimate the impact of civil society via the impact of established TNC networks only; Arato analyses the effects of Solidarity during a specific time period;

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and P Grilli di Cortona, 'From Communism to Democracy. Rethinking Regime Change in Hungary and Czechoslovakia,' International Social Science Journal, 128, May 1991, pp 315-330.

[93] P.Chilton, ibid, pp.175-6.

[94] Ibid, p 174.

[95] D Share, 'Transitions to Democracy and Transition Through Transaction,' Comparative Political Studies, Vol 19 No 4, January 1987, pp.525-548.

[96] A.Arato, 'Civil Society Against the State: Poland 1980-81,' Telos, Part 47, Spring 1981, pp 23-47.

whilst Share, having stipulated the need for a broad typology, analyses "transition through transaction" only, and with reference to one case-study, Spain. This raises the question of a *comprehensive* analysis of the effect of a developed – or under-developed – civil society as a concept in itself on the process of transition and, in particular – and to elaborate of Share's study – on the *mode* of transition, an area highlighted by both Nelson and Munck as one requiring further investigation.[97] Chilton's study also raises the question of Poland: the civil society that existed there throughout the 1980s was, arguably, the most developed of all the East European countries, and its impact on the process of transition could, therefore, serve as a benchmark against which transition throughout the rest of Eastern Europe could be compared. It is interesting, however, that Poland is not included within her particular comparative study.

(1 3.4) The Mode of Regime Breakdown

Certainly, there have been a number of studies – notably those by Huntington, Linz, and Karl and Schmitter – which have sought to distinguish between different types or modes of transition according to the relative importance of governing and opposition groups as the sources of democratisation. Linz, for example, using the classifications *ruptura* and *reforma* (the former referring to those transitions which incorporate a clear break with the past, and the latter, a protracted reform of the authoritarian system) contends that the actions of individuals and of civil society play an important and even decisive role, and classifies countries according to the particular mode of regime breakdown experienced.[98] Interestingly, although stating that there appears to be no single model for the transitions in Communist countries, Linz argues that the East Europeans' response to Gorbachev's perestroika was similar to processes that have taken place elsewhere.[99] The reform programme represented an initiative for change from above, subsequently reinforced and accelerated from below, which supports his statement to the effect that "transitions from authoritarianism to democracy tend to be initiated when leaders in the authoritarian regime start considering the possibility of reform..."[100] With the primary focus on explaining modes of breakdown generally, the study does not specifically address the Communist revolutions of 1989.

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[97] G Munck, op cit, p 359, D N Nelson, op cit, pp 11-40.

[98] J J Linz, 'Transitions to Democracy,' The Washington Quarterly, Summer 1990, pp.150-152.

[99] Ibid, p.156

[100] Ibid, p.150.

Huntington, Zhang, and Karl and Schmitter, on the other hand, all distinguish between differing modes of Communist transition. Zhang's article focuses primarily on the 1989 Chinese transition and the later Soviet case, and contends that, although the choices made by elites during transition are important, political pact-making is dependent upon certain institutional conditions.[101] Although Eastern Europe as a specific region is not considered here, Zhang claims that his generalisations on China and the USSR can be applied to the region, and that none of the former Communist regimes experienced a pacted transition.[102] This conclusion is, in itself, valuable and distinguishes the transitions in Southern Europe and Latin America from those in Eastern Europe. Poland, however, is classified as an exception, fitting neatly into none of the stated categories, and Czechoslovakia is cited as an example of *regime breakdown*, on the grounds that a significant weakening of the Communist regime resulted in the loss of its repressive capability which led, ultimately, to breakdown.[103] This does pose the question as to the *cause* of the regime's initial weakening, or whether the process was affected by independent opposition in Czechoslovak society. Moreover, Zhang's conclusion that the Polish example appears to defy classification when civil society was at its most advanced stage of development in all the European Communist regimes, and when it was the first system in 1989 to experience breakdown, is representative of the general limitations of many existing theories.

Karl and Schmitter explore the hypothesis that the mode of transition from authoritarian rule is a principal determinant of whether (a) democracy will emerge; and (b) whether or not it will be consolidated. In this respect, in distinguishing between processes in which authoritarian elites continue to dominate political life post-transition, and those in which they were displaced by mass movements, they conclude that *pacted transitions* are the most favourable to a consolidated democracy, followed by *transitions by imposition*. Where mass movements gain control over the process of regime change, the probability of a successful democratic outcome diminishes.[104] In defining modes of transition, two variables are considered. The first considers the actors involved and whether the impetus for change comes from above (elites) or below (masses). The second variable is that related to the strategy of transition, which varies along a continuum ranging from multilateral compromise to unilateral recourse to the use of force.[105] From the possible extremes, four ideal-types

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[101] B Zhang, op cit, pp.108-9.

[102] Ibid p.132.

[103] Ibid pp.132-3.

[104] T.Lynne Karl and P Schmitter, op cit, pp 282

[105] Ibid, pp.274-5.

of regime transition therefore emerge. *Pact* in which elite groups agree upon a multilateral compromise among themselves; *imposition*, where elites employ force unilaterally to effect regime change against incumbent resistance; *reform*, in which the masses mobilise from below and impose a compromised resolution without resort to violence; and *revolution*, where the masses defeat the authoritarian rulers militarily. Noting that many cases of regime transition are, in fact, difficult to classify – Hungary and the GDR, for example[106] - Karl and Schmitter's "score" of recent examples in Latin America, Southern and Eastern Europe categorises Poland and Czechoslovakia as cases of transition by reform, and Romania as being located between revolution and imposition.[107] Karl and Schmitter do, then, distinguish between differing modes of transition according to where the impetus for change comes from: "above" or "below." However, other than linking civil society to mass-driven transitions there is, for example, no explanation as to *why* the transition process in, say, Poland was a bottom-up one, or *why* Solidarity was admitted to roundtable negotiations in 1989. This apparent limitation thus begs the question of the precise impact of civil society on the type of regime breakdown experienced. The individual modes of transition are related to the civil society concept as an explanatory variable in the sense that transition is produced by actors who choose particular strategies that lead to a process of change. The fact that Poland's transition is categorised as a process of reform of the ancien regime due, in large part, to the impact of Solidarity, does not, however, analyse the extent of development of the civil society as a whole, or its relationship with the regime, and, hence, particular reasons behind the union's ability to negotiate with the Communist Party from a position of power in 1989.

Huntington, considering the "third wave" of democratisation as a whole, also locates the process of transition along a continuum, in terms of the relative importance of governing and opposition groups as the source of democratisation.[108] For analytical purposes, the cases are grouped into three broad types: *transformation* (Linz's *reforma*), occurring when incumbent political elites take the lead in initiating regime change; *transplacement* when democratisation is the result of joint government-opposition activity; and *replacement* (Linz's *reforma*) for a distinctly bottom-up process of transition.[109] Huntington's subsequent analysis of the three categories identifies certain broad characteristics for each type. Replacements, for example,

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[106] Ibid p 277.

[107] Ibid pp 276-7.

[108] S P Huntington, op cit, p 583

[109] Ibid, pp.582-3.

deemed to be the commonest mode of transition in personal dictatorships, are characterised by the virtual absence of reformers within the authoritarian regime, with democratisation occurring as the independent opposition gains strength and the government loses it. Such regimes – the former GDR is cited here – are often unaware of their domestic unpopularity and regime collapse is, therefore, generally swift, with repressive governments often toppled by the force of mass public demonstrations.[110] Particular emphasis is placed on what Huntington refers to as "forward legitimacy," defined in practical terms as a "sharp, clean break with the past," the institutions, procedures and individuals of the previous regime being too tainted by association to play a role in the formation of a new system.[111] In defining the characteristics peculiar to each mode of transition, Huntington's article is significant for an analysis of the East European revolutions, and for any study seeking to identify the factors that contributed to the differing modes of transition experienced. With regard to Romania as an example of replacement, however, there are a number of factors that appear to run counter to Huntington's claims. With the assumption of power by the National Salvation Front (NSF), there was no sharp, clear break with the past in December 1989, a fact which does also suggest the pre-revolutionary existence of reformers within the Communist regime. More crucially, mass mobilisations demanded the overthrow of the *leader* not the *system*.[112] These three factors (the clear break with the past, the prior existence of intra-party reformers, and the push for democratisation by a strengthening independent opposition) are discussed as elements of the replacement mode, however. Czechoslovakia's classification raises queries too, in the fact that the Communist government did not act *forcefully* to suppress the mobilisation of political power by the opposition; nor can we speak of a rough equality between the government and opposition forces until the transition process was already well under way in 1989. Huntington's article does play closer attention to the role of opposition groups as the sources of regime breakdown than many transitions studies. The limitations, however, mean that there is no specific emphasis on the concept of civil society and its actual effect on the mode of breakdown (it is considered alongside numerous other factors) or specific focus on the East European region.

(1.4) Conclusion

Eastern Europe experienced in 1989 a variety of events and modes of regime breakdown and transition, to the extent that to talk of a revolution against Communism presents a certain anomaly. There were, in fact, several and widely

[110] Ibid, pp.602-8.

[111] Ibid. p.605.

[112] Ibid. pp.602-7.

differing processes of revolutionary change. The foregoing discussion revealed that the transitions and democratisation literature has produced many, and often conflicting, arguments and theories. To summarise, the existing literature on regime transition focuses on a number of interdependent themes and issues. Predominant is a concern with explanations of *why* transition from authoritarianism to democracy occurs. In that respect, the literature can be divided into two broad schools of thought. The first – the *prerequisites* school – adopts a deterministic approach, in the sense that transition is considered to be one possible consequence of such factors as the attainment of a specified level of socio-economic development or the existence of a supportive political culture. The alternative - the *process* school – focuses analysis on human choices and actions, on the premise that a process of change can only be initiated when key individuals or groups reach the decision that change is necessary or desirable. Within the latter school, it has been shown that the concept of civil society, although employed as an explanatory tool by a number of transitions theorists, remains an area that has been neglected to-date, or one that raises a number of further research questions – a point to which I will return.

In seeking to explain the occurrence of regime change, existing literature also focuses on specific phases of transition: the reasons for the initial breakdown of the regime, the process of transition itself, and the factors favourable to a process of consolidation. In so doing, it approaches the analysis of these phases through a number of lenses, and considers the particular impact of international or external factors; the role of key social, economic and political elites; the effect of low levels of systemic legitimacy; and the effect of mass protest against authoritarian rule. It has been shown, however, that literature employing such indices of change does raise a number of questions. For example, what role did civil society play in convincing elites of the necessity or desirability of change? Political leaders could not have initiated change without some reference, however minimal, to the public will, and given the potential costs of regime liberalisation, the question remains as to the root cause of the reform packages introduced, particularly at the end of the 1980s. What were the processes already under way in individual countries that were complemented by changes in the international sphere? Neither the change within the Soviet Union, nor the pressures emanating from such bodies as the EU or Council of Europe, for example, should be viewed as sufficient conditions for the *breakdown* of Communism in the Soviet bloc.[113] The effective renunciation of the Brezhnev Doctrine was significant, and is crucial in differentiating 1989 from 1956 or 1968 in Eastern Europe and, therefore, should be recognised as a key factor in explaining the *timing* of the

[113] A C Janos, 'Social Science, Communism and the Dynamics of Political Change,' World Politics, Vol 44 No 1, October 1991, pp 81-112.

revolutions, but not their actual occurrence. In Romania, the demonstration effect of events in Poland and elsewhere was crucial to the perception of the possibility for change in society yet, throughout the rest of Eastern Europe, there was an internal popularly-driven dynamic which generated a pressure which may eventually, by itself, have toppled the Communist regimes. Cracks had been in evidence for at least two decades in some Communist countries and although, to many observers, Communist publics appeared to have accepted the prevailing status quo, the activities of such groups as Solidarity in Poland and Charter 77 in Czechoslovakia provided potent evidence of democratic-oriented independence in society. Furthermore, what factors prevented the securing of effective systemic legitimacy; and what was the precise impact of public protest against Communism? In both these respects, the concept of civil society cannot be discounted.

While some theorists do recognise the explanatory validity of the civil society concept to Eastern Europe, its general treatment in the transitions literature, however, is either dismissive of its explanatory value;[114] or, on the other hand, neglectful of the concept in its entirety. By that, I refer to analysis that focuses on certain component features of civil society (TNCs for example) or to consider its significance in certain periods only. However, what of the constitutive role of civil society in the initial breakdown of Communist authoritarianism? What role if any does it play: ancillary or facilitating? Is there a distinct civil society phase in the breakdown of Communist regimes? Does the extent to which civil society is organised affect the course of transition? Comprehensive analysis of the impact of a developed civil society on the process of transition would appear to be an avenue which would allow us to flesh out these and related questions.

In addition, in the foregoing review of the transitions literature, the mode of transition in particular, was identified as an area requiring further research. This is particularly evident with specific regard to the East European cases. A degree of commonality across the region did exist. All the former Communist countries were, for example (although to varying degrees), experiencing social, economic and political crisis by the mid to late 1980s.[115] With the initial exception of Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia, all had seen Communism imposed from the outside and

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[114] A C.Janos, ibid, for example, who sees breakdown as a consequence of international factors (Czechoslovakia) or economic failure (Poland and Hungary), and P G Lewis, op cit, identifying elite disintegration and the general collapse of legitimacy as the cause of the political crisis in Eastern Europe

[115] K Henderson and N Robinson, Post-Communist Politics: An Introduction, 1997 Hemel Hempstead, Prentice Hall, pp 1-21

subsequently supported by the Soviet Union and all had, therefore, lacked effective political legitimacy from the outset. Certainly, ideological justifications for Communist rule had given way during the 1970s to a quasi-legitimacy founded on the purported superior ability of the central-command economy to "deliver the goods." Once economic crisis deepened in the 1980s, however, the legitimacy of the systems decreased once more. In addition, all the countries of Eastern Europe had undergone a process of rapid socio-economic development post-1945. Admittedly, the levels of development reached were not uniform across the entire region: Poland and Hungary, for example, were more highly urbanised, industrial and educated societies compared to Romania and Bulgaria. However, it remains true that a certain level of development was common to all. Again, within all the Communist systems of rule, incumbent Communist parties faced the same potential dilemmas of either liberalisation or reform: any openings of the systems, or attempts to satisfy the demands emanating from the public, had the potential to merely open the floodgates to increased protest, thereby threatening the Communist monopoly of power. Furthermore, with Gorbachev's effective renunciation of the Brezhnev Doctrine between 1988-9, all the East European countries were presented with a qualitatively different Soviet-satellite relationship. The pledge of non-interference in the domestic affairs of the Communist nations was as applicable to Poland, Hungary, Romania or Czechoslovakia.

If, then, such factors were common throughout the region, an important question remains to be addressed: why did the former East European Communist regimes experience different modes of breakdown? The transitions literature does seek to explain types of breakdown generally, according to the relative importance of governing and opposition groups to the process of democratisation, and classifies countries into broad categories of breakdown modes. The review of the extant literature did, however, indicate that a number of questions exist, principally, the *specific* relationship between civil society and the particular mode of breakdown experienced in individual countries. In essence, to what extent does civil society affect the mode of regime breakdown? Is there a scale that can be employed, ranging from unorganised and individual forms of opposition, to the evolution of fully developed *alternative society* which, in turn, determines the *mode* of breakdown experienced? Given the extent of factors common to all the East European countries, civil society appears to be a concept that would enable us to differentiate between the experiences of individual East European countries in 1989.

CHAPTER II: CIVIL SOCIETY AND A FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS

The discussion of existing academic literature on regime breakdown and transition in Chapter One identified a number of specific questions related to the events of 1989 in Eastern Europe. In particular, it argued that the concept of civil society has been underplayed, especially in those studies seeking to explain modes of regime breakdown. I suggested, with specific regard to the East European context, that civil society is a factor that could be employed to address the apparent limitations of the extant literature. The central purpose of this thesis, therefore, is to understand the effect of a domestic variable - civil society - upon the mode of transition experienced in Eastern Europe in 1989. Were generalisations to be drawn from the Polish example alone, the conclusion that civil society was the driving force behind regime breakdown and transition throughout the region could appear justifiable. However, despite the fact that a degree of commonalty did exist in Eastern Europe, it is also evident that the particular modes of transition experienced differed vastly, as did the levels of development of the civil societies to be found in the Communist systems and the nature of the respective authoritarian regimes being transformed. On the one hand, therefore, it may be questionable whether a comparative approach to Communism's breakdown in Eastern Europe is either justifiable or, indeed, useful. On the other, however, such divergences as those already discussed, should not be viewed as barriers to comparison. Debate over the importance of the unique versus the universal is not a new one, and it is not my intention to reiterate, here, these old and probably irresolvable arguments. Rather, I accept that there are elements of both present in the East European example, and argue that comparison in this study will permit the extraction of common themes and the formulation of an alternative theory to supplement existing transitions literature.

This chapter is, therefore, concerned with establishing a framework for the analysis that will follow in the case-study chapters. Its main task will be to define a key concept - civil society - and investigate its applicability in the East European context. Although my chief concern is with the substance of "actually existing" civil societies rather than the theoretical uses of the concept, in order to indicate the common features and functions of civil societies in different social systems, it seems appropriate, first, to indicate the main stages in the evolution of the concept.

(2.1) The Concept: Civil Society

In recent years, both democratic activists and students of transitions to democracy have made extensive use of the term civil society.[1] Only a minimal agreement in these quarters as to the basic meaning of the term has ensured that the concept remains a matter of considerable dispute. Contemporary definitions abound, ranging from George Kolankiewicz's understanding of civil society as "all forms of unmediated and untrammeled association"[2] to James Scanlan's "broad network of non-political relations among individuals and groups who spontaneously and independently carry out a great many economic and social functions."[3] Gordon White refers to the concept as having a long and distinguished history in Western political theory - between 1750 and 1850, hundreds of British, French and German thinkers concerned themselves with the subject of civil society - yet it remains highly ambiguous.[4]

(2.1.1) The Historical Evolution of the Concept

Historically, civil society entered European usage around the year 1400 with a nexus of meanings given to it by Cicero in the first century BC in his 'societas civilis'.[5] It referred to individual states, and to the condition of living in a civilised political community sufficiently advanced to include cities: a society with its own legal code, and with undertones of civility and urbanity, of civic partnership (living and being ruled according to civil laws) and of the refinements of civil life and the commercial arts.[6] Until the eighteenth century, civil society was a condition in which individuals lived under government, and a concept which expressed the growth or expansion of civilisation to a point where society was civilised, with citizens regulating their relationships and settling disputes according to an accepted system of

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[1]J L Cohen and A Arato, Civil Society and Political Theory, 1992 Cambridge, The MIT Press, Chapter One· 'The Contemporary Revival of Civil Society,' pp 29-82.

[2]G Kolankiewicz, 'The Reconstruction of Citizenship,' in: K Z Poznanski (ed), Constructing Capitalism, 1992 Boulder CO, Westview Press Inc., p.142

[3]J.Scanlan, 'Reforms and Civil Society in the USSR,' Problems of Communism, Vol 37 No 2, March-April 1988, pp 42-43.

[4]Gordon White, 'Civil Society, Democratisation and Development,' Democratisation Vol.1 No.3 Autumn 1994, pp 375-390

[5]D Miller, The Blackwell Encyclopaedia of Political Thought, 1987 Oxford, Blackwell Ltd , pp.77-78

[6]E Shils, 'The Virtue of Civil Society,' Government and Opposition, Vol 26 No 1, Winter 1991, p 5

laws; one in which civility was prominent, and citizens took an active part in public life.[7]

During the eighteenth century, in contractarian political thought, the concept evolved into something like its present usage, and in the writings of John Locke and Thomas Hobbes especially, political or civil society was contrasted with paternal authority and the state of nature. In addition, contractarian thought stressed the institutional basis of civil society, that is, the social contract binding members of a voluntary community to common mores "for the mutual preservation of their Lives, Liberties and Estates..."[8] Adam Ferguson writing in 1767 defined the concept as a stage of civility, the natural consequence of civilisation, and employed it as a political term to contrast Western governments with Oriental despotism.[9] In addition, civil society was deemed to be pluralistic, without which, individual and societal liberties could be neither guaranteed nor protected. Only pluralism could, to an extent, guarantee a balance-of-power to prevent the onset of despotic rule. Civil society was viewed as one in which urban life and commercial activities flourished, the implication being that a money economy, ready exchange in something like a free market, and a law-abiding political order comprised a satisfactory and progressive state of human affairs. Minimally, however, it was a society with a multitude of private activities, outside the family but distinct from the state.[10] Furthermore, and significantly, Eighteenth Century writers elaborated the distinction of a sphere of society separate from the state, and with forms and principles of its own.

This distinction between state and civil society took central position and was expanded by Friedrich Hegel in his "Philosophy of Right" published in 1821, in which he defined civil society as a sphere lying between the family and the state.[11] It was seen as an economic system: a distinct private realm of commerce, class interest, religion, and other individual and group prerogatives distinguishable from the

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[7]K.Kumar, 'Civil Society. An Enquiry into the Usefulness of an Historical Term,' British Journal of Sociology, Vol 44,1993, p 377.

[8] J.Locke, Two Treatises of Government, 1963 New York, Cambridge, p 395. Also, Z Rau, 'Some Thoughts on Civil Society in Eastern Europe and The Lockean Contractarian Approach,' Political Studies, Vol.35, 1987, pp 582-3.

[9]A Ferguson, An Essay on the History of Civil Society, (Edited by Fania Oz-Salzberger), 1995 Cambridge, Cmbridge University Press, pp.71-3.

[10]E.Schils, op cit, p 5.

[11]G.W F.Hegel, Philosophy of Right, (Translated by T.M.Knox), 1952, Clarendon Press, pp.110, 189. A Pelczynski (ed), The State and Civil Society, 1984 Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, p 1.

universal and encompassing power of the state.[12] This economic system contained within itself guarantees for individual rational behaviour and progress and, as such, was conducive to the realisation of the interests of individuals. In addition, it formed individuals into "super-individual collectivities" with an integrated societal self-consciousness.[13]

> "Civil society in this sense is an arena in which modern man legitimately gratifies his self-interest...but also learns the value of group action [and] social solidarity"[14]

In developing a more organic model of state-society relations, the lines between the legal existence of a civil society and the substance of activity therewithin were blurred, and although seen as two distinctly separate entities, the relationship between civil society and the state was necessarily symbiotic.[15] Civil society could not function without the supervision of a regulatory state. In Hegel's hands, for example, civil society assumed a less positive meaning than previously, viewed as an essentially self-crippling entity in need of constant state supervision and control. In short, civil society could not remain civil unless it was ordered politically and subject to "the higher surveillance of the state."[16] In addition, two points must be noted. Firstly, whilst independent activity occurs within the realm of civil society, the overall orientation of individual actors is generally in accord with the aims of state leaders due to the fact that civil society has "flowed" or developed from the prior existence of the state, and is contained within it.[17] And, secondly, whilst emphasising economic relations, Hegel also stressed that non-economic institutions and the relations between them are not peripheral or minor aspects of civil society but are central to its functioning.[18] Thus, for Hegel, civil society consists of "the social sphere of classes and autonomous organisations", "the civil sphere of public institutions such as the courts and various other social welfare agencies" in addition to the economic sphere

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[12]G W.F.Hegel, Ibid. pp.353-4; A.Pelczynski, ibid p 5.

[13]E Schils, op cit, p 6.

[14]See. Pelczynski's Introduction to The State and Civil Society, op.cit, pp 9-11.

[15]G.W F Hegel, op cit, p 266. N Robbio, 'Gramsci and the Conception of Civil Society,' in: C.Mouffe (ed), Gramsci and Marxist Theory, 1979 London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, p 221.

[16]J.Keane, 'Despotism and Democracy,' in: J Keane (ed), Civil Society and the State, 1988 London, Verso, pp. 50-53.

[17]G.W F Hegel, op cit, pp 154-5.

[18]K Kumar, op cit, p 379

of production, exchange and other market relations.[19] Hegel's interpretation of civil society remains significant today, as political theorists generally distinguish civil society from the political state, using the former to denote forms of association which are spontaneous, customary and, in general, not dependent upon law; and the latter to denote the legal and political institutions of the wider state.[20]

Karl Marx, also, focused on the commercial and economic aspects of civil society. Referring to Hegel's organic model, Marx eliminated all distinctions between the legal existence of an independent public sphere and the orientation of its actors. However, whereas Hegel's interpretation had been a relatively complex one, Marx's was reductionist in essence, reducing civil society virtually to the economic sphere of labour, production and exchange.[21] Starting from the premise that it is not the state that nurtures and conditions civil society (Hegel) but civil society that conditions and regulates the state, Marx's interpretation was inextricably linked to the growth of a bourgeois middle class and the spread of capitalism. Consequently, civil society was interpreted as a particular stage in the development of productive forces:-

> "The social practices and social institutions of civil society could be no more than the forms in which the essential life of capitalist society, the economic life, was played out."[22]

Thus, the concept of civil society was effectively dismissed as a residue of bourgeois social organisation and the rise of capitalism. For Marx, civil society could only be equated with bourgeois society, in which the bourgeoisie sought to dominate the state for its own advantage. Alternative orientations, for example, towards workers' interests, could never be realised within the context of a bourgeois institutional framework. Szajkowski reminds us it should be borne in mind, however, that for Marx the institutions of civil society were inextricably linked with his account of class and, consequently, his conceptual framework was bound to be that much narrower.[23] Irrespective of this, for Marx, civil society's two distinguishing characteristics remained the division of society, but a division between the propertyless masses and

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[19]Z A Pelczynski, 'Solidarity and The Rebirth of Civil Society,' in J.Keane (ed), Civil Society and the State, 1988 London, Verso, p.364.

[20]Hegel, op cit, pp.x, 124-6, 376. R.Scruton, A Dictionary of Political Thought, 1982 London, The Macmillan Press Ltd., p.66

[21]A Pelczynski, The State and Civil Society, op cit, p 2.

[22]K Marx, 'Preface to an Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy,' in: K.Marx and F.Engels, Selected Works in Two Volumes, Vol 1, 1962 Moscow, Foreign Languages Publishing House, p 362.

[23]B Szajkowski, 'The Catholic Church in Defence of Civil Society in Poland,' in: B Misztal (ed), Poland After Solidarity, 1985 New Brunswick, Transaction Books, pp 68-69.

the coercive owners of the means of production. Although having written in 1845 in "The German Ideology" that civil society was "the true source and theatre of all history",[24] his explanations of political events, legal changes and cultural development were based on economic criteria alone. Consequently, in contrast to Hegel's interpretation, which included cultural, social and political categories in addition to the economic, Marx's stemmed from a much narrower economic base. For him, the anatomy of civil society was to be sought purely in the political economy. Admittedly, such factors as market competition and commodity production were and are essential elements in the development of the concept of civil society since its Eighteenth Century interpretations. However, they represent only one dimension that, on its own, is unable to furnish a complete understanding.

Gramsci's development of a theory of civil society during the period of Italian Fascism in the early twentieth century, departed both from Hegelian usage, and Marx's basically economic interpretation, and his writing - particularly in his "Prison Notes" - was largely responsible for the revitalisation of the concept. For Gramsci, civil society was to be found neither within the state per se, nor within the economic sphere of production. Rather, he identified civil society as existing between the coercive relations of the state and the sphere of economic organisation. Consequently, the formula most commonly found in Gramsci is that the state consists of civil society *and* political society. *Political* society refers to the coercive apparatus, the arena of domination; whilst *civil* society is that of consent and direction exercised through private organisations such as the Church and trade unions: in effect, that area of social life which appears as the realm of the private citizen and individual consent. It was within the sphere of the civil society that intellectuals operate especially,[25] and, therefore, an arena within which ideologies, theories, and individual schools of thought could be disseminated and used as springboards for the conquest of political power in the state.[26] Thus, Gramsci's model of civil society, unlike Marx's, involves a double network and covers two dimensions. Firstly, the economic: the system of production and material concerns; and, secondly, the political-cultural: ideological and cultural apparatuses which affect the government.[27]

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[24]K.Marx and F.Engels, The German Ideology, Part I with selections from Parts II and III, together with Marx's Introduction to A Critique of Political Economy, edited by C.J Arthur, 1970 London, International Publishers Also, N.Abercrombie, The Penguin Dictionary of Sociology, 2nd Edition 1988 London, Penguin Group, p.34.

[25]D Forgacs (ed), An Antonio Gramsci Reader, 1988 New York, Schocken Books, Chapter 10. Intellectuals and Education, pp 300-322. Also, K Kumar, op cit, p 382

[26]A Pelczynski, The State and Civil Society, op cit, p 3.

[27]C Buci-Glucksman, Gramsci and the State, 1980 London, Lawrence and Wishart, p 70.

Writing specifically about Italy, Gramsci concluded that it was within the sphere of civil society, as opposed to the political, that the working class under a Fascist leadership had a better chance of gaining hegemony, and having achieved it, could make it the springboard for the conquest of political power in the state. A revolutionary overthrow or radical change of the political state was out of the question, therefore, the only option for independent participation was to accept the systemic boundaries imposed by Fascism, while carving out as much autonomy as possible in an independent sphere of public activity. Thus, whilst retaining the Marxian idea of the state as a predominantly coercive apparatus controlled in capitalist society by the production-owning bourgeoisie, he insisted that civil society could neither be seen just as the economic sphere, nor as a mere adjunct to the state. It was, rather, a sphere of various autonomous organisations and activities, in which the state did not necessarily have a monopoly of power or hegemonic status.[28] As such, it offered various groups and classes an opportunity to undermine the domination of the bourgeoisie in its home territory of the economy and the coercive state, via a gradual, prior transformation within the realm of civil society itself. This political "war of position" was a more suitable strategy for a successful take-over of power than a sudden "war of movement" or sudden frontal assault (as proposed by Marxist-Leninists) upon the state apparatus.[29] In effect, Gramsci's civil society was functional in a way that Marx's was not. The outlines of, or an embryonic form of civil society could develop within the context of a coercive or oppressive state, with autonomous interests and associations being pursued and organised independently of (though, notably, necessarily related to) the state.[30]

Gramsci's model of civil society is fundamental to an understanding of the emergence of an autonomous sphere in Eastern Europe and of the subsequent revolutions in 1989. Developments in Eastern Europe, especially Poland, have given the Gramscian approach - albeit in a somewhat modified form - a new lease of life, and allowed Western scholars to conceptualise recent developments, and dissidents, themselves, to map out a programme to achieve the de-totalisation of real socialism. Pelczynski, for example, employs a neo-Gramscian framework to analyse and explain

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[28] D Forgacs, op cit, pp 233-238, and Chapter VIII. 'The Art and Science of Politics.'

[29] D Boothman (ed), Antonio Gramsci: Further Selections From the Prison Notebooks, 1995 Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, pp 324, 350. Also, D Forgacs, op cit, Chapter VII: 'The Art and Science of Politics,' especially pp 225-229; and C Buci-Glucksman, op cit, pp 314-7.

[30] D Forgacs , op cit, pp.225-228.

"the rebirth of civil society" in Poland,[31] as does Arato in his analysis of Solidarity in 1980-81,[32] and Frentzel-Zagorska investigating the patterns of transition from one-party states.[33] In the context of Communist Europe, a contractual approach to independent activity was not an option.[34] Furthermore, the non-feasibility of a revolutionary overthrow or fundamental reform of the status quo had been forcibly demonstrated by the experiences of Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968. The only option for independent participation in the 1970s-1980s was, therefore, to accept the official systemic boundaries of Communist rule and the regime's control over "high politics," while carving out as much autonomy as possible over "low politics" in an independent sphere of public activity.[35] Similarly, the proponents of independent activity in East Central Europe, beginning in the early 1970s, assumed that a civil society could emerge within the parameters of the totalitarian state. The monopolistic party would retain control over the broad economic and political agenda, whilst an increasingly independent *second society* would incrementally broaden its scope to effect the realisation of private and local interests. That is, opposition activity was focused on the search for a space within existing society which lay outside the official power structure and limits imposed by the state. These principles were embodied in Adam Michnik's theories of "New Evolutionism"[36] as the only way to oppose Communist regimes. The formation of the Committee for the Defence of Workers (KOR) in Poland in 1976 can be viewed as the first example of this horizontal collectivism within East European Communist society.[37] What it demonstrated was that the outlines of a civil society could develop, in a Gramscian

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[31] Z.A.Pelczynski, 'Solidarity and the Rebirth of Civil Society,' op cit, pp 365-6.

[32] A Arato, 'Civil Society Against the State: Poland 1980-81,' Telos, No.47, Spring 1981, pp 23-47

[33] J Frentzel-Zagorska, 'Civil Society in Poland and Hungary,' Soviet Studies , Vol.42, 1990, pp.759-777.

[34] Z Rau, op cit, p 584

[35] "High politics" refers to "the principal political issues of society, the abstract ideas and language of politics, the decisions and actions of the societal leadership " Conversely, "low politics" includes "decisions that directly touch the citizen's daily life, the communal matters, and the conditions of the work place." S Bialer, Stalin's Successors· Leadership, Stability and Change in the Soviet Union, 1980 Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, p.166.

[36] 'New Evolutionism' implied a long-term strategy of -
(i) transforming the existing, and creating new, independent social organisations capable of defending autonomous interests and resisting the domination of the party-state;
(ii) extending, gradually, the arena in which public opinion could criticise existing policies and formulate alternatives based on the actual and desired needs of society.
In: A Michnik, Letters From Prison and Other Essays, 1985 Berkeley, University of California Press, pp.135-148.

[37] G Kolankiewicz, op cit, p 142.

sense, within the context of an authoritarian state, with the interpretation and expression of interests being pursued independently of - though necessarily related to - the structure of state domination and economic relations.[38] The relations between the Polish United Workers' Party (PUWP) and Solidarity (which, significantly, Andrew Arato refers to as "the state versus civil society")[39] for example, evolved into a struggle for power of the kind Gramsci postulated - a slow gradual *war of position* in which the balance-of-power would ultimately tilt from the state to civil society. In essence, citing the Poland example as the principal reference point, East European civil society can, therefore, be seen as operating within - or parallel to - the wider boundaries defined and delineated by the state.

Two further points are significant here. This neo-Gramscian interpretation of civil society involved a twofold re-orientation. Firstly, the target of democratisation shifted from the whole of society, to society outside of state institutions proper which, necessarily, incorporated a degree of self-limitation in that the leading role of the Communist Party in the state sphere remained unchallenged. And, secondly, the interpretation indicated that the agent of change would be an independent, self-organising society aimed, not at revolution, but at structural reform achieved as a consequence of organised pressure from below.[40]

(2.1.2) Contemporary Definitions

In summary of the above:

> "Civil society has been found in the economy and in the polity; in the area between the family and the state or the individual and the state; in non-state institutions which organise and educate citizens for political participation; even as an expression of the whole civilising mission of modern society."[41]

Despite shifts in interpretation or definition, the theoretical concept has consistently retained certain central features. Firstly, civil society is a society distinct from, and independent of the state. It is the realm of organised social life that is open, voluntary, self-governing, at least partially self-supporting, and autonomous from the state. To a degree, however, the borders between civil society and the state are not distinct, but blurred. There is an interdependence between the two spheres. The free association of

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[38] A.Arato, 'Civil Society, History and Socialism. Reply to John Keane,' Praxis International, 9, April-June 1989, pp.133-151, especially, p 141 and 146.

[39] See A.Arato,'Civil Society Against the State,' op cit, pp.23-47.

[40] A Michnik, op cit, pp 86, 88 and 95.

[41] K Kumar, op cit, p 383.

civil society is constrained by the recognition of the principles of state authority and the rule of law , and needs the protection of an institutionalised legal order to develop and be secure. From its side, civil society strives to lay down limits on the actions of the state. In addition, civil society encompasses a vast array of organisations, formal and informal, and entails the creation of a wide variety of autonomous institutions - independent pressure and interest groups, media (television, radio, and, more importantly, a press) free from censorship, an independent judiciary, for example - to form a network which has not one, but many centres and, therefore, cannot easily be destroyed by a monopolistic power. Civil society should also be civil: a society in which tolerance between competing individuals and groups is accepted and can flourish.[42] Civil society fosters genuine political debate and in so doing, makes direct inputs into the political system and affairs of the state. Lastly, this links to a feature little emphasised during the Nineteenth Century but which is particularly relevant when referring to East Central Europe, and that is the idea of a *political community*. Grzegorz Ekiert employs Gramsci's distinction between political, and domestic or civil society to account for the process of Communist regime change. The reinvigoration of *political* society, he argues, distinguished 1989 in Eastern Europe from earlier manifestations of civil discontent in 1956 and 1968. However, rather than equating political society with the coercive apparatus of the state (as Gramsci does), Ekiert's category of political society embraces "the entirety of voluntary associations and social movements in an active *political* community,"[43] collectively organised around the principle of public political debate and participation. This could also be expressed by distinguishing between a *passive* and an *active* civil society, the former referring to the institutions that differentiate and stabilise it, and the latter to the forms of autonomous collective action required to defend and expand its political potentials.[44]

However, as I intend to use the concept of civil society as an analytical tool to foster as explanation of the events that took place in 1989 in Communist Eastern Europe, my chief concern is with the substance of "actually existing" civil society rather than the theoretical bounds or uses of the concept. Real civil societies will differ considerably from their normative claims and strictures, their defining

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[42] See· S N Eisenstadt, 'Civil society,' in: S M Lipset (ed), The Encyclopaedia of Democracy, 1995 Washington, Congressional Quarterly, Vol 1, pp 240-242.

[43]G Ekiert, 'Democratisation Processes in East Central Europe,' British Journal of Political Science Vol 21, 1991, p 300. (Emphasis added).

[44]A Arato, 'Social Theory, Civil Society and the Transformation of Authoritarian Socialism,' in: F.Ferenc and A Arato (eds), Crisis and Reform in Eastern Europe, 1991 New Brunswick, Transaction Books, p 5.

characteristics being largely determined by the nature of the existing regime, as well as socio-cultural, political and historical factors peculiar to each nation. For example, Diamond charts the development of civil society in the former Communist countries and distinguishes between those in Romania and Bulgaria and those in Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia. According to his analysis, the latter had previous civic traditions that could - and were - revived throughout the 1970s and 1980s; whilst the countries of the former, particularly Romania, faced a far more difficult time, having no traditions on which to draw.[45] Vajda, too, emphasises that the totalitarian political systems throughout Eastern Europe had highly variable modes of operation, due in part to the very different historical developments of the respective countries.[46] It is, therefore, important to highlight the distinction between civil society as an ideal type - embodying all the virtues of separation, autonomy, and free association in their entirety - and the real world of civil society which will embody these principles to varying degrees. Consequently, rather than attempting to clarify the many and varied theoretical interpretations outlined above, there is a need to devise a working definition of civil society which will enable an exploration of the process of Communism's breakdown in the societies of Eastern Europe, and to explore the implications of a civil society for the mode of regime breakdown.

Considering all the above points, the most crucial and common understanding of the concept appears to be that civil society is an arena of non-state institutions and practices, which enjoy a high degree of autonomy. As a working definition, I understand civil society to be:-

> The independent social self-organisation of society, the constituent parts of which voluntarily engage in public activity to pursue individual, group or national interests. Civil society is independently organised to the extent that it operates outside the formal, institutional framework of the state, yet it necessarily operates within, or parallel to, the established structures of the official state system.

Significantly, civil society - being unofficial and nominally distinct from the state - in the absence of institutionalised and legal forms of interest articulation and mediation, may emerge as a network of independent organisations outside the formal system, which may exert pressure on the political organs of the state. This interpretation permits an understanding of the emergence of a self-organised society prior to the

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[45] L Diamond, 'Toward Democratic Consolidation,' Journal of Democracy, Vol 5 No.3, July 1994, pp. 4-17

[46] M Vajda, 'East-Central European Perspectives,' in: J Keane (ed), Civil Society and the State, 1988 London, Verso, pp.333-360.

institutional transformation of the regime, and allows an analysis of the role of civil society in this transformation. It also facilitates distinctions between different types or sectors of civil society - for example, between those institutions with recognisable political roles, and those with activities directed at spheres other than the political - and, therefore, permits comparative analysis of the respective roles of civil societies in the course of regime change or collapse.

(2.2) Civil Society in Eastern Europe

The areas in which particular societies self-organise, the forms of their organisation, their goals and forms of activity will, to a large extent, be determined by the specific opportunities and barriers created by the defining characteristics of the given regime. In order to contextualise the systemic changes within the East European regimes, and the role played by civil society therein, it is, therefore, essential to briefly outline the nature of the Communist regimes in which the drama was played out. In that respect, this section will consider the main characteristics of totalitarianism, and the relationship between that particular form of rule and civil society, both in theory and in practice.

(2.2.1) Totalitarianism

In the immediate post-1945 years, Western analysts employed the concept of totalitarianism to refer to the Soviet Union and its European satellites.[47] Totalitarianism described an economic, social and political system extending the principles of authoritarian rule into all spheres of life. It depended on detailed penetration and complete subjugation of all spheres of life by the central system of government. Totalitarian systems were characterised by an all-engulfing ideology, a hierarchy of powers to manage society, a mass party which aimed to indoctrinate and mobilise, and a political police with unlimited prerogatives. Furthermore, totalitarianism aimed at the dissolution of all social structures and bonds outside the control of the party, and, in that respect, the Soviet and East European totalitarian-type systems excluded any critical agent - civil society - extraneous to their organisational principals.

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[47] C Friedrich and Z Brzezinski, Totalitarianism, Dictatorship and Autocracy, Revised Edition, 1965 Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, p 3; and Z.Brzezinski, Ideology and Power in Soviet Politics, Revised Edition, 1968 New York, Praegar Publishers, p xxi. Although the totalitarian model was the predominant framework of analysis during the 1950s and early 1960s it must, however, be recognised that the concept was a product of Western and émigré scholarship, and portrayed an ideal type only.

By the late 1950s and early 1960s, however, the validity of the model was questioned with Nikita Khrushchev's "opening-up" of the Soviet system of rule.[48] This dismantling of the concept of totalitarianism led to the construction of alternative models, which emphasised a host of new features visible within the Soviet system.[49] For example, some refined the existing model on the evidence that the system no longer appeared to permit the dominance of the First Secretary - the "directed society" thesis[50] - whilst others employed a "mobilisation model," based on the premise that the Soviet system was but one variant in the process of political development.[51] An alternative school of thought observed the evident changes within the Soviet polity - in particular, the apparent existence of a degree of pluralism - viewing them as part of an inevitable trend linked to industrialising societies, wherein socio-economic development was necessarily accompanied by growing and changing public demands on the system compelling it to open up.[52] Inspite of a lack of agreement on one particular model, most scholars recognised a degree of change in response to these new demands.[53] The expectation of continued change throughout the 1960s and later was effectively dashed, however, by the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968, thereby forcefully indicating the extent of Soviet tolerance for change within the satellite states.[54] During the 1970s, subsequently, scholarly analysis of the system per se gave way to a number of studies of constituent parts of the system: the role of the elite groups, of technocrats, the interplay between domestic and international spheres of policy-making, for example.

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[48] C Johnson, 'Comparing Communist Nations,' in: C Johnson (ed), Change in Communist Systems, 1970 Stanford, Stanford University Press, p 2. Although the models developed referred specifically to the political system of the Soviet Union, the basic principles also remain relevant for the East European systems of Communist rule, which appeared to slavishly follow the example set by Moscow.

[49] New in some cases to the Soviet system itself, and, in others, merely to the community of Soviet scholars. C Lefort, The Political Forms of Modern Society: Bureacracy, Democracy, Totalitarianism, 1986 Cambridge, Polity Press, Ch.2, pp 52-88.

[50] A Kassof, 'The Administered Society· Totalitarianism Without Terror,' in: F.J Fleron (ed), Communist Studies and the Social Sciences, 1969 Chicago, Rand McNally., p.46.

[51] S P Huntington, Political Order in Changing Societies, 1968 New Haven, Yale University Press, pp 40, 47-53.

[52] K.Jowitt, 'Inclusion and Mobilisation in European Leninist Regimes,' World Politics, Vol.28 No 1, October 1975, pp 69-96

[53] J Hough, 'The Soviet System Petrification or Pluralism ?' Problems of Communism, Vol.21 No 2, March-April 1972, pp 25-45

[54] W Taubman, 'The Change to Change in Communist Systems. Modernisation, Post-modernisation and Soviet Politics,' in: H.W.Morton and R L.Tokes (eds), Soviet Politics and Society in the 1970s, 1974 New York, Free Press, pp 379-80.

I do not propose to examine in any further detail the many criticisms of the totalitarian, or other, models of the European Communist systems that emerged during the 1970s. Suffice it to say that totalitarianism came under attack for a number of reasons. For example, as the era of the concentration of power in a single dominant leader, reaching its height under Stalin's repressive regime, gave way subsequent to his death, to a more relaxed and accommodating approach, the coercive apparatus did not appear to be so central or dominant a feature. What is significant is that the picture officially portrayed was one of consolidation, political strength, and social and cultural maturity, with the Communist Party recognised as the leading powerful force, enjoying authority and trust within society. Society was centralised with the Party exercising a recognised hegemony, with all individuals working towards one, commonly perceived socialist goal. Therefore, in theory at least, there were no divisions within the system at large. The very concept of a civil society was rendered superfluous to both the theory and the regime-claimed reality of the system. However, the fundamental tenet of totalitarianism - that a monolithic regime dominates an acquiescent and passive population - had been belied since 1945, not only by evidence of elite power struggles demonstrating obvious cleavages within the Party leadership itself, but also by increasing evidence of open political struggles and resistance. A cursory glance at the vast literature on dissident and opposition activity in European Communist systems reveals that the ideal-type or model of totalitarianism concealed certain anomalies and distinct shortcomings.

However, despite these admitted flaws, totalitarianism has enjoyed a resurgence as a means of explaining the true nature of Communist systems. Joppke, for example, declared that it would be misleading to abandon the concept in favour of some alternative form of authoritarianism.[55] I would argue that, as a concept, it does have a useful analytical value when attempting to capture the essence of the East European Communist regimes. The East European systems may not have been orthodox totalitarian, yet they strove to be and continually tended in that direction. Moreover, prominent dissident intellectuals and writers consistently employed the term when referring to life under Communism. During his address forwarded to the University of Toulouse in 1984, for example, Vaclav Havel referred to the anonymity and de-personalisation of totalitarian power as symbolised by the Czechoslovak Communist Party (CCP).[56] Similarly, Ivan Klima begins an essay entitled "Culture vs. Totalitarianism" with the statement:

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[55] C Joppke, East German Dissidents and the Revolution of 1989, 1995 Basingstoke, Macmillan Press Ltd , pp.10-11, 17.

[56] V Havel, 'Anti-Political Politics,' in· J Keane (ed), Civil Society and the State, 1988 London, Verso, pp.381-398

> "With the exception of two brief periods [1945-8 and 1968] Czechoslovakia lived under the rule of totalitarian power for an entire half century."[57]

Writing on the subject of Charter 77, Josef Vohryzek talks of a "closed totalitarian society;"[58] and, similarly, Jacques Rupnik highlights the misguided abandonment of the totalitarian model as a "propagandist product of the Cold war era," for it only to be re-appropriated by dissident writers within the East European regimes, citing 1968 as the ultimate proof of the impossibility of "detotalising totalitarianism."[59]

(2.2.2) Totalitarianism and Civil Society

One set of difficulties associated with the concept of totalitarianism revolves around an interpretation of the notion of social self-organisation within a supposedly totalitarian-type environment. The essence of the totalitarian state is that it aspires to be total, asserting that the state is identical with society and co-extensive with it. It, therefore, denies autonomy to the individual and to non-state organisations, which must either be incorporated into the state apparatus, or face certain liquidation. Having secured control of social organisations, the totalitarian state seeks to penetrate every aspect of life, and assume control over all interests and activities. In theory, there can be nothing beyond state control: there can be no independent institutions with an autonomy and validity of their own, and no scope for an individual to remain true to his/her judgement, conscience or beliefs.[60] Consequently, totalitarianism denies the possibility of, and excludes, any independent civil society. Therefore, if we consider Communist society to be, generally, characterised by the following four features:- the Party articulates the will of the people; the state is sacred, as is the Marxist-Leninist ideology; opposition to the Party and its policies signifies disloyalty; and individuals and groups, acting autonomously, are socially divisive, then it becomes evident that, any relinquishing on the part of the state of its control to personal or private activities or demands would necessarily entail a recognition of independent interests in society and, thus, undermine the entire rationale of the Communist regime.[61]

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[57] I Klima, The Spirit of Prague, 1993 London, Granta Books, p.110.

[58] J Vohryzek, 'Thoughts Inside a Tightly-Corked Bottle,' in: V.Havel (ed.), The Power of the Powerless, 1985 London, Palach Press, pp.198-221.

[59] J Rupnik, 'Totalitarianism Revisited,' in: J Keane (ed), op cit, pp 263-267.

[60] B.Wolfe, Communist Totalitarianism Keys to the Soviet System, 1985 Boulder CO, Westview Press, pp 267-9

[61] See D Lane, Soviet Society Under Perestroika, 1992 London, Routledge, pp 107-130 for further discussion.

With particular reference to the countries of Eastern Europe, significant, then, were early manifestations of the apparent continued or potential existence of a semi-functioning civil society which were apparent in Hungary and Poland in 1956, and Czechoslovakia in 1968. This existence took the form of an increasing tendency towards self-organisation within society, and a determination to protect and extend the permissible public sphere, thus, suggesting that the overall disengagement of the state from civil society was not as complete or total as propounded.[62] In the former GDR, for example, the increasingly overt activities of independent peace groups and the role of the non-Orthodox Church began to represent the interests of a far from passive population. Dissident intellectuals certainly pressed for political reform and features normally associated with a civil society (freedom of the law and media, and of association, for example) in various waves from the 1950s. Sakwa states that the image of Eastern Europe as "a sea of grey immobility and passivity" can no longer be accepted,[63] mirroring the criticisms levelled at theoreticians of totalitarianism, in general, and Sovietologists, in particular, that totalitarianism, as a theoretical system of rule, was, in reality, somewhat flawed in those countries in which it actually existed.

(2 2 3) How to Measure Civil Society in the East European Context?

The apparent resurrection or survival of civil society was identified by dissident intellectuals and scholars in both East and West. For example, Andrew Arato referred to the "Solidarity period" of 1980-81 as "the end of revisionism and the reconstitution of civil society."[64] Essays which appeared in Poland written by Adam Michnik and Jacek Kuron talked about the possibilities for the reconstruction of society, led not by the Party as the agent of reform but by independent public opinion and "by society."[65] Kuron's 1976 pamphlet - "Pour une Platforme unique de l'Opposition" - on an oppositional strategy for KOR outlined a systematic programme for the resurrection of civil society based on the re-establishment of the rule of law, and freedom of association guaranteed within an independent public sphere, to be founded on the networks of informal social relations that already existed in Polish society.[66] The success of Michnik's "New Evolutionism" strategy depended on the

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[62]J Frentzel-Zagorska, op cit, p 762.

[63]R Sakwa, Soviet Politics An Introduction, 1989 London, Routledge, p 319

[64]A Arato, 'Civil Society Against the State,' op cit, p 23

[65]Ibid, pp 27-29

[66] Cited in H Gordon Skilling, Samizdat and An Independent Society in Central and Eastern Europe, 1989 Basingstoke, Macmillan Press, p 180

actions of independent society, and was subsequently to form the basis of Solidarity's policy concerning systemic transformation. Rudolf Bahro's "The Alternative in Eastern Europe" described the building of a new Communist Party outside the existing one to absorb and replace its predecessor as a result of its social hegemony. That is, it would truly be the representative of society, responding to independent political thought and action.[67] In 1978, Jiri Pelikan was to interpret Bahro's concept of "dual power" to mean the emergence of parallel structures alongside official institutions -for example, publishing houses, universities, autonomous trade unions, social committees - which, together would form the basis of an entire "parallel society".[68] In Hungary, Hegedus stressed the potential plurality of social forces seeking some autonomy and independent public expression. Even though, here, the existing network of social ties was almost exclusively intellectual, he proposed that they did provide a viable basis for an alternative, critical public sphere which could bypass the state altogether by setting up parallel institutions.[69] In Poland, Wojcicki referred to the reconstruction of society amidst a high degree of organisation and societal autonomy, as an attempt to overcome the atomisation and control of the population.[70] In essence, as Western scholars referred to the resurrection of civil society, in Eastern Europe, a similar idea was more often expressed in concepts such as "the social self-organisation of society" in Poland, or an "independent society" in Czechoslovakia, or a "parallel society" in Hungary.[71]

(2.2.4) From Civil Society to Second Society

Richard Sakwa suggests three possible forms or varieties of resistance/opposition to communist power. Firstly, "organic work," that is, the steady devotion to the cause of regime change but working through the structures of the existing system. Communist power, however, remained, throughout its existence, relatively impermeable to opposition figures, any official opening, allowing even the expression of alternative ideas, would have struck at the very heart of the system. Secondly, violent or overt insurrection. This, too, was not an attractive choice for

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[67]Rudolf Bahro, 'The Alternative in Eastern Europe' New Left Review 106, November-December 1977, pp 3-38.

[68]J Pelikan, 'Bahro's Ideas on Changes in Eastern Europe' in: R.Woller (ed), Rudolf Bahro: Critical Responses, 1980 New York, White Plains, pp 168-185.

[69]A.Hegedus, 'Democracy and Socialism in East and West' in: Coates and Singleton (eds), The Just Society, 1977 Nottingham

[70] K Wojcicki, 'The Reconstruction of Society,' Telos, No.47, Spring 1981, pp 98-104

[71] V Benda et al, 'Parallel Polis, or an Independent Society in Central and Eastern Europe: An Enquiry' Social Research, Vol 55 Nos.1-2, Spring/Summer 1988, p 211.

opposition members: the mere threat of Soviet military intervention to maintain Communist governments, echoing the events of 1956 and 1968, deterred many would-be opposition groups in Eastern Europe. Lastly, he suggests the creation of an *alternative society*, that is, a society not so much counterpoised to the official world as ignoring it; a *second* society insulated, to an extent, from Communist structures.[72] In the absence of any official political structure or avenue that could make it possible for groups or individuals to compete openly on the official political stage, the opposition turned its attention from authority and the state, to society as a means of change. The creation of an *independent community* became the only meaningful construction possible. As I highlighted previously, such a strategy was adopted by dissident intellectuals - notably, Havel, Michnik, Kuron and Hegedus - echoing Gramscian themes of the possibility of a civil society operating within the parameters of an oppressive authoritarian state.

It is this last point that is significant for any discussion of the role of opposition, and for its effects on the process and mode of regime change and democratisation in Eastern Europe. That is to say, the development and subsequent consolidation of a *second society* is a theme integrating the disparate theme of opposition in Communist Europe and, as such, can be used to compare the effects of an autonomous civil society on regime transition.

(2.2.5) The Second Society: A Definition

The concept of a second society should not be interpreted as a separate entity to that of civil society, but, rather, as one stage in the evolution of the latter. In essence, the birth and subsequent development of a second society is the precursor to a fully active, legally recognised civil society.[73] The concept represented a 1970s East European construct; an attempt to encourage the development of civic initiatives in a system which recognised no legal public space for independence, and to account for and give direction to those actions already evident. The adoption of the second society concept by both East European dissidents, and the groups and associations they encouraged, permits the analysis of independence in systems which afforded no legal recognition or space for traditional civil society actors and activity. Inevitably, both individual and group efforts to overcome the social atomisation of society did prosper without the prior theorising of dissident intellectuals. Activities that would later be subsumed within the concept of a second society - black market selling and

[72] R Sakwa, op cit, pp 324-326.

[73] Only in Poland during the years 1980-81 with the legal recognition of the Solidarity Trade Union, would it be justifiable to refer to the existence of a *civil* society in Eastern Europe.

profiteering, reliance on familial and community networks to obtain scarce resources, for example - were a characteristic, albeit in varying degrees, of the Communist systems from the outset.[74] Similarly, cultural independence and phenomena such as samizdat publishing were in evidence *before* the theoretical essays written in the 1970s gave meaning and direction to citizens' initiatives.[75] In that respect, the concept of second society must be understood, on the one hand, as a spontaneous reaction to the strictures of the Communist system and, on the other, as the consequence of a deliberate strategy propounded by opposition intellectuals.

The perspective of the second society has been advanced by a number of scholars in Eastern Europe. Notably, Elemer Hankiss, writing to explain the apparent contradictions inherent in his native Hungary, set forth the concept of a "dual society," thereby distinguishing between a "'first society' - 'the manifest, formal, institutional sphere', and the 'second society' - 'the latent and informal sphere of social existence.'"[76] Vaclav Benda, a Czechoslovak Catholic intellectual and revolutionary democrat, wrote an essay in 1978 entitled "Parallel Polis" in which he called for the organisation of "parallel activities independent of the state, in which the various currents gradually form a broad, unlimited association of people, a community, a polis."[77] Vaclav Havel's call for independent society to participate in "anti-political politics" - that is, "politics of the people" or "politics from below" - was to prove a rallying-point for those willing to express their opposition to Communism and act upon it.[78] His "Power of the Powerless" talked of "a spectre of dissent haunting Europe," and recognised that the formation of a single, specific party in public opposition to the Communists was not the way to achieve a reform of the system. Instead, he advocated "structures arising from below as a consequence of authentic social self-organisation."[79] Ivan Jirous referred to the "parallel polis" and its external manifestations (for example, the "second culture" or the Charter 77

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[74] S Sampson, 'The Informal Sector in Eastern Europe,' Telos, Vol 66 No 4, Winter 1985-6, pp 45-51.

[75] H Gordon Skilling, Samizdat and An Independent Society in Central and Eastern Europe, op cit, pp 19-42.

[76] E Hankiss, 'The "Second Society:" Is There an Alternative Social Model Emerging in Contemporary Hungary ?' Social Research, Vol 55 No 1-2, Spring/Summer 1988, pp.18-21.

[77] P.Uhl, 'The Alternative Community as Revolutionary Avant-Garde' in: V Havel et al, The Power of the Powerless, 1985 London, Palach Press, p 192.

[78] V.Havel, 'Anti-Political Politics,' op cit, pp 381-398

[79] V Havel, The Power of the Powerless· Citizens Against the State in Central-Eastern Europe, 1985 London, Palach Press, p.93.

movement) as embodiments of Havel's "power of the powerless."[80] In this sense, Charter 77 and similar independent movements, such as the Committee for the Defence of the Unjustly Persecuted (VONS) and the Czech "cultural underground," can be understood primarily as creators of a genuine alternative to the Communist totalitarian forms of social life. Charter 77 signatories, in particular, saw their activities as paralleling the activities of the official, recognised, institutionalised system, in an attempt to create a new sphere or dimension of social existence which would ultimately play a catalytic role in the transformation of the "first" or "official" society into a more democratic order.[81]

The first and second societies, however, should not be understood as two distinct groups of people:

> "instead of being situated at two opposite poles, the two social spheres...may reach deep into the middle field of a continuum and overlap, or even intertwine with one another."[82]

Rather, they should be seen as two identifiable, but not necessarily distinct, dimensions within the social sphere of a given society, regulated by two distinct sets of organisational principles. In addition, a well-developed second society subsumes a series of sub-systems. In the first instance, a flourishing and mostly illegal "second economy" in competition with the planned economy of the state may exist. Many economists argued that, by the 1970s and 1980s, this second economy was an indispensable part of the entire economic system as it was able to satisfy consumer demands that the state-directed economy could not, and was therefore reluctantly accepted, as it - to a certain degree - channelled public discontent away from the official regime. The informal channels and networks that it created represented the growth of collective action vital for the day-to-day existence of virtually all East Europeans.[83] As such, for the individual, the second economy assumed a greater significance than the official one, and also contributed towards considerably extending personal liberties.[84] This phenomenon was more extensive and well-

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[80]H Gordon Skilling, 'Background to the study of opposition in Communist Eastern Europe,' Government and Opposition, Vol 1 No 3, 1976, p.227.

[81]A Liehm, 'The New Social Contract and the Parallel Polity' in. J L Curry (ed), Dissent in Eastern Europe, 1983 New York, Praegar Publishers, p 177

[82]E Hankiss, 'The Second Society: Is There an Alternative Social Model Emerging in Contemporary Hungary ?' Social Research, Vol.55 Nos.1-2, Spring/Summer 1988, p.20.

[83]Ibid, pp 22-23

[84]I Kemeny, 'The Unregistered Economy in Hungary,' Soviet Studies, Vol 34 No.3, July 1982, p 362 See, also, S Sampson, op cit, pp 44-66.

developed in Hungary than elsewhere in Communist Europe, the population's involvement in unregistered economic activity being far greater. Endre Sik estimates that, by 1989, activity within the second economy accounted for as much as 35 per cent of total GDP.[85] Secondly, a "parallel culture" in opposition to state censorship and the Communist drive to create a "people-as-one" society was a common characteristic.[86] The term "parallel" or "second" culture is used to designate the entire realm of creative effort: samizdat, writing, independent art and theatre, education, and underground music and poetry, and youth culture. In particular, the role played by samizdat publications should not be underestimated, as its growth contributed significantly to the development of a second culture. To quote Ivan Klima:

> "I'm convinced that this 'underground culture' had an important influence on the revolutionary events of the autumn of 1989."[87]

In Czechoslovakia, alone, the publication of two hundred samizdat periodicals and several thousand books undermined the Communist Party's attempts to subject intellectual and spiritual life to the level of control exercised elsewhere in the system. The ideas disseminated in samizdat - all ultimately directed towards effective "freedom" - threatened the very heart of communist rule for, as Czeslaw Milosz states:

> "Communism recognises that rule over men's minds is the key to rule over an entire country, the word [therefore] is the cornerstone of the system."[88]

A third possible characteristic of the second society was the "second social consciousness" representing a backlash from society against the reach of the official ideology in penetrating and permeating the consciousness of the masses. This phenomenon can best be seen in the split between the "public" and the "private" individual: a public adherence to Marxism-Leninism and the principles and structures of the Communist system, mirrored by the development of private contrabelief systems expressed within the confines of the second society. This theme is best developed by Czeslaw Milosz in "The Captive Mind" in which he refers to the "ketman" that characterised the "people's democracies" of Eastern Europe. He defines "ketman" as a belief that:

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[85]E Sik, 'From the Second to the Informal Economy,' Journal of Public Policy, Vol.2 No.12, 1993, p 158

[86]R Sharlet, 'Varieties of Dissent and Regularities of Repression in the European Communist States: An Overview' in: J L Curry (ed), Dissent in Eastern Europe, op cit, p 8.

[87]I Klima, op cit, p.50.

[88]C.Milosz, The Captive Mind, 1981 London, The Penguin Group, p.161.

> "He who is in possession of truth must not expose his person, his relatives or his reputation to the blindness, the folly, the perversity of those whom it has pleased God to place and maintain in error. One must, therefore, keep silent about one's true convictions if possible."

In essence, an individual's outward loyalty to the regime and all its principles, his/her apparent willingness to build, together with the Party, a socialist future, changes completely within the four walls of his home or amongst friends. Only then, can he/she live "within truth" and express feelings or ideas contrary to those espoused officially, and, thus, offer some form of resistance to the Communist system.[89]

Fourthly, a regime-opposed religious belief system, counterpoised to the official policy of atheism could be identified within the bounds of second society.[90] This point is well illustrated by the significance of the Roman Catholic Church in Poland, where approximately 90 per cent of the population remained devout Catholics despite persistent attempts at persecution and limitations on the Church's activities. Similarly, in the former GDR, religion provided a focus for the activities of dissident groups and the opposition in general, contributing significantly to the evolution of alternative structures. In addition, the re-emergence of horizontal social networks, which saw the regeneration of the solidarity of local communities and interaction between diverse groups was complemented by the generation of a recognisable counter-elite, which would subsequently take centre-stage in the regime transitions in 1989. Groups were united in their opposition to Communism and, thus, challenged the vertical organisation of power (all communication, theoretically, flowing downward from the party to the people) which characterised the system.

In summary, the notion of an "independent" or "parallel" society caught the imagination of opposition circles across East and Central Europe. The concept embraced independent, autonomous initiatives and activity undertaken within the framework of an otherwise controlled society, and served to demarcate it from the life of official institutions. It refered to the various forms of dissent expressed in Eastern Europe seen in the informal acts of collective protest or self-expression by individuals in the economy, culture and society, which could not be expressed within the structures of the Communist system.[91] This concept was supported by former East European dissidents themselves also. Typically, for example, Jiri Dienstbier stated:

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[89]Ibid especially Chapter 3.

[90]R.Sharlet, op cit, p 8

[91]H Gordon Skilling, Samizdat and An Independent Society in Central and Eastern Europe, op cit, pp.219-238.

"The dynamism today is with the independent and parallel activities, as instruments of the self-organisation of civil society."[92]

The existence of elements of a second society were significant for they demonstrated that Communist regimes had not only failed to achieve the level of control portrayed by the totalitarian and other models but, especially in the post-Stalin era, had also scaled back their ambitions, allowing independent activities in civil society to play a more overt role. The increasing number of independent groups and associations, embedded in second society, gave genuine expression to popular aspirations, and testified to the emergence of social forces with a solid public presence outside the official political structures, thereby creating a real challenge to the established forms of politics.[93] Merely via their actual existence within the regimes, these groups challenged the fundamental tenets of the Communist systems, by undermining the effectiveness of the Communists' strategy to achieve the social atomisation of the individual, and introducing independent elements into the socio-political order that challenged the "people-as-one" principle of Communist theory. In this respect, non-Party groups and organisations of a second society, operating outside the formal political process, are crucial components of the entire process of change and transition in Eastern Europe, as they played important roles as agents of political change, and laid the foundations for the events of 1989. In Poland, for example, the phenomenon of autonomous groups flourished: the emergence of a range of social movements in the late 1970s heralded the first effective political opposition within the Communist bloc. Their efforts would culminate in the birth of the Solidarity Trade Union in 1980-81, and the reconstruction and consolidation of *a legally recognised civil society* in Poland.[94]

In addition, second society organisations provided forums for discussion and had the potential to formulate alternative political programmes which, especially in Poland, were to form the basis for action throughout the 1980s.[95] Second society groups successfully established horizontal networks, both internally and transnationally, thereby undermining the hierarchical organisation of the official

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[92]V.Benda et al (eds.), op cit, p 233.

[93] N Lampert, 'Democracy and Civil Society,' in· J Bloomfield (ed), The Soviet Revolution, 1989 London, Lawrence and Wishart, p.211.

[94] M Bernhard, 'Civil Society and Democratic Transition in East Central Europe,' Political Science Quarterly, Vol.108 No 2, 1993, p 314.

[95] J Lipski, KOR, 1985 London, University of California Press, see Appendices

political systems. Transnational contacts between opposition groups - which incorporated mutually supportive exchanges and attempts to integrate activities, especially between Czechoslovak and Polish activists - opened up a new chapter in the history of the East European dissident movements, and countered official policies aimed at the insulation of domestic publics from troubles abroad.[96] Furthermore, second society organisations were the breeding ground for alternative political leaderships, members of autonomous groups gaining valuable experience in the art of self-organisation and political confrontation. Leaders such as Lech Walesa and Vaclav Havel learnt skills and strategies that could be employed once the Communist regimes had fallen, and, post-1989, many former dissident leaders were to take-up influential positions within the transitional governments. Via the establishment of a recognisable counter-elite, second society opposition was able to gain a degree of heretofore unknown legitimacy and credibility in the eyes of both the populations at large and, to an extent, recognition from the Communist regimes, if only in the form of continual persecution and harassment of dissident leaders. In 1989, in particular, in those countries in which the leadership of the opposition was clearly recognisable (predominantly Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia) failing Communist regimes were able to identify specific potential partners with whom to open negotiations in an attempt to preserve the essence of the ailing systems. In summary, by effectively negating Communist attempts to achieve unity, consolidation and uncontested political strength, and with the re-engagement of the individual in political life via independent institutions, second society can be interpreted as a predominant factor affecting the process of transition in Eastern Europe. Independent organisations fulfilled a number of functions which contributed to an undermining of Communist rule. The extent to which they were able to do so, also undoubtedly affected the manner in which the regimes broke down in 1989.

Having defined the concept of second society, it is important to outline a specific set of criteria that can be employed to "measure" the extent of its development in the individual case study countries. The potential for a "fully developed" second society to include such spheres as a second economy, an independent culture, to generate a recognisable counter-elite and to encourage independent religious affiliation, for example, has been outlined above. In order to gauge the extent to which second society encompassed these spheres of activity in Poland, Czechoslovakia and Romania, the following specific criteria will be used.

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[96] P.Chilton, Mechanics of Social Change: Social Movements, Transnational Coalitions and the Transformation Processes in Eastern Europe,' Democratisation, Vol 1 No 1, Spring 1994, pp.151-181.

In the first instance, with regard to the emergence and expansion of a second culture, the extent of samizdat publishing will be analysed. The question of whether it succeed in rallying the public to the opposition's cause, either via declarations of support or sympathy, or via the formation of independent groups and associations will be addressed. The case studies will consider whether samizdat publications were successful in attracting a national readership, or whether circulation was limited in terms of the numbers or particular regions appealed to. In addition, whether the sphere of activity developed to the extent that independent publishing houses were established that were able to nurture large networks of support; or to the extent that it encouraged independence in associated spheres, such as education will be addressed. Secondly, the extent of independent group formation will be analysed. In particular, the case studies will focus on the forms they adopted, in terms of structure or membership requirements, and their respective orientations (political, social and/or economic). Also, the degree to which second society groups were able to formulate a viable alternative policy programme to that propounded by the Communist regime appears a significant factor to consider. In addition, the case-studies will focus on whether second society was spearheaded by an identifiable group or umbrella movement that was able to direct the independent activities of society as a whole; and whether these activities generated the emergence of a recognisable alternative leadership that, in turn, formulated a specific political programme. The existence, or otherwise, of a popular and national independent church distinguishing between the institution as an alternative source of authority within society, or as a regime-support structure, would also appear to be a significant factor.

I now pose the question: to what extent did the emerging second societies of Eastern Europe contribute towards the particular forms of transition that occurred in 1989? Where second society appeared to be at the fullest stage of development in Eastern Europe (Poland) the regime was eroded from within. Breakdown was negotiated, gradual and peaceful, with second society organisations co-opted at an early stage. Where opposition to Communism was unorganised and sporadic (Romania) breakdown was swift and violent, with second society organisations playing a specific role only after the initial transition. Levels of opposition activity throughout the period of Communist rule were minimal and tended to be of an individual and isolated nature. In addition, two features of the second society in Poland appear to be significant. Firstly, the opposition, under the umbrella of Solidarity, united society and overcame class divisions; and, secondly, the independent union was able to formulate a viable political alternative to the Communist system of rule, and challenge the Jaruzelski regime in the political sphere. In these two respects, second society in Poland presented a society-wide, organised

political opponent, which the Communist regime could not ignore in 1989. My hypothesis can, therefore, be summarised as follows: the extent of development of second society, and the nature and orientation of activities therewithin, determined the ability of opposition forces to appeal to all classes in society via the formulation of a popular, political alternative to Communist rule. This, in turn, had a specific impact on the mode of breakdown experienced in 1989. The hypothesis leads on to three specific questions. What were the historical factors within individual countries that conditioned the evolution of second society? What opposition, embedded within second society, did evolve? And, what was the impact of this opposition on the particular mode of breakdown witnessed in 1989? By addressing these questions, I will be able to test the hypothesis outlined above.

In order to assess the extent to which second society contributed towards the particular mode of breakdown experienced, it is also necessary here to outline a classification of modes of breakdown in order to compare the effect of second society on the process of change within the case study countries. This can be done by placing countries in transition at a point determined by two axes. The first (the vertical axis) relates to the level of development of second society; the second (the horizontal axis) relates to mode of regime breakdown (see Figure 2.1).

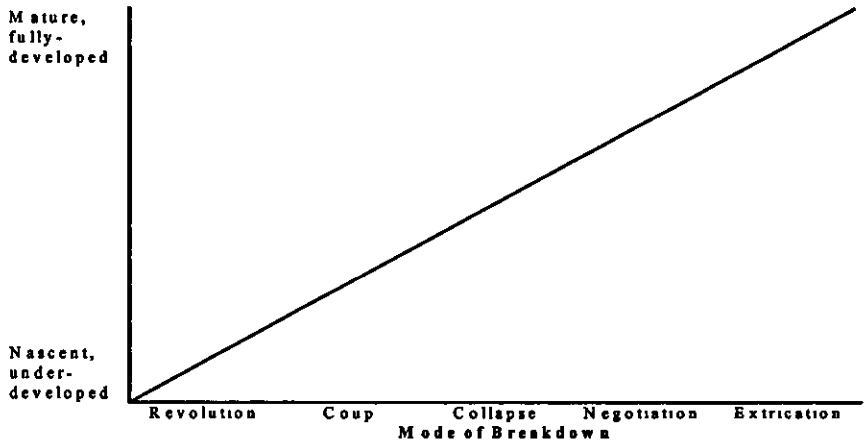

Figure 2.1 Second Society and Modes of Regime Breakdown

(Typology derived from: D Share, 'Transitions to Democracy and Transition Through Transaction,' Comparative Political Studies, Vol 19 No 4, January 1987, pp 525-548; S P.Huntington, 'How Countries Democratise,' Political Science Quarterly, Vol 106 No 4, 1991-2, pp 579-616, and T L Karl and P C Schmitter, 'Modes of Transition in Latin America, Southern and Eastern Europe,' International Social Science Journal, No 128, May 1991, pp.269-284).

Whilst recognising that such categories represent ideal-types and that most cases of regime breakdown may manifest characteristics of more than one mode, it is important to define the six categories shown in Figure 2.1. Firstly, *revolutions* are a

result of mass mobilisations and the consequent defeat of the incumbent authoritarian rulers. Therefore, regime breakdown may be a relatively rapid phenomenon and, significantly, accompanied by high levels of violence. Opposition forces will establish coherent groups or parties only after initial and probably spontaneous public demonstrations. Transitions through revolution tend to result in the complete delegitimation of the previous regime, and, therefore, a clear break with the past. The second category of breakdown via a *coup* occurs when the authoritarian regime is dislodged from power by an elite group from within the military, police force, or from within the incumbent governing party itself. The action of these groups may be triggered by the threat of impending military defeat, or by the perception of imminent threats to the status quo. The public may play an ancillary role via mass demonstrations against the authoritarian regime or in support of the coup leaders, however, society does not generally hold the initiative in the transition process. The initiative in terms of the direction and extent of transition remains with the elite and a clear break with the past may not be identifiable. Military coups, in particular, may involve the possibility of accompanying domestic violence. The *collapse* of an authoritarian regime may occur as the result of military defeat or occupation by an external power, or as a consequence of domestic factors such as severe economic crisis. Multilateral negotiations may ensue, however, society generally plays a minimal role as the principal impetus for change is an external one. *Negotiation* occurs when government and opposition leaders are jointly involved in a negotiated transition, a situation itself the result of a rough equality of power between the two. Here, transition is characteristically peaceful and gradual. Furthermore, a degree of continuity between the old and the new regime will exist, no clear definitive break with the past being readily identifiable. Negotiations are preceded by mass mobilisations and the expansion of independent activities and public support for them. A distinction must be made, however, between negotiations that are elite-led and those that are society-led. The former variant of the negotiation mode concerns those transitions that are led from within the authoritarian regime. Incumbent elites play the key role in the transition process, controlling negotiations with certain co-opted opposition groups. Transition is non-violent, with society playing a supportive role for the changes initiated "from above." Within the second variant, opposition groups play the predominant role, forcing the regime to enter negotiations. In both variants, negotiations are likely to ensure that the process of change is generally peaceful and that transition is characterised by incremental reform of the authoritarian regime rather than its sudden overthrow. The final category of *extrication* can be the consequence of the sudden and rapid loss of legitimacy enjoyed by a regime, which abruptly retires from power allowing the democratic opposition to take over. Transition may be relatively swift, but not accompanied by widespread violence. Society may play a

crucial role in demonstrating the regime's lack of legitimacy, however, the main impetus for change comes from within the regime. This category refers principally to those instances when the military-as-government extricates itself from power and returns to the barracks.

(2.3) Country Justifications

The modes of transition experienced by the European Communist regimes in 1989 demonstrate major variations, despite their coincidental timing and the superficial similarity displayed in their rejection of Communism.

I have chosen to focus on the three very different cases of Poland, Czechoslovakia and Romania, and by comparing them, to analyse the extent to which the variation between the modes of transition can be explained by domestic, specifically second society, variables. The case-study countries have been selected as representing three points on a continuum, ranging from peaceful negotiated change to violent revolutionary upheaval. The Polish example represents one extreme of this continuum: a negotiated, social contract-type of revolution (with independent social movements preparing themselves over a long period for the transfer of the state apparatus into their own hands) that was both gradual and peaceful. The Romanian example is located at the other extreme. Romania represents a case of regime collapse (perhaps better classified as a coup rather than a revolution) which was both catastrophic and arrested. The collapse of Communism was sudden and violent. In this study, therefore, Romania acts as the counter-case, which serves to illustrate what the significant conditions for the non-violent transitions in the remaining countries must have been. Czechoslovakia also experienced relatively sudden regime collapse, following some of the most severe repression witnessed in Eastern Europe throughout the 1970s. Yet, distinct from Romania, the transition was non-violent. In this respect, the Czechoslovakian example is located between the two extremes of Poland and Romania.

In this thesis, the Polish case-study will serve as the standard for comparison. The self-liberation of second society in Poland, beginning with the formation of cross-class opposition movements, reached its apex when the Party-state was compelled to legally recognise second society's existence and the boundaries of the public space. Second society was able to co-exist for a time (with the interruption of Martial Law) with a moribund authoritarian regime. At the end of the 1980s, social forces within this reconstituted second society were to negotiate a political compromise with the Communist regime, which allowed them to contest state power through parliamentary elections. During the entire process of regime breakdown, second society

organisations played a predominant role. In comparing Czechoslovakia and Romania to Poland, attention will be paid to the extent to which opposition to Communism developed (for example, whether it succeeded in overcoming the class divisions within society, or in formulating a viable alternative to Communist rule) and whether its effect on the mode of transition in each country was determining or peripheral.

By employing the criteria outlined above, the case study chapters will assess the extent to which a second society developed in the Polish, Czechoslovak and Romanian examples. In so doing, they will also consider the context in which opposition developed, that is, the nature and characteristics of the Communist regimes, which either created specific opportunities or barriers for second society activities. The case-study chapters are, therefore, divided into three sections. In order to establish the context in which opposition to Communism developed, the first will consider historical factors which conditioned the nature of emerging opposition, in addition to the general characteristics of the established Communist regimes, which effected its subsequent evolution. The second section focuses specifically on the nature of the opposition that did emerge, and the range and extent of its activities, with a particular emphasis on the 1970s and early 1980s. The final section considers the role of second society during Communism's later years, and assesses its specific impact on the mode of transition experienced in 1989.

CHAPTER III: POLAND CASE STUDY

In this chapter, I will address the central argument of this thesis: that is, to what extent the emerging second society within Poland contributed towards, or conditioned, the particular form of transition which occurred in 1989. My contention is that the mode of regime breakdown was directly dependent on the level of development achieved by the second society in Poland, and on its relationship with the Communist regime, which had evolved since the late 1940s. Post-1945, the country continually displayed a high and ever-maturing degree of second society activity, especially in the period after August 1980 and the formation of the Solidarity trade union. In 1989, as a direct consequence of the activities of opposition groups and individuals, the breakdown of the Communist regime and the Polish transition towards democratisation was characterised by negotiations involving both government and second society representatives. My argument, therefore, is that the development and activities of second society resulted in a gradual transition, characterised by a non-violent transfer of power and major structural changes of the economic and political systems. Independent organisations played a crucial and central role throughout.

I do not intend the case studies to be historical descriptions or chronologies of Communist rule from the 1940s to the year 1989. Certain important events and turning points will be analysed in more detail than others, however, insofar as they were significant for the evolution of a second society in each country. In particular, the indigenous historical factors that had a bearing on the type of second society that was likely to evolve; the interplay between the policies adopted by the Communist regimes and those of the opposition forces; the adoption of specific and coherent strategies and programmes by the opposition; and the development of intra-societal alliances, will be highlighted.

The following case study chapter will is divided into three sections. The first sets the cultural, historical and political context within which second society developed, and highlights those factors that contributed, or detracted, from this development. Section Two maps out the evolution of the second society within Poland, concentrating, in particular, on the evolution of theories of opposition by dissident intellectuals and the period post-1976. The final section looks, in greater depth, at the activities and the specific strategies adopted by opposition groups and their contribution to the mode of breakdown experienced by the Communist regime in 1989.

(3.1) History and Political Traditions

(3.1.1) Western Orientations and Traditions

Whatever one's chosen definition of "Europe"[1] and "Poland,"[2] there can be little dispute that, historically, Poland has lain on Europe's Eastern confines. In every other sense, however, its strongest links have traditionally been with the West. This Western connection was forged in large measure by Poland's loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church, which determined that all deep-rooted cultural ties lay with the Latin world; and that libertarian and pluralist values, common to Western societies, found fertile soil on Polish lands.[3] Poland's kinship with those countries that respected basic freedoms, held free elections in which the people could judge their government, and accepted the independence of the judicial system and the freedom of the press, was constantly affirmed.[4]

This characteristic was strengthened by a number of additional factors. Davies points to the development of Polish commerce with Germany, Holland, France and Spain, as opposed to trade links with the Black Sea countries to the East during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; and to the consequences of the historical Franco-German rivalry which repeatedly forced successive French kings to attempt to procure an alliance with Poland to complete the geographical encirclement of their German enemy.[5] Jerschina, highlights the fact that the West represented countries where no one confiscated private land; and countries to which millions of peasants had emigrated to enjoy the benefits of higher pay, freedom and democracy.[6] A significant additional factor is that the West also represented those countries that had maintained their freedom, or liberated themselves, from Nazism. Unique in Eastern Europe,

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1 Whether it is the idea of Christendom; or the modern concept of a geographical continent stretching from Gibralter to the Caucasus

2 Whether it was the ancient realm of the Piasts or the Jagollians; or the united Republic of Poland-Lithuania.

3 See: Norman Davies, Heart of Europe: A Short History of Poland, 1984 Oxford, Oxford University Press, Chapter 5, especially pp 336-345.

4 See. Alain Touraine, Solidarity: The Analysis of a Social Movement: Poland 1980-81, 1982 London, Cambridge University Press, p 50.

5 N Davies, op cit, pp 343-4

6 Jan Jerschina, 'The Catholic Church, the Communist State and the Polish People', in: S Gomulka and A Polonsky (eds), Polish Paradoxes, 1990 London, Routledge, p 87.

Poland did not choose any form of alliance with Nazi Germany in the early 1940s. Its resistance forces had been large and well-organised and, thus, the experience of the War left the Poles with no feelings of complicity, and with a record of anti-Nazi resistance far stronger than, for example, that of Czechoslovakia or Hungary.[7] As such, once again, Poland's experiences were akin to those of the West of Europe, not the East.

(3.1.1.1) History of Anti-Russianism/Sovietism, and Catholicism

As a consequence of the above, the attempt to legitimise the Communist regime post-1945 encountered two specific obstacles whose foundations were deeply buried in Polish history. These were, firstly, the fact that Communism came from the East and was brought by Russians, a people whose state had been in competition with that of Poland since the sixteenth century. Poland's historical contact with the Russians fostered bitterness and mutual distrust, emotions which were perpetuated by more recent revulsions against the state-sanctioned orthodoxy of Tsarism and the atheism of the Marxist-Leninist ideology.[8] The Soviet crimes were best symbolised by reference to Katyn and the massacre of some four thousand Polish army officers. Until the late 1980s, Poles remembered it as *the* symbol of Soviet oppression.[9] Generations of Poles, therefore, came of age with an awareness of their Polish national identity, and with a strong desire for independence from the Russian aggressor.

The second obstacle to Communist rule in Poland was the influence of Catholicism. In order to understand the position and role of the Church, it is necessary to focus on its historic role in Poland.[10] The most significant point to highlight here, is

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7 See P G Lewis, 'Legitimacy and the Polish Communist State', in: D Held et al (eds.), States and Societies, 1983 Oxford, Martin Robertson and Company Ltd , pp 436-8.

8 See N Davies, op cit , pp 344-345; Ch IV 'The Legacy of Spiritual Mastery: Poland During the Partitions 1795-1918' and Ch V 'The Legacy of an Ancient Culture Poland Before 1795 ' Also, Anonymous, The Dark Side of the Moon, 1947 New York, for memoirs of the Polish deportations of 1939-40.

9 Katyn Forest near Smolensk in Byelorussia marks the site of a mass grave where the corpses of over 4000 Polish Officers were unearthed by German investigators in April 1943.

10 The role played by the Roman Catholic Church in Polish history and politics is a complex one. An in-depth analysis is not possible here See· Jan Novak, 'The Church in Poland,' Problems of Communism Vol 31 No 1, 1982, pp.1-16, J.Jerschina, op cit, pp.76-96; S Staron, 'The State and the Church' in. A Bromke and J W Strong (eds), Gierek's Poland, 1973 New York, Praegar Publishers, pp 158-175, L Dembinski, 'The Catholics and Politics in Poland,' ibid, pp 279-291; L Kolakowski and J Gross, 'Church and Democracy in Poland. Two Views,' Dissent, Summer 1980, pp 316-322

the identification of Roman Catholicism with Polish nationality, a deep-rooted tradition established in the twelfth century, when national integration had been threatened by internal divisions and early German expansionism.[11] In the absence of a nationally accepted monarch, it was the Primate who acted as head-of-state and maintained national unity. Particularly during the "era of Partitions" in Poland, Catholicism as a religion, and the Church as an institution, played the role of essential agents in the preservation of a distinctly Polish national identity, helping to maintain a sense of nationhood across divided frontiers.[12] By sharing the fate of its people, the Church fulfilled the role of an important national rallying-point and, thus, became the effective mainstay of "Polishness." These ties were formalised in the twentieth century, during the inter-war period, by constitutional conferral on the Catholic Church of "favoured status" as the majority denomination of the population.[13] Post-1945, the Polish Catholic Church emerged from the War with its accumulated authority perhaps greater than ever. Despite losses, the Church had, once again, shared the sufferings imposed on the Polish nation as a whole, whilst both priests and Church hierarchy had taken an active part in the national resistance movement.[14]

A further factor to note is the national and religious homogeneity that became particularly evident in 1945. The loss of former Eastern Polish territories, and the massive transfer of Polish inhabitants to the newly acquired Western territories, from which the original German population had been removed, enormously strengthened the social basis of the Church.[15] A 1970s survey revealed that nearly 99 per cent of the population identified themselves as Poles, and more than 93 per cent had been baptised as Catholics.[16]

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[11] N Davies, op cit, pp 279-291.

[12] At the end of the 19th Century, Poland lost its political independence and was, effectively, partitioned among its three neighbours - Austria, Russia and Prussia

[13] J Nowak, op cit, p 3.

[14] More than 200 churches were destroyed Of the 12,000 priests and members of religious orders in the prewar Church, 2500 had been executed or severely debilitated by their experiences in Nazi concentration camps All Polish seminaries had been either closed or destroyed.

[15] L Dembinski, op cit, pp 176-177

[16] W Zolaniewicz, The Catholic Church in Poland 1945-1978, 1979 Poznan-Warsaw, Pallotinium Press, p 21.

The position of the Roman Catholic Church in the Communist political system post-1945 was a specifically Polish feature. In Poland, more so than anywhere else in the Communist bloc, religious and national values were an integrated and indivisible element of national culture. During the Stalinist period, the Church and its clergy shared the suffering of the people. More importantly, however, as the only officially tolerated, substantially independent organisation within the Communist system, the Roman Catholic Church provided a readily accessible alternative system of values that stood in stark contrast to Polish reality. It therefore acted as the foundation stone upon which the social and moral expectations of most Poles were based. This is particularly significant with regard to the development of the opposition in the 1970s and 1980s, as popular resistance, in large measure, sprang from this moral foundation.[17]

Historical factors cannot be overlooked in any analysis of change in Eastern Europe. All the above contribute to explanations as to how and why the Polish opposition developed to the extent, and in the form, that it did in the later stages of Communist rule. Poland's strong tradition of conspiring against foreign rule, for example, was much more conducive to the self-organisation of society against an imposed system of power than, say, was the case in Czechoslovakia. The former's freedom fighting and conspiratorial tradition offered ready-made patterns for anti-government activity, and endowed people engaging in it with a moral righteousness. It also helped secure widespread social support for opposition activities, if only at the level of individual consciousness, thereby preventing the unquestioned internalisation of Communist values. The long history of anti-Russianism and the general feeling of alienation that Soviet rule inspired, coupled with the continuing and growing presence of the Catholic Church, figures prominently in any analysis of the illegitimacy of the Communist regime in Poland post-1945. Their relevance to Communist Poland became evident at an early stage when, uniquely in Eastern Europe and significantly for future decades, the totalitarian drive was weakened in order to mitigate the problems associated with Communist rule. This provided no effective solution, however, and the inadequate grounds of the Communist regime's legitimacy continued to lie at the roots of its problems until the final breakdown of the PZPR leadership in 1989.[18]

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[17] See: A Michnik, 'A Lesson in Dignity', Letters From Prison and Other Essays, 1985 Berkeley, University of California Press, pp 160-168.

[18] V.C.Chrypinski, 'Political Traditions of the Poles,' Problems of Communism, Vol 27 No 5 1978, pp 63-67; and A Bromke, 'A Pole Views His Country,' Problems of Communism, Vol 20 1971, pp.73-77

(3 1 2) The Establishment of the Communist Regime in Poland

Stalinist institutions were imposed upon Poland during the period from 1944-1949, and were clearly alien to the dominant political culture. For the reasons discussed above, many Poles viewed the system as alien from the outset. The following account of the establishment of Communism in Poland is brief. My aim is to highlight only those factors and themes that held a long-term significance for the evolution of the Polish opposition forces.[19]

Post-1945, the Polish Workers' Party (PPR) succeeded in effectively seizing power in Poland, only with Soviet support. Not until December 1948 and the founding congress of the Polish United Workers' Party (PZPR), however, could the Communists claim to rule unchallenged. Early 1947 witnessed the elimination of the Peasant Party (PSL) as an independent political force, leaving only the Socialists (PPS) as a viable alternative to the Communist Party.[20] Stalin's instructions for the formation of a new ruling party by an amalgamation of the rump PPS with the Communist PPR in March 1948, successfully eliminated all official, autonomous political forces within Poland.[21] With the consolidation of its political power, the PZPR proceeded briskly to bring Communism to Poland, and began to transform the state and society along the lines of the Stalinist model.[22] Significantly, however, Stalinism never gained the same ferocity in Poland that reigned in neighbouring countries. Dissidents were persecuted, for example, but the purges never reached the intensity evident in other satellites.

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19 For more detailed accounts, see N Davies, op cit, Chapters I and II, pp.1-6 and 73-100. Also, J.Rothschild, Return to Diversity: A Political History of East Central Europe Since World War II, 2nd Edition 1993 Oxford, Oxford University Press, Chapter 3; Patrick Brogan, Eastern Europe 1939-1989, 1990 London, Bloomsbury, Chapter 2; S.S Lotarski, 'The Communist Takeover in Poland', in: Thomas Hammond (ed.), The Anatomy of Communist Takeovers, 1975 New Haven, Yale University Press

20 For a brief analysis of the political parties in existence in 1945 Poland, see: D.Ost, Solidarity and the Politics of Anti-Politics, 1990 Philadelphia, Temple University Press, especially pp 35-38

21 For the reasons behind Stalin's actions to consolidate "provisional" arrangements within the satellite states, see Ibid, Ch 4, pp 55-74

22 For a personal account of the impact of Stalinism, see A Szczypiorski, The Polish Ordeal The View From Within, 1982 Beckenham, Croom Helm Ltd , Ch 4

Furthermore, several factors are significant with regard to the development of opposition in Poland, as distinct from that in Czechoslovakia and Romania. Firstly, although the collectivisation of agriculture was boldly pushed forward in Poland, it was slow and incomplete, (the peasants were neither deported, nor driven to famine) and finally abandoned in 1956. After a policy of decollectivisation, sizeable social groups retained a degree of autonomy from state control, which had a significant impact on the consciousness of society. In addition, the middle classes and the intellectuals, though severely harassed, were not liquidated. Having, initially thrown their support behind the new regime, following the relative failures of the first Five Year Plan (1950-55) and the death of Stalin in 1953, many intellectuals came to reject Stalinism and to feel responsible for the wrongs the regime had committed.[23] Consequently, many enthusiastically joined the growing reform movement within Poland, thus, laying the early foundation stones of opposition upon which later anti-Communist activity could build. Furthermore, the Roman Catholic Church - despite a period of persecution, and the arrest and imprisonment of Cardinal Wyszynski - was not suppressed, in large part due to the regime's desire to bolster its own legitimacy via the promotion of a relatively conciliatory policy towards the Church [24] In 1956, the Church remained both independent of the Communist regime, and in the best position to carry out its service for the Catholic community. From the mid-1950s onwards, these three specific features of the Polish order - an independent Catholic Church, a relatively free peasantry, and a growing band of intellectual political dissidents - went from strength to strength.[25] To quote Adam Michnik:-

> "The Church's opposition to atheistic policies, the villages' resistance to collectivisation, the intelligentsia's defiance of censorship - all made up the Polish "syndrome" that bore fruit in the form of the August strikes and Solidarity."[26]

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23 The interwar Polish regime had been strongly discredited for its failure both to solve social problems and to defend the country in 1939. The need for immediate social reform - supported by the Communist Party - was recognised by most political groups in society. Others were attracted by the role of the USSR in the defeat of Nazism, and by the "practicality" of the Marxist-Leninist ideology.

24 For details see: J Nowak, op cit, pp 3-8, J Jerschina, op cit, pp 80-90

25 N Davies op cit, pp 10-16

26 A Michnik, 'A Year Has Passed,' Letters from Prison and Other Essays, op cit, p 125.

(3.1.3) June 1976 Workers' Unrest

On June 24th 1976, Edward Gierek's regime announced a steep and unanticipated increase in basic food prices.[27] The combined uproar of workers' strikes and street demonstrations forced the rescinding of the proposed price rises the following day. In the interceding twenty-four hours, however, hundreds of demonstrators had been arrested, scores maltreated and beaten by the police, and many eventually sentenced to imprisonment.[28] The ensuing persecution of the working class strike activists prompted intellectuals into positive and decisive action in September, with the formation of the Committee for the Defence of Workers (KOR), representing the first constructive efforts on the part of the Polish intelligentsia to bridge the gap that had prevented the formation of a united societal front against the Communist regime in 1956, 1968 and, again, in 1970-71. This was to prove, perhaps, to be the single most decisive turning-point in the evolution of political opposition as a whole in Poland, and is a central factor in distinguishing Poland from the two other countries under consideration here. In order to fully understand the formation of this alliance, it is necessary in the first instance however, to examine the course of opposition to Polish Communism under Wladislaw Gomulka and Gierek in greater detail.

(3.1.3.1) Gomulka's Regime

In June 1956, protests by Polish workers against their worsening economic situation and increasing demands from intellectuals for greater freedoms threatened the status quo in Poland.[29] In the late 1950s, despite a broad national consensus of support, Gomulka, the newly appointed leader of the PZPR, was to squander the reserves of popularity and legitimacy that had sustained his return to power.[30] A combination of ideological rigidity, intolerance of any manifestation of dissent, and support for the increasing bureaucratisation of the system, appeared to alienate the PZPR further.

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27 J Rupnik, 'Dissent in Poland 1968-78: the End of Revisionism and the Rebirth of Civil Society', in: R.Tokes (ed), Opposition in Eastern Europe, 1979 London, The Macmillan Press Ltd., p 80 For a discussion of the reasons behind the economic crisis which necessitated the increases, see: G Sanford, Polish Communism in Crisis, 1983 London, Croom Helm Ltd, Ch 2. 'The Gierek Question', and J.Lipski, op cit, pp 30-32.

28 J Lipski, op cit, especially pp.41-42.

29 For fuller details of the 1956 crisis, see: A Kemp-Welch, The Birth of Solidarnosc: the Gdansk Negotiations 1980, 1983 London, The Macmillan Press Ltd, pp 3-7.

30 N Bethell, Gomulka: His Poland, His Communism, 1969 New York, Rinehart and Winston, p 229.

Admittedly, there was a brief honeymoon period. The hopes and aspirations raised in the latter half of 1956 seemed to be confirmed in Gomulka's acceptance speech. For example, he began by locating the "evil" accompanying the Stalinist period in Poland firmly in the "irrevocable past;" repeated the call for a more powerful Sejm; and reiterated the need for a revised relationship between the PZPR and society.[31] More than 80 per cent of cultivated land reverted to the private plots of individual peasant families.[32] Gomulka also permitted the workers' councils that had been formed in 1956 to continue to operate, promising the "abolition of the exploitation of man by man."[33] Important changes in the manner in which the PZPR ruled were introduced, and the autonomy and power of the secret police was curtailed and subjected to Party control, in the process, eliminating terror and fear as the central instrument of Communist rule.

More importantly with regard to the genesis of a second society in Poland, in the cultural sphere, a less doctrinally rigid policy was instituted. Building on the independent activity that had begun to re-emerge following the death of Stalin in 1953, artists were allowed to experiment with forms other than socialist realism, and intellectual life as a whole became less subjected to an ideological rigidity. An additional critical change was the cessation of blatant attempts to crush the Catholic Church, and the beginnings of efforts to arrive at a mutually-acceptable modus vivendi between Church and state.[34] While harassment and interference did not end completely, Church-state relations were normalised to the extent that the former could pursue its spiritual mission and the moral education of the public with little interference. These efforts on the part of the Communist regime represented an acceptance on its part of the existence of an alternative authority within Polish society. Significantly, the concessions granted would allow the Catholic Church to develop, relatively unhindered, into an alternative institutional framework,

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31 For this and other quotations from Gomulka's acceptance speech delivered to the 8th Plenum on October 20th 1956, see· K Syrop, Spring In October, 1957 New York, Praegar Publishers, pp 98-110. See N Bethell, op cit, pp 232-233 Also, Z Pelczynski, The State and Civil Society, 1984 Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, p 9.

32 See. F Lewis, The Polish Volcano, 1959 London, Secker and Walburg, pp 234-236

33 K.Syrop, op cit, p 107.

34 For example, religious instruction was to be reintroduced into state schools, new churches were to be constructed; and imprisoned priests and bishops (notably Cardinal Wyszynski), under house arrest since 1953, were released

propagating a particular moral stance in opposition to Communism's doctrinal ideology. The significant consequence of this for second society was that Polish Catholicism escaped the fate of other religious denominations in Communist Europe, that of outright collaboration with, and control by the Party-State. The ensuing decades would bear witness to the PZPR's continual attempts to curb the growing moral and political authority of the Church and the second society it sheltered. Its failure to do so would have important ramifications throughout the 1970s and 1980s, when the Church would play a central role in the evolution of the opposition movement.

This re-emergence of a nominal degree of pluralism in society was echoed in the Sejm, when the existence of only one political party ceased to be the reality with the PZPR's acceptance of the Catholic club 'Znak.' Admittedly, such within-system changes were aimed at preserving the core of Communist rule - in particular, the hegemony of the ruling party - and were concessions conceded with the aim of quieting a more outspoken public. Although Znak was, generally, to confine its activities to loyal support of official policies, the inclusion of the group in parliament was significant on two counts.[35] Firstly, it was a symbol of the de facto recognition by the regime of social and cultural pluralism within society and, as such, would have an important psychological effect on the Polish opposition, particularly the intelligentsia. Secondly, Poles were given an opportunity to become acquainted with pluralism, through the promotion of a dialogue between the Church and intellectuals. This fostered a whole ethos of opposition hitherto unknown, and laid the foundation for an independent culture, and expanded second society co-operation in the 1970s and 1980s.[36]

In 1957, however, Gomulka moved to limit the re-emergence of second society and restore the paramount hegemony of the PZPR.[37] From the peoples' point of view, the Gomulka leadership lost all credibility as a reformist or even a modernising body. Within the PZPR itself, his attacks against those whom he termed "revisionists" and "liberals" were complemented by the reintegration of more hard-

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35 See. A Bromke, Poland's Politics· Idealism vs Realism, 1967 Harvard, University Press, Ch 12

36 A.Michnik, 'The New Evolutionism', op cit, pp 140-145.

37 A.Ross-Johnson, 'Polish Perspectives, Past and Present,' Problems of Communism Vol 20 1971, pp 60-62 Also, Lech Walesa, A Path of Hope, 1987 London, Pan Books Ltd., pp.84-85.

line officials into the leadership team after 1959, to the detriment of reformist factions.[38]

More significantly for the legitimacy of the Communist regime, the PZPR remained insufficiently concerned with genuine socio-economic reforms and the general improvement of living standards. The long-awaited economic reforms of 1964-65 and 1969-70 were, therefore, limited.[39] Repeated attempts at economic decentralisation and the introduction of market economic mechanisms were frustrated by a combination of bureaucratic inertia, a desire by the Communist elite to protect its vested interests, and the general failure of the regime to admit the severity of socio-economic crisis.[40] It was to be these blatant failures in the realms of economics and social justice that were to bring about Gomulka's downfall in December 1970. Gomulka's early recognition that conceding to popular pressure and gaining legitimacy as the executor of the genuine popular will, was replaced by a regime which grew steadily illiberal, adverse to institutional innovation or genuine participation and, consequently, lacking any semblance of real authority.[41] The workers' riots accompanying regime-proposed price rises finalised the erosion of Gomulka's authority, and on December 20th, he was replaced as First Secretary by Edward Gierek.[42]

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38 For intraparty changes see, in particular, A Ross-Johnson, 'Poland End of an Era?' Problems of Communism, Vol.19 No.1, January-February 1970, pp 28-40.

39 G Sanford, op cit, p 24

40 See, in particular. N Ascherson, op cit, Ch 3: 'Years of Disillusion;' J Rothschild, op cit, pp 184-200 For the economy in the period 1956-70, as a whole, see· M Gamarnikow, 'The Polish Economy in Transition,' Problems of Communism, Vol 19 No.1, January-February 1970, pp 40-47; and Z Fallenbuchl, 'The Strategy of Development and Gierek's Economic Maneouvre', in. A.Bromke and J Strong, op cit, pp.54-57 Also, S Markowski, 'Mr Gomulka's Economic Legacy The Roots of Dissent', World Today, February 1971, pp.56-67.

41 P G Lewis, op cit, p 442

42 For details of the January and February 1971 strikes, see· R Laba, 'Worker Roots of Solidarity', Problems of Communism Vol 35 No 4 1986, pp 47-67, P Green, 'The Third Round in Poland', New Left Review No 101-102, February-April 1977, pp 69-71; V C Chrypinski, 'Poland' in· A Bromke and T Rakowska (eds), The Communist States in Disarray 1965-1971, 1972 Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, pp 95-120

(3.1.3.2) Gierek's Regime

When Gierek came to power in Poland in December 1970, his position was extremely tenuous.[43] His basic problem was the same as Gomulka's: how to reconcile an alien Communist rule with deeply-entrenched national aspirations. His style in approaching it was distinct, and he moved quickly to distinguish himself from his predecessor by presenting a much bolder vision of what he wanted to accomplish in Poland.[44] In order to establish labour peace and stability, Gierek built his own personal appeal, and that of the regime, around society's craving for higher levels of material consumption, with plans to rapidly accelerate economic growth through an ambitious programme aiming at industrial modernisation.[45] This new strategy was accompanied by the announcement of a technocratic approach to economic growth intended to satisfy the rising expectations of Polish consumers.[46] The policy programme was based on the hope that success and progress in the economic sphere would secure the support of society, particularly the recently rebellious working class. As one leading PZPR official stated at the time:

> "Our policy is based on the fundamental idea that the highest goal of socialism lies in the constant satisfaction of the material and spiritual needs of the people on the basis of dynamic economic development."[47]

The second major component of Gierek's new approach was a policy of consultations with representatives of important social groups, in particular, the workers. By offering such consultation, Gierek planned to make possible the rebuilding of order, and avoid a repetition of past errors attributable to the regime's

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43 For an evaluation of the situation in Poland at the time of Gierek's takeover, see: A Bromke, 'Beyond the Gomulka Era', Foreign Affairs, April 1971, pp 480-492; S Staron, 'The Winds of Change in Poland', East Europe April 1971, pp 2-10.

44 J Rothschild, op cit, p 96.

45 For analysis of Gierek's early economic policies, see. A Bromke, 'A New Political Style', Problems of Communism, Vol 21 No.5, September-October 1972, pp 1-20 Also, Z Fallenbuchl, 'The Polish Economy in the 1970s', in· US Congress Joint Economic Committee, East European Economies Post-Helsinki, 1977 Washington, Government Printing Office. On changes specifically in agriculture, see: 'Poland: Important Changes in Agricultural Policy,' 'The Week in Eastern Europe,' Radio Free Europe, (hereafter, RFE) No 72/21, 18th-24th May 1972, p 9.

46 M Bernhard, op cit, p 42

47 Quote from Edward Babiuch, member of the PZPR Politburo and a CC Secretary, November 1971. See· A Bromke, 'A New Political Style,' op cit, pp 24-27

isolation from wider society.[48] In his radio and television speech of December 20th 1970, Gierek stated:-

> "The iron rule of our economic policy and our policy in general must always be respect for reality, broad consultation with the working class and the intelligentsia...The most recent events reminded us painfully of the fundamental truth that the Party must always maintain a close bond...with the whole nation."[49]

Taken together, Gierek's plan for economic growth and modernisation, and his scheme for consultations with society, comprised a legitimisation strategy for the new regime.[50] In reality, the consultation plank of the strategy soon collapsed, and the more formal aspects of the policy were almost entirely cosmetic.[51] Workers were permitted to express their views, but still within strict bureaucratically-defined limits at carefully stage-managed mass meetings. The 1972-73 strike actions in defence of the concessions won in 1970 bore testimony to the real situation in the country, and the ongoing lack of genuine consultation.[52] The most damaging blow to the credibility of the policy and, thus, to the underlying legitimacy of the regime, was delivered in June 1976, when the Gierek regime attempted to introduce a wage and price reform without preparing society for its introduction, or without prior consultation. His pledge to hold consultations was finally exposed as hollow.

The retreat of the authorities from this policy had the effect of partially undermining the entire regime's legitimisation strategy. Consequently, only the economic component of Gierek's vision for Poland remained, and support could thus be maintained only by "delivering the goods." The fact that the failure of his economic strategy became increasingly obvious, particularly in 1975-6, meant that Gierek's claim to exercise legitimate authority was as threadbare as his predecessors.'

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48 See P Green, op cit, pp 82-87

49 Z Pelczynski (ed.), The State and Civil Society, 1984 Cambridge, University Press, pp.3-4.

50 For a more in-depth analysis of this form of "functional prerequisites" legitimacy - that is, a "social contract" between state and society - see: J Bielosiak, 'The Party: Permanent Crisis', in: A Brumberg (ed), Poland: Genesis of a Revolution, 1983 New York, Random House, p.19.

51 M K Dziewanowski, The Communist Party of Poland, 2nd Edition 1976 Cambridge, Harvard University Press, p 318. 'The Week in East Europe', RFE No 72/38, 14th-20th September 1972, pp 13-14.

52 For details of the 1972-3 strikes, see P Green, op cit, p 87.

A repeated sequence of elevated claims by the PZPR accompanied by a marked failure to deliver - that is, the credibility gap - was becoming ever more obvious as the 1970s progressed,[53] and began to turn the public mood into one of intolerant anger.[54]

Undeniably, the early years of the 1970s did witness a noticeable improvement in economic conditions. In the early 1970s, Poland had one of the highest rates of economic growth in the world, and the country did experience an intense, although short-lived, consumer revolution.[55] During the 1971-75 Five Year Plan, national income increased by 60 per cent, and industrial production by over 70 per cent, with similar improvements in living standards and levels of consumption.[56] Economic progress and development, however, was based on an import-led programme, with the main source of investment being Western credit. As the level of interest repayments rose steeply following the 1973 oil price crisis, and as Polish products remained generally substandard and, therefore, unexportable, the economy lurched towards deeper crisis.[57]

The Party leadership had asked the Polish workers to judge its record above all by its ability to raise living standards. Apart from some initial concessions to the private sector peasantry, however, no serious, deep structural reform of the state-owned industrial sector was undertaken. The short-lived economic boom succeeded only in producing a climate of rising expectations throughout the country. By early 1974, production shortages for the consumer sector of the economy had already appeared. More seriously, on the food front, any productivity gains that had actually been achieved within Polish agriculture were still utterly inadequate to meet consumer demand. Under these circumstances, the population's frustration increasingly manifested itself in open demonstrations of discontent. In the summer of 1974, there were lengthy disturbances among Gdynia dockworkers and, in the autumn, reports of unrest among the miners at Katowice were widespread. In March

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53 For analysis of the growing gap between official proclamations and reality, see. A Bromke, 'Poland Under Gierek", op cit, pp 8-9.

54 The majority of the public continued to have no confidence in Gierek or Poland's prospects, with most doubts focusing on the state of the economy See: 'Polish Confidence in Gierek', 'The Week in East Europe', RFE No 72/2, 6th-12th January 1972, Special Report, p 20.

55 G Sanford, op cit, p 29.

56 A Bromke, 'A New Juncture In Poland', op cit, p 4

57 G Sanford, op cit, p 32

1975, a countrywide meat crisis provoked exasperated housewives into action, and brought female workers out on strike.[58]

Gierek's dilemma came to a head in 1976. In an attempt to correct budgetary distortions, he took the same step that had tripped Gomulka: a steep increase in basic food prices. At the same time, the leadership also pushed through a number of Soviet-inspired institutional changes.[59] Workers across the country immediately went on strike[60] Fearful of the volcanic situation in the country and the possibility of Soviet military intervention as per Czechoslovakia in 1968, the Party withdrew the price rises "for further consultations," and, simultaneously, moved quickly to crush the strike movement.[61]

(3.1 4) Summary

By the mid-1970s, evidence of an increasingly vocal opposition could be found within Polish society. The intellectuals had opposed the rigidity of the Communist system from the mid-1950s; the students had protested in 1968; and on two separate occasions (1970-71 and 1976) the PZPR-led regime had bowed-down to working class protest. By 1976, the sources of legitimacy for Communism had, therefore, been exposed as threadbare. An historical antagonism to Russia combined with traditionally strong connections with the West, and the continued existence of the Roman Catholic Church as a viable moral alternative to Communist rule, ensured that attempts to impose orthodox Communist policies on Polish society would meet with little success, and that the opportunities for second society organisations to flourish were rife.

(3.2) The Development of Second Society

The Polish opposition of the 1970s and 1980s was unique in Eastern Europe, if only for its inclusion of a large number of industrial workers. Their continuing and

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58 L Walesa, A Path of Hope, op cit, p 83. Also, A Szczpiorski, op cit, p 97. For a good analysis of the situation in Poland in the autumn/winter of 1975, see: T.Heneghan, 'Poland on the Eve of the 7th Party Congress,' RFE Research, December 3rd 1975

59 For example, youth organisations were merged into a single Komsomol-type body; and anti-religious propaganda was escalated. P Green, op cit, p 99.

60 For a full account of the strike movement see: M.Bernhard, 'The Strikes of June 1976 in Poland,' East European Politics and Societies 1 (Fall 1987), pp 363-92

61 N Ascherson, op cit, pp 113-114.

expanding participation was to prove crucial to the reconstruction of a second society in Poland. The activities promoted by intellectual dissidents and associated groups, throughout the 1970s, did secure a de facto toleration of nominal pluralism by the Communist authorities. They failed, however, to obtain the de jure recognition of that pluralism or of the organisational autonomy of the groups therein. It was not until the worker-led strikes of the summer of 1980, and the historic signing of the Gdansk Accords at the end of August, that the opposition was able to secure a legal recognition of the alternative space it had created. Although the popular perception of the 1980 strikes is, generally, one of spontaneity, an essential, directional role was played by workers - in conjunction with selected intellectuals - who had been involved in opposition politics in the late 1970s. These workers were able to steer government-worker negotiations to secure the legal recognition necessary for the reconstitution of second society in Poland. The following analysis considers the impact of two sets of factors on the possibilities of forming a society-wide alliance in 1976, and its significance for the evolution of the Polish opposition in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

(3.2.1) The Evolution of Second Society

(3 2 1.1) Change From Above

In September 1976, fourteen Polish intellectuals announced the formation of KOR, an organisation devoted to assisting those repressed by the party-state in the aftermath of the June crisis [62] For the first time in postwar Polish history, the intellectual elite formally recognised that persecution of the workers as a social class affected them also. For Poland, specifically, and for the East European Communist regimes more generally, continuing stability throughout society had, since the late 1940s, been dependent upon the continued lack of united action between different social groups and classes.[63] In 1968, attacks were launched against Polish intellectual and academic circles, yet the workers looked on with indifference. Similarly, in 1970, the Polish coastal cities witnessed the massacre of workers, which provoked no firm response from the intellectuals.[64] They stood aside, perhaps as Kolakowski suggested,

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62 For founding declaration of September 23rd, see· S Persky and H Flam (eds), The Solidarity Sourcebook, 1982 Vancouver, New Star Books Ltd , pp 67-68.

63 A Kemp-Welch, op cit, p 12

64 For a brief analysis of the traditional gulf between the working class and the intelligentsia, see: Walter D Connor, 'Dissent in Eastern Europe A New Coalition ?' Problems of Communism Vol 29 No.1 January-February 1980, pp 1-17. Also, Marc Rakovski (pseudo), Towards an East European Marxism, 1978 New York, St Martin's Press, p 33

because "they had been persuaded to believe in the complete inflexibility of the system under which they lived."[65] 1976, however, represented a decisive turning-point in the evolution of the opposition movement within Poland, and the decisions and events of that year are central to any comparative analysis of the opposition within the three Communist countries under consideration here. KOR served as an "ice-breaker."[66] In its original form, KOR represented the first bridge between workers and intellectuals. Its work of coordination, and its role of maintaining contacts with dissident workers activated by their experiences of 1970 and 1976, transformed an embryonic political mobilisation into a more complete societal movement. Consequently, by 1979, there existed in Poland the foundation of a second society: an alliance of workers, intellectuals and the Church, unprecedented in both Polish history and in the Soviet bloc, which was to grow into Solidarity in 1980.

Initially, KOR was primarily an association of intellectuals *in support* of the workers, not workers themselves, many of whom looked upon the organisation with suspicion.[67] Its formation represented the culmination of a much longer process than the immediate post-June 1976 response suggests. This process had increasingly gathered speed and momentum throughout the 1970s, particularly in response to the constitutional crisis of 1975. In December of that year, the intellectuals' reaction to proposed amendments to the Polish Constitution, introduced by the PZPR at its 7th Congress, was unprecedented in postwar Poland.[68] On December 5th, for example, a group of intellectuals sent a petition to the Sejm elaborating the principles that they felt should be included in the new constitution. The letter, which invoked the 1975 Helsinki Final Act (to which Poland was a signatory) amounted to a plea for the restoration of democratic liberties.[69] The appeal was important, not only because it was the first in a flood of similar protests, but also because it contained a positive programme of fundamental civil liberties. Many more letters about the Constitution

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65 L Kolakowski, 'Hope and Hopelessness', Survey, Vol.17 No 3, Summer 1971, p.51.

66 T. Garton Ash, The Polish Revolution, 1983 London, Jonathan Cape Ltd , p 18 See, also, J Haydn's account of an interview with Regina Litynska, a leading Solidarity dissident, in Poles Apart Solidarity and the New Poland, 1994 London, Frank Cass and Co Ltd , p 14, in which she refers to the function of KOR as beginning "the process of crossing the social divide which eventually led to the flowering of a mass movement of opposition "

67 L.Walesa, A Path of Hope, op cit, p 97.

68 J Lipski, op cit, p 25

69 For the full text of the "Letter of the 59," see RFE Research, December 31st 1975, p 2.

followed: several hundred people, of all ages and from all walks of social life, publicly expressed their support in the form of "open letters" addressed to the Sejm.[70] In all, an estimated forty thousand people took part in the protests, and a full list of all the signatories conveyed a sense of the formation of open opposition throughout society.[71] This united action can be seen as the political consequence of the economic crisis which had erupted the previous spring and, as such, played an important role in the crystallisation of political opposition and social resistance in Poland in the mid-1970s.

Furthermore, voices within the Church were also raised over the reforms and, for this reason, the protests can be considered of significant importance.[72] In January 1976, for example, the Polish Primate Cardinal Wyszynski threw his moral authority behind the dissenters, and in three Warsaw sermons voiced strong concern over the proposed changes.[73] In March, the Episcopate issued a statement calling on the government to cease its harassment of those who had expressed their views on the Constitution. The Church's voice was a decisive one: its links with the working class and peasantry in Poland meant that the entire issue was portrayed as one affecting the *whole of society*, not just a particular group or class as had been the case in 1968 or 1970.[74] Although, generally, workers were not party to the protest letters, their public silence at this time should not be seen as yet another example of the continuing alienation of social groups in society. Rather, their psychological identification with the intellectuals' cause in 1975 must be viewed as the precursor to the unity of society that would occur in Poland less than six months later.

In June 1976, then, there already existed in Poland, a solid base on which any potential opposition movement could build. In May, a clandestine group, the Polish Coalition for Independence (PPN), appeared, and immediately circulated (in samizdat form) its manifesto, calling for the restoration of democracy and for Poland's

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70 A Ostoja-Ostaszewski et al (eds), Dissent in Poland 1976-1977, 1977 London, The Association of Polish Students and Graduates in Exile, pp.11-24.

71 J.Lipski, op cit, p.28.

72 Indeed, Adam Michnik refers to the 1975 crisis as the "beginning of the self-organisation of the opposition in Poland." A New Evolutionism, op cit, p.141.

73 J Lipski, op cit, pp 25-29

74 For Walesa' response to the crisis, see· L Walesa, A Path of Hope, op cit, pp 93-94.

independence from the USSR. Issued in the name of an organised political group, it is significant because, for the first time, it proposed a distinct alternative to the prevailing political and economic system.[75] The idea of institutionalising the intellectuals support for the striking workers in June arose in early July 1976. A "Declaration of Solidarity with the Striking Workers" had already been issued in late June,[76] and a consensus to form a committee had been reached.[77] This consensus and the practical work undertaken were a decisive effort to overcome the Communist regime's attempts to prevent communication among and between different social strata. Bolstered by the Episcopate's September 10th statement of support,[78] and in response to a renewed wave of repression, the "Appeal to Society and to the Authorities of the PRL" was issued on 23rd September. The brief statement announced the first organised effort in Polish society to defend the rights of workers.[79] More significantly for this study, the Appeal represented the first moves towards a united society-wide opposition to Communism, and as such, one of the most significant steps towards the re-emergence of an independent second society in Poland.

(3.2.1.2) Change From Below

The Gomulka and Gierek eras and their respective significance for the evolution of second society in Poland have already been outlined. This section focuses on the ideological and theoretical development amongst opposition forces, that occurred during the 1970s particularly, because of the impact it had on the evolution of second society throughout the late 1970s and early 1980s.

The changes within the PZPR that accompanied Gomulka's early years in power, and the reforms it introduced, were a source of hope to the opposition that the

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75 A Bromke, 'A New Juncture in Poland', op cit, p.14.

76 See: S Persky and H Flam, op cit, pp 57-58, for full text

77 For the texts of representative letters and "declarations of support" prior to the formal creation of KOR, see: P Raina, Political Opposition in Poland 1954-1977, 1978 London, Poets' and Painters' Press, and A Ostoja-Ostaszewski, op cit, pp.76-78.

78 The statement of the Episcopate Plenum in Czestochowa reiterated the Primate's calls for amnesty and dialogue, and also called for the Poles to work hard and make sacrifices for the common good and social peace. Part of the text is quoted in J Lipski, op cit, p 51.

79 For the full text, see S Persky and H Flam, op cit, pp 67-68

Communist system could evolve into a more humane and democratic one.[80] Two strands of thought (revisionism and neopositivism) developed against this backdrop. The two concepts (although each had certain peculiarities) shared the conviction that a greater degree of reform and change, affecting the whole of society, would come "from above," that is, from the PZPR and, significantly, would not be the result of public pressure "from below," that is, from second society.[81] Both were based on a specific intraparty perspective and, consequently, neither stream formulated a definitive political programme as a basis for action choosing, rather, to share the existing ideology and language of the Communists, criticising only specific issues or policies. Consequently, both were reduced to the articulation of an agenda for change without any viable means to implement it. For example, Kuron and Modzelewski's later crucial "Open Letter to the Party," calling for self-managing socialism in which workers and peasants would exercise the key role in political and economic decision-making, was addressed to *the Party*, and not to *workers and peasants* themselves.[82] So, despite the fact that these appeals were distinctly more radical in tone than their predecessors, dissidents blindly maintained their faith in the Communist authorities as being a potential source of reform. Despite positive effects the failure of both streams can be attributed to this common factor.[83] Change "from above" had been an effective strategy to pursue during the relatively liberal period that followed de-Stalinisation. However, confronted with crackdowns by the Party-State on the political disturbances of the late 1960s and the early 1970s, neither the revisionists nor the neopositivists had any other choice but to be either victims or disenfranchised spectators of state repression.[84]

The student and intellectual movement in March 1968, the ensuing anti-Semitic campaign, and the Soviet backlash against the Czechoslovak "Prague Spring" in August of the same year, together delivered the death-blow to the intraparty opposition strategy faithfully followed since 1956.[85] However, although in

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80 A.Michnik, A New Evolutionism, op cit, p 135.

81 These "peculiarities" are discussed by Michnik in his A New Evolutionism essay. See, in particular, pp.135-138.

82 For the full text, see: S Persky and H Flam, op cit, pp 35-57.

83 A Michnik, The New Evolutionism, op cit, pp 136-137 and 139-141.

84 Ibid, p.142

85 A Ross-Johnson, 'Polish Perspectives', op cit, pp 63-65, and 'Poland: End of an Era ?' op cit, pp 28-30

late 1968, it appeared as though the PZPR had restored its hegemonic status, the events in that year arguably represented a significant turning-point in the evolution of Polish opposition and of second society. Zygmunt Bauman, writing a decade later, states:-

> "The importance of the March events lies in the fact that they closed a period of twenty years in which the Polish intelligentsia "flirted" with the political leadership."[86]

In his 'New Evolutionism,' Michnik wrote that 1968 marked "the death of revisionism," at a time when "the band tying the revisionist intelligentsia to the Party was definitively severed."[87] The opposition was forced to rethink the premises for its activities, and forced into formulating a new concept of opposition, one in which the focus was on the entire Polish society rather than on attempts to regenerate the PZPR.

The workers strikes of 1970-71 can be classed along with earlier manifestations of discontent as a further example of the inability of certain sectors of society to form permanent, opposition-oriented organisations, and the general willingness, especially of the working class, to accept government concessions at face value. Admittedly, in 1970, in spite of the increasing political content and overtones contained within their demands, the workers demonstrated that they were neither prepared nor ready to directly challenge the Party or the system itself, and normal working slowly resumed in February 1971. What should be highlighted, however - for its ultimate significance at the end of the decade - is the fact that, for the first time in Communist Poland's history, direct working class action had forced a change in the policy and leadership of the country. The assertiveness of the workers represented not only a new element on the Polish political scene, but also a unique phenomenon in the Communist world. Thus, the lasting result of the 1970-71 strikes lay in the veto power the workers gained over government economic policies, which would be remembered and reasserted in 1976 and 1980. The workers had demonstrated their capacity for resistance in defence of their own economic interests but, in addition, had shown that they were capable of coupling economic demands with those relating to the wider political system, for example, demanding democratically-elected organs of

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86 'Krytyka' No 1, Summer 1978, in J Preibisz (ed), Polish Dissident Publications, 1982 New York, Praegar Publishers, p 77.

87 A Michnik, Letters From Prison and Other Essays, op.cit, pp 60-61.

the Party, trade unions and factory workers councils.[88] Although this political challenge did not manifest itself into a coherent alternative programme and did not succeed in appealing to other sections of society (notably, to either intellectuals or students) the workers did prove themselves capable of undertaking coherent political activity without intellectual or other guidance.

In the realm of state politics, Ost, however, refers to Polish life in the 1970s as "a great leap nowhere," a decade of both considerable change and concession, coupled with increasing stagnation (economically and politically) and government-led repression.[89] Throughout the 1970s, the PZPR seemed increasingly afraid of the situation it had helped to create, but appeared unwilling, or unable, to do anything about it. Aware of the erosion of its working class base of support as demonstrated by the 1970 strikes, Gierek did attempt to make the Party more responsive to pressures from below, which, however significant, failed to halt the disaffection of workers from the PZPR.[90] The erosion of the working class base of support continued steadily until 1975.[91] In this condition of official stagnation, a new opposition emerged ("new" in the sense that it adopted a different approach to both the Communist system and to the question of its political involvement within that system) that began to offer an alternative. Poland's intellectuals began to contend that the only way for things to change would be for the people to start rebuilding the independent social bonds (a second society) that the system had tried to destroy. Between 1970 and 1980, intellectuals were, thus, responsible for putting dissent and social change proposals in an entirely new framework: the target of criticism and change was no longer to be the PZPR or specific government policies, but the lack of independent initiatives from society. This section, therefore, analyses the evolution of the Polish opposition forces along the above-mentioned lines.

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88 J Rupnik, 'Dissent in Poland, 1968-1978,' in R Tokes (ed), Opposition in Eastern Europe, 1979 London, The Macmillan Press Ltd , p 71

89 D Ost, op cit, p 55.

90 A Bromke, 'Poland Under Gierek,' Problems of Communism, Vol 11 No 5, September-October 1972, p 6

91 M K Dziewanowski, The Communist Party of Poland, 2nd Edition, 1976 Cambridge Mass., Harvard University Press, p.73.

The seminal work that introduced this new strategy of political opposition was Leszek Kolakowski's "Thesis on Hope and Hopelessness" published in 1972.[92] In it, he aimed to demonstrate why the revisionist strategy of reform from above was dead, yet why this need not mean that hope of change had died too. He refused to draw the conclusion that the state socialist system was unreformable, and cited four reasons for this belief, the most important one with regard to the development of a second society being:-

> "The inflexibility of a social system is partially dependent on the degree to which the population is convinced of its inflexibility."[93]

In essence, when people began to believe that change was possible – that is, that the system was in part flexible - they would have taken the first step on the road to systemic reform. This point, for example, can be used to distinguish 1956 and 1968 from later periods of discontent. 1970-71 was the first occasion that the workers recognised the possibility of reform and that the PZPR was forced to back down as a result of their pressure and, thus, represented a psychological boost to opposition forces. Kolakowski introduced his programme of "societal democratisation":-

> "What follows is that if the mechanism of the bureaucratic rule functions *without any resistance on the part of society*, it will inevitably keep reproducing...It does not, however, follow from these observations that these tendencies cannot be countervailed by a *movement of resistance capable of limiting and weakening their operation*...The reformist position [must be] understood as an *idea of active resistance* exploiting inherent contradictions of the system."[94]

Reform was therefore possible through independent social activity, via an independently organised second society. What is crucial here is the rejection of the state as the sole focus of opposition activity.

Developing this theory, Jacek Kuron's 1974 article, "Political Opposition in Poland," was an important step towards the recognition of the potential for mass opposition activity oriented around society rather than the state.[95] In it, Kuron argued

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[92]For full text see L Kolakowski, 'Hope and Hopelessness,' op cit For in-depth analysis see D Ost, op cit, pp 58-64.

[93]L Kolakowski, op cit, p 42

[94]Ibid, p 42 (Emphasis added)

[95]See· J Kuron, Politics and Responsibility, 1984 London, Aneks

that democratisation may not require state transformation as had been thought by the revisionists and neopositivists, and that it should be possible to bypass the state altogether and still effect political change. In short, his essay centred on a basic reconceptualisation of democracy. For him, democracy meant the continual expansion of the scope for autonomous, uncoerced social activity and, thus, represented a goal that could be realised within society, not the state.[96] Consequently, any form of social activity that the Party-State did not control, insofar as it undermined the totalitarian tendency of the socialist system, constituted an act aimed at the rebuilding of a second society. The theory was also echoed by Kuron in late-1976 in his influential "Reflections on a Programme of Action" in which he specifically called for the creation of a "network of interlocking social movements.[97] Convinced in the 1960s that the system had to be reformed to enable independent activity to emerge, Kuron now contended that, given the nature of the system, independent activity must come first: activity, in itself, constituted a fundamental political transformation.

It was Michnik's 1976 essay "The New Evolutionism," however, that developed the ideas of Kolakowski and Kuron into a coherent strategy for political opposition. It was written against the backdrop of the Soviet presence in Poland, which was recognised as the factor determining the possible limits of evolution.[98] Like Kolakowski, Michnik rejected the apparent hopelessness of the Polish situation, and suggested an alternative path of action. Believing that the opposition was foundering in the absence of a movement - albeit one which should not explicitly challenge state power - he followed Kuron's emphasis on independent social networks as the mainspring of a renewed opposition movement and re-conceptualised the strategy of political opposition as the turn from a focus on the Communist authorities to that on an independent public. Recognising the fact of continuing Communist rule and that the state would not be the source of reforms, Michnik argued that individuals must begin by acting as if basic human rights, liberties and freedoms were already guaranteed. In line with Kolakowski's position that the system was only as unreformable as the people believed it to be, Michnik effectively called for the reconstitution of second society.

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96 Ibid, pp.107-108.

97 J Kuron, 'Reflections on a Programme of Action,' Polish Review (New York) No 22, 1977.

98 A Michnik, 'The New Evolutionism,' op cit, pp 142-144.

Furthermore, echoing Kuron and Modzelewski's 1964 "Open Letter," Michnik recognised the centrality of the working class for the evolution of public life toward a democracy and, thus, the workers' strikes of 1970-71 and 1976, with their elections of independent strike committees within the shipyards, represented a new stage in worker consciousness.[99] Significantly, he saw the key future event as being the foundation of independent "institutions representing the interests of workers." He concluded that the democratic opposition must formulate its own political goals, forcing the government to react, not lead:-

> "the democratic opposition must be constantly and incessantly visible in public life, must create political facts by organising mass actions, must formulate *alternative programmes*."[100]

It was to be the duty of the intelligentsia to formulate these programmes and defend basic principles *in conjunction with* the activities of the working class, thereby giving necessary direction to the latter's' actions, and laying the theoretical foundations for cross-societal unity and for an all-encompassing second society.

The entire political opposition of the late-1970s in Poland revolved around this basic proposition and, consequently, the main thrust of opposition activity was to get people, individually or in groups, to act independently of state control. The overriding significance of the 1970s intellectual essays and theoretical writings was that, although relatively little could be translated into actual social practice, it did express an attitude in potentia in Polish social life and one on which second society could build post-1976.

(3.2.2) 1976-1980

(3.2.2.1) KOR

The formal emergence of KOR in September 1976 inspired other new opposition movements and institutions. In this sense, one of the significant consequences of the June crisis was a rapid emergence of unofficial opposition groups, and of a large and varied samizdat publication industry.[101] In the late 1970s, a new opposition - one based on the theoretical underpinnings outlined above - emerged that began to offer an alternative. Starting from the premise that the only way for

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[99] Ibid pp 144-145

[100] Ibid, p.147. (Emphasis added).

[101] Walesa refers to 1976 as "the turning-point on the road to Gdansk" (1980), A Path of Hope, op cit, p 97

things to change would be for people to start rebuilding the independent bonds that the system tried to destroy, the organised opposition grew to a size and diversity that was unprecedented in the Soviet bloc.[102] What is significant, here, is that the opposition would expand to encompass social groups and political activists outside the original KOR milieu, thus extending the boundaries of the society-liberated public space and making it increasingly difficult for the Party-State to repress second society or the developing organisations within it.[103]

As discussed, the most significant of the independent groups to emerge post-1976 was KOR. Two important points deserve mention here. Firstly, the transformation of KOR in September 1977 into the "Social Self-Defence Committee - KOR" ("KSS-KOR").[104] By July 1977, all imprisoned workers had been amnestied and reinstated and, in theory, KOR's work was complete.[105] However, having been approached during the course of the year by numerous other individuals who had been unlawfully persecuted by the Communist regime, on September 29th, KOR expanded its activities to the defence of the entire society. Supported by a "Social Self-Defence Fund" formed on October 11th, KOR's new programme called for "social initiatives from all sections of society.[106] KSS-KOR's subsequent appeals called for all forms of independent activity, and noted that a number of successful, independent social initiatives had already been undertaken.[107] After twelve months of activity, KOR succeeded in generating a definite mobilisation of public consciousness, which, although not on a mass scale, was broad-based. In 1978, self-defence was expanded from the working classes to the defence of society as a whole, which involved independent and self-governing social initiatives. Consequently, by 1978, a level of second society maturity and cross-class support not previously attained was identifiable.

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102 W Connor, 'Dissent in Eastern Europe', op cit, pp.1-17.

103 M.Bernhard, op cit, p 131.

104 For the declaration of September 29th accompanying this transformation, see. J.Lipski, op cit, pp 469-70.

105 In its September 1976 "Appeal to Society", the founding members had stated that when all their demands had been fulfilled, KOR would have no reason to continue its existence. Ibid, p 469.

106 Ibid, p 470.

107 "Appeal to Society" October 10th 1978, translated in Ibid, pp.474-482

The second point is more closely related to the worker activists themselves. June 1976 did not immediately produce many working class dissident activists, principally because the June events did not successfully promote the emergence of a "workers' elite." In certain factories, strike committees were elected. However, with the PZPR's immediate rescinding of the price rises, those collective actions that had developed, died down rapidly before specific groups could form and leaders emerge. Initially, KOR entered this environment as a guardian and a rescuer, not as an organiser of formal structures for a continued opposition movement. September 1977, however, marked a decisive shift in emphasis: a new approach and strategy for the self-defence of society, involving the specific organisation of independent initiatives, which would feed directly into the creation of independent workers' bodies in the late 1970s, and, thus, into Solidarity in August 1980. This expansion of activities to the general, society-wide defence of civil rights represented a distinctly new phase in the development of the Polish opposition, which moved from a purely *defensive human rights campaign* towards a *positive programme*, which focused on the establishment of independent alternative institutions when limitations were placed on freedom of thought and action by the official ones.

Among the most important of the independent organisations prompted by the formation of KOR were the Free Trade Unions, founded in 1978-9. Many of the activists of these organisations - including Lech Walesa, Andrzej Gwiazda and Anna Walentynowicz - would play a central role in the events of August 1980. The free trade unions were the most advanced forms of worker representation in the pre-Solidarity period. All were formed from pre-existing, locally organised groups of worker activists. Their efforts and those of the samizdat journal 'Robotnik' ('The Worker') led to the expansion of the opposition to include a substantial number of workers. These were to change the quality and direction of KOR's activities and of the entire democratic opposition. The Founding Declaration of the 'Free Trade Union of the Baltic Seacoast,' for example, concluded with an appeal to all working people to form their own independent representations:-

> "We would like our initiative to become a stimulus for a number of varied and independent social actions."[108]

Likewise, the Founding Declaration for the Union formed in Katowice criticised the power of the PZPR and the dependent status of the official trade unions, and appealed for workers to unite "to resist the exploitation of the workers by the state and party apparatus," and to help create free trade unions as a mechanism through which to

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[108] S Persky and H Flam (eds.), op cit, pp 68-70.

struggle for the improvement of their lives.[109] It was established to serve as an organisational framework "to be filled out with a spontaneous will to action." When asked for the reason behind the group, the whole committee replied that the "*immediate aim was the creation of a free independent trade union.*"[110]

The establishment of the Free Trade Unions in 1978-9 is significant in this study, as they effectively and practically demonstrated the further development of working class opposition post-1976, which was earlier noted as a specific characteristic peculiar to Poland in the 1970s.

(3 2 2 2) The Polish Catholic Church in the 1970s

Towards the end of the 1960s, a marked shift in the self-perceived role of the Catholic Church became evident, following decisions reached at the 1965 Second Vatican Council. The Church adopted the role of champion of human rights, irrespective of religious affiliation and, even when not directly attacked, it began to raise its voice in protest against the persecution of others. In the early 1970s, this new emphasis on the defence of human rights became stronger.[111] More significantly, the Church's new attitude promoted a rapprochement between different segments of the Polish intelligentsia. Formerly anti-clerical intellectuals, who had already begun to re-evaluate the relevance of Christian ethics in their moral stance against Communist rule, began to see the Church as an institution in a more favourable light.[112] This allowed for co-operation within the opposition between lay Catholics and non-believers, as well as for both to agree on the fundamental importance of human rights. The unity of society promoted by the Church was a further factor that encouraged the overcoming of not only traditional class divisions, but also the divisions within them and, consequently, strengthened the emerging second society.

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109 RFE Research Situation Report, Poland/6 (1978), pp 8-9

110 J Haydn, op cit, p.22.

111 See: G Blazynski, Flashpoint Poland, 1979 New York, Pergamon Press. For details on the many statements issued by the Episcopate appealing for leniency towards worker activists and an end to regime-approved brutality, see: RFE Research Situation Report, Poland/42 1976, p.11; RFE Research Situation Report, Poland/1, 1977, pp 20-21.

112 The most important work of this kind was Adam Michnik's 'The Church, the Left, a Dialogue' in which he described the Church as the most formidable opponent of totalitarianism and, therefore, the mainstay of all people fighting for greater freedom Similar ideas were expressed in many samizdat publications post-1976. See. Lidia Ciolkosz, 'The Uncensored Press', Survey, Vol 25 No 4, Autumn 1979, pp 56-57.

On numerous occasions, then, the Catholic Church reaffirmed its commitment to the promotion of human rights, and took a number of stands against Party-State policies that it perceived as immoral. Three points require particular emphasis, however. Firstly, despite a growing convergence of views, it would not be wholly accurate to describe the Church and the dissident opposition of the 1970s as political allies. At times, they co-operated on specific cases, but the Church was constrained in just how far it could, or was willing to go, in its support of the opposition. In contrast to the 1980s Solidarity period, when the Church hierarchy played the role of mediator between the union and the regime, and provided space and shelter for independent cultural initiatives, Church political involvement in the 1970s was less direct because it courted greater risks than in the 1980s.[113] Secondly, in discussing the role of the Church, it is essential to bear in mind that the Church is a complex hierarchical organisation: its politics are not identical at all levels of the hierarchy, and vary according to individual beliefs and parishes or regions. Similarly, the role and stance adopted by the Church can be seen to change markedly over time. Before his death in 1981, it was led by Cardinal Stefan Wyszynski, who staunchly defended the independence of the Church in Polish life. Under his stewardship, official pronouncements on public issues and events were made that were seen as supportive of the opposition.[114] On other occasions, the Church also worked to persuade the Party-State to release political prisoners or to be less repressive.[115] Conversely, under the leadership of Primate Glemp, the Church was often accused of pursuing a policy line too conciliatory towards the Communist authorities, something that would, later, threaten the unity of the opposition as a whole.

Finally, an event of supreme religious and political significance was the election of Karol Wojtyla, the Bishop of Krakow, as Pope in October 1978. His election was met with jubilation, and the new Pope's pilgrimage to his homeland in June 1979 had an important psychological effect on Polish society. As well as fortifying both the Church's moral authority and the steadfastness of Polish

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113 M Bernhard, op cit, p 137.

114 Andrzej Micewski, Cardinal Wyszynski, 1984 New York, Harcourt Brace Janovich, pp 318-319, 372-373, 431-432

115 M Bernhard, op cit, Ch s 4 and 5 for examples of Church statements or interventions in the period 1975-77

Catholicism, the 1979 Papal visit was akin to a "psychological earthquake."[116] The Pope expressed in public people's private thoughts and hopes, and his words gave them the necessary encouragement to take up opposition causes decisively. As such, the visit had an enormous impact on the development of second society. Promoting self-assertion amongst individuals and groups, the direct impact of the Pope's visit in 1979 lay in its strengthening of the organisation of second society (both in terms of its cohesiveness and visible identity) and in the subsequently more overt articulation of demands vis-a-vis the state. Furthermore, his visit was as influential upon non-believers as upon Catholics. For the former, his visit was an occasion to demonstrate opposition to the system. For ten days, the state virtually ceased to exist, except as a censor for media coverage. During that time, people perceived Poland not as a Communist country, merely as a Communist *state*,[117] as it suddenly became obvious that "the emperor had no clothes."[118] Prior to his visit, articles appearing in independent publications expressed hope that the Papal visit would force the Catholic Church into taking firmer action against the regime in the future. Afterwards, many believed that it marked the beginning of a spiritual revolution in Poland and a new belief in the pursuit of human and civil rights.

(3.2 2.3) Student Movements

Throughout the early 1970s, specifically student groups or movements were relatively quiescent with regard to the ruling authorities. In contrast to the preceding decade, when student associations had openly voiced their opposition against the government's assaults on intellectual and cultural freedoms, not until the death of fellow student Stanislaw Pyjas in May 1977, did the students, once again, unite to form coherent opposition bodies.[119] The Pyjas affair transformed the student movement into a distinct, separate component of the opposition with its own goals and methods of action. The protests that followed Pyjas's death led to the creation of the Student Solidarity Committee (SKS) in Krakow. Prior to this, in the winter of

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[116] B Szajkowski, 'The Catholic Church in Defence of Civil Society in Poland,' In B Misztal (ed), Poland After Solidarity, 1985 New Brunswick, Transaction Books, p 79.

[117] T.Garton Ash, 'The Pope's Hardest Journey,' The Spectator, July 10th 1982, p.15.

[118] A Tomsky, 'Poland's Church on the Road to Gdansk,' Religion in Communist Lands, No 1-2 1981, pp 28-39

[119] J.Lipski, op cit, Ch 6 A good account of the developments in Poland in 1977, with special attention to the activities of the university and student opposition, is presented in P.Osnos, 'The Polish Road to Communism', Foreign Affairs, Vol 56 No.1, October 1977, pp 209-220 Also, L Unger, 'Two Weeks that Shook Poland', International Herald Tribune, May 30th 1977.

1977, student activists from Warsaw and Krakow had already begun to lay the groundwork for the SKS movement at a number of specific training sessions and discussion "camps" focusing on "the theme of the forms of action of the independent student movement."[120] During the 1977-78 academic year, five additional SKS were created, although individual committees were not linked by a single national structure or network.[121]

Specific activities, though, were linked by common objectives: the defence of students' rights and interests, the pursuit of issues of local academic interest (for example, the defence of oppositional activists in the academic community), the establishment of "underground" libraries to overcome the limited circulation and censorship of official text books, and the demand for greater academic autonomy and consultation within universities.[122] SKS also supported national opposition initiatives, and played a key role in bringing the uncensored lectures of the Society of Academic Courses (TKN) to local audiences, in addition to locally distributing underground publications. Active in the area of publishing,[123] the student movement of the 1970s would, later, contribute a large number of key Solidarity members.[124]

(3.2.2 4) Education

Independent education has a strong tradition in Poland, dating from the end of the eighteenth century. By 1956, various semi-private seminars were run by eminent academics in their homes, and small study or discussion groups emerged. Any attempt, therefore, to challenge the PZPR's almost total monopoly in the field of education in the new opposition environment of the 1970s, and to counteract censorship, could expect to fall on fertile ground.

In October 1977, a group of Warsaw intellectuals began a series of lectures devoted primarily to the social sciences and history. It proved so popular that it soon

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120 M Bernhard, op cit, p 143.

121 J Lipski, op cit, pp.142 and 204. Also, A Ostoja-Ostaszewski, Dissent in Poland, op cit pp 141-142.

122 RFE Research, 'Review of Uncensored Polish Publications,' October 1977-January 1978', BR/51 (1978), p 9

123 RFE Research, 'Review of Uncensored Polish Publications Sept-Nov 1977' BR/255 (1977), pp 2-4

124 For details of specific names see: M Bernhard, op cit, pp 145-6

acquired a degree of formalisation. Subsequently, on 22nd January 1978, fifty-eight eminent intellectuals and academics signed a declaration calling into being the 'Society for Academic Courses that became popularly known as the "flying university" (TKN). This was to open up a new chapter in the history of independent movements in Poland.[125] The first year of activities exceeded original expectations owing to unexpected levels of support from the academic and intellectual community and the Roman Catholic Church. Important support, for example, came from the Polish Episcopate's communiqué of March 1978, which expressed "disapproval of all actions that restrain the human spirit from freely creating cultural values."[126] Both sources demonstrate the level of cross-class support and cooperation that existed in Communist Poland during this period.

With the extent of support much wider than the number of lecturers and students participating, the greatest achievement of TKN was the breaking of the barrier of fear through bringing people together for the purpose of self-education. This, in turn, helped to produce a qualitative change in certain crucial basic attitudes. TKN never claimed to be a substitute for a specifically political discussion group. Rather, associated lecturers merely refused to honour the official taboos on politically sensitive topics, and aimed to break the government's institutional monopoly on knowledge, allowing for the pluralism they considered necessary for the development of the national culture. In other words, as proposed by the leading theorists of the early 1970s, TKN no longer attempted to press for the reform of Poland's universities through existing institutions. Instead, it turned towards society to reconstitute the national memory of Poland, and to redirect the nation to its independent and democratic sources of culture.

(3.2.2 5) Peasant Movements

During the late 1970s, four regional peasant committees were founded specifically to address growing dissatisfaction over new peasant retirement legislation, and a series of local issues.[127] Supported by specific underground newspapers, a peasant university was formed in February 1979, bringing intellectuals

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125 C.Pszenicki, 'The Flying University,' Index on Censorship Vol 8 No 6, November-December 1979, p 20.

126J Lipski, op cit, p 212

127 P Green, 'The Course of Events', Labour Focus on Eastern Europe 1.3 (1977), p 4; and N Ascherson, op cit, p 140.

into the villages to lecture on subjects of importance to peasants.[128] Self-defence committees were often supported by the village priests, and assisted by advice and publicity from KOR, all of which bore testimony to the growing unity and cross-class support within society. In 1979, "peasants' centres for knowledge" appeared. These amounted to unofficial colleges organising not only debates on personal grievances, but also courses on the history of "peasant politics" in Poland. Although the total numbers involved were small, the activity did constitute a foundation on which to revive independent and organised peasant politics. There was also an attempt to establish a "think-tank" on the rural question, called "The Centre for People's Thought," including peasant activists and representatives from both KOR and ROPCiO.[129] It did not, however, yield much in the way of direct action or concrete programmatic materials. The independent peasant movement as a whole, though, did contribute several of the future leaders of Rural Solidarity, and the existence of unofficial peasant groups demonstrated the breadth of support for independent initiatives in the late 1970s.

(3.2.2.6) Independent Publishing (Samizdat)

The 1976-1980 change in political atmosphere was best reflected in the growing number of publications that defied official censorship, which were vital ingredients in independent Polish social and political life. Samizdat involved a considerable number of volunteers to help with editing, printing, distribution and collection of funds. Publications increased despite persecution and despite shortages of paper, difficulties with effective distribution and with access to duplicating equipment, which was strictly controlled. Millions of Poles, if not directly involved, were at least aware of this activity. According to Lipski, by early 1979, the total number of volumes of underground periodicals, books and brochures printed each month totalled one hundred thousand.[130] This meant that in the year preceding the foundation of Solidarity, underground printers had bombarded Polish society with over one million pieces of samizdat. According to Walery Pisarek, Director of the Krakow Centre for Journalism Research, one-quarter of Poles had read an

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128 J Lipski, op cit, pp 260-261. Also, P Raina, Independent Social Movements in Poland, 1981 London, LSE/Orbis Books, p.163.

129 P Raina, ibid, pp 169-80

130 J Lipski, op cit, pp 304-5.

underground publication before 1980. This meant that, at one point or another, between eight-nine million Poles had contact with the underground press.[131]

The publication of such a large body of independent literature helped to create a whole *alternative culture.* According to Tomasz Mianowicz, a former samizdat editor, their number was "several times greater than that of samizdat publications in all other Soviet-bloc countries."[132] In his words, the growth of independent publishing into a mass movement for greater political freedom in Poland categorically broke the Communist's monopoly of information and, consequently, was one of the chief causes of the Polish workers' success in August 1980.[133] This was not only because publications succeeded in propagating the idea of free trade unions among workers, but, more significantly, because the Communist system depended on a tight control of information, permitting the authorities to propagate a specific mentality and impose a certain life-style on the population. Consequently, the advances made during the second half of the 1970s in the field of independent publishing were of paramount significance in helping to tip the state-society balance-of-power and influence decisively in favour of the latter.

Furthermore, the divisions within the opposition were played out within independent publications, which became testimony to the emergence of a variety of alternative views and ideologies in opposition circles. The ideological diversity represented in samizdat is an important point to note here, as it demonstrated the growing maturity and development of the Polish opposition into a markedly differentiated and complex society. The sheer scale of the independent press's activities was enormous and these activities were widely supported by leading opposition groups, notably KOR. The independent press expressed a variety of orientations and outlooks and, as such, was at the forefront of recreating a specifically Polish national consciousness.[134] The diversity and breadth of publications, representing all spheres and walks of life in Poland, created an entire network that attempted to be a conscious and permanent alternative to state-sanctioned literary

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131 Cited in: M K.Albright, 'Poland. the Role of the Press in Political Change,' The Washington Papers 102 (1985), published for the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Georgetown University, by Praegaer Publishers, New York, pp.18-19.

132 Index on Censorship Vol 12 No 2 April 1983, p.1

133 Ibid, p 24.

134 J Walc, 'Unofficial Publishing,' Index on Censorship Vol 8 No 6 Nov-Dec 1979, p.14.

publications. As such, the great number of periodicals being published at any single point can be seen as a measure of the level of discontent in society. The emergence of free and uncensored news, information and publications was one of the essential foundations for the Solidarity trade union. Despite severe repression during the period of Martial Law, literary and political works continued to be published by means of increasingly sophisticated technical machinery. The uncensored press and publications became such an essential element of life in Poland, to the extent that, by the early 1980s, publications were no longer being confined to an "underground life," but were increasingly sold openly on the streets.

(3 2.2.6 1) Spotlight on 'Robotnik,' ('The Worker')

Having largely accomplished its aims with regard to the June 1976 protests, KOR (as outlined above) began to focus on larger issues facing the working class, turning its practical and organisational attention to the creation of discussion groups or specific frameworks, which would facilitate the open exchange of information and foster economic and political agitation [135] The vehicle that finally translated this new approach into practice for the workers was the publication of "Robotnik" in September 1977, based on material provided by worker correspondents.

In this sense, Robotnik reflected the overall strategy and tactics of KOR, and was to serve as a vehicle for the process of worker politicisation being engaged in by intellectuals.[136] Its purpose and goals were made explicit in the first issue: Robotnik had been created so that workers could "publish their independent opinions, exchange experiences, and make contacts with workers at other factories."[137] This was significant in two ways. Firstly, because it provided evidence of cross-class co-operation, and recognised the central role that workers would play in any process of systemic change in Poland. It was, therefore, an explicit link to the 1970s theoretical writings that recognised the significance of continuous working class agitation. Secondly, it recognised the need to create a situation in which workers could defend their interests and have daily influence over government decision-making, working in-conjunction with the intellectuals. The founders of Robotnik sought to maintain the post-1976 worker-intellectual cooperation, seeing it as the only way to overcome the

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135 'Robotnik Editor on Unofficial Workers' Movement', Labour Focus on Eastern Europe, Vol 3 No 5, 1979-1980, p 11

136 J Haydn, op cit, p 77

137 J.Priebisz (ed), op cit, p 207

cycle of apathy-participation-apathy that had characterised worker attitudes during previous times of crisis. They also wanted to prevent a return to the isolation of different sectors of society so evident in 1968 and 1970.

Towards this end, Robotnik indicated and discussed methods and possibilities in connection with the struggle for independent trade unions, including the election of authentic workers' representatives and the creation of independent workers' councils. Various texts including specific instructions - for example, "How to strike," "What to demand," "Guidelines for conducting a successful strike" - aimed at fostering self-organisation among the workers.[138] In this role of "facilitator of organisation," Robotnik did have a certain degree of political success. Lech Walesa refers to the journal in his autobiography:

> "It was through the paper that I got to know the Wyszkowski brothers [and] another group of graduates and young members of what was later known as the Young Poland Movement...These encounters added to the experience I'd gained at the yard."[139]

With distribution wide enough to reach all major industrial centres, combined with a focus not only on immediate social and economic issues, but also on broader interests concerning the nation, society and the state, Robotnik was a key and central factor in the evolution of a specific working class political consciousness that was to have such an explosive and destructive impact on the Communist system in Poland during the Summer of 1980.[140] It was also responsible for turning KOR's general strategy into specific tactics, and it raised working class consciousness in key industrial centres, which had been the supposed heart of Communism.

The Charter of Workers' Rights, as the germ of a future organisation, is undoubtedly the most important single document that Robotnik produced. In Issue No.35 of August 1979, the publication of the Charter can be seen as the first specific opposition *programme* (signed by over one hundred intellectual and worker activists), which can be read as an early draft of the demands of August 1980.[141] With reference

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138 See. M Bernhard, op cit, pp.168-170

139 L.Walesa, A Path of Hope, op cit, p 92

140 For details and figures relating to print runs, length of issues and distribution policies and networks, see: J Lipski, op cit, pp 228-231, and M Bernhard, op cit, pp 161-164

141 For full text see: J Lipski, Appendix, op cit, pp.492-500.

to the covenants and conventions of the International Labour Organisation and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Charter included sections on workers' wages, working hours and safety, privileges and the Polish Labour Code. This followed on articles that had appeared in earlier editions calling "for society to band together and defend itself," and those "emphasising the right of all workers to form independent associations."[142] Notably, the Charter's signatories stressed that any fundamental or effective solutions to Poland's problems depended, specifically, on the actions of the workers themselves, acting together in defence of their own interests, via truly independent trade unions.[143]

(3.2.2.7) Summary 1976-1980

The movement of the 1970s, particularly developments following the constitutional crisis of 1975, encompassed all social strata in Poland. In contrast to both the immediate post-crisis years of earlier manifestations of discontent, the years 1976-1980 witnessed the evolution and expansion of an organisational network of opposition social movements, inspired and nurtured by the activities of KOR, which, for the first time in Polish Communist history, successfully united all social classes against the ruling regime. A new mode of opposition politics, developed theoretically by such figures as Kuron and Michnik in the first half of the decade, was put into practice through consciously organised, permanent, independent social movements that strove to change the behaviour of the Party-State via "pressure from below." KOR nurtured this fledgling politics by publicising opposition activities, training activists, offering financial and moral support, and disseminating knowledge about how to practice it. Consequently, this "new form" of opposition politics became the dominant mode of resistance to the Party-State.

By the year 1980, many sectors of Polish society had successfully liberated a public space, in which they had re-appropriated their own communities, ideals and language.[144] Numerous signals of the increasing ability of society to organise itself and present a united front to the Party-State abounded. In August 1980, the workers who participated in that process went on to lead a movement in their country that

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142 'The Economy Up Against the Wall', Robotnik No.29, February 21st 1979, p 1, in J Priebisz (ed), op cit, p 222

143 M Bernhard, op cit, p 167.

144 Regarding the reappropriation of a "politically-meaningful language" by opposition activists, see: L.Walesa, A Path of Hope, op cit, p 95.

went well beyond the "psychology of captivity" decried by Michnik,[145] and advanced the process of the breakdown of Communist rule in Poland by securing the legal prerequisites for the reconstruction of second society. At the end of the 1970s and beginning of the new decade, there were two significant turning-points for the Polish opposition, which were to have a direct impact on the course of events during the 1980s. Firstly, the June 1979 Papal visit of John Paul II, during which the population momentarily became a coherent community displacing the Communist state; and, secondly, the introduction, on July 1st 1980, of a new pricing system for meat and derived products.[146]

(3.2.3) August 1980

The incompetence and isolation of the Gierek regime, combined with the widespread feelings of injustice it provoked, provided the necessary tinder and spark to ignite the economic crisis in Poland in 1980. A combination of a growing economic indebtedness to both Western and Soviet credit sources and a lack of serious structural reform of the state-owned industrial sector, began to take its toll as the dawn of the 1980s approached. To quote Walesa:-

> "We kept going, for better or worse, but with no recognisable goal to head for on the horizon. Our rigidly centralised economic system, inefficient and unworkable as it was, couldn't be saved by loans, technology, or occasional contracts with the West." [147]

1979 saw the first actual (officially admitted) decline in post-1945 national income. Attempting to correct budgetary distortions, and in an attempt to eliminate Poland's trade deficit by the end of 1980, Gierek felt himself driven to the same decision that had tripped Gomulka: a steep and unanticipated increase in basic food prices. Having learnt a little, however, from the blunders of 1970 and 1976, price rises were introduced in a covert way, for example, better cuts of meat were to be transferred to so-called "commercial shops," where prices were already much higher; and the news was to be broken quietly, at the beginning of the July summer holidays.[148]

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145 A Michnik, 'On Resistance,' in: Letters From Prison, op cit, pp 50-51.

146 For further details of the price increases see: 'Polish Commercial Shops Increase Their Meat Allocation,' RFE Research, Situation Report Poland/14, July 9 1980, p 3.

147 L Walesa, A Path of Hope, op cit, p 93

148 See K Ruane, The Polish Challenge, 1982 London, the BBC, pp 1-2, for the publication of the official announcement by the official Polish News Agency, PAP.

The 1980 events were triggered by workers as a result of the same failures and pressures of the Gierek era that had concerned the dissidents throughout the 1970s. The disciplined wave of non-violent strikes that rolled over Poland in response to the August price rises was energised not only by immediate economic grievances.[149] The regime's general "remoteness, exclusiveness, arbitrariness, unaccountability, incompetence, repressiveness and illegitimacy" were also contributory factors.[150] The growing inequalities in a supposedly egalitarian society were in glaring contrast to official statements proclaiming "You've never had it so good !"[151] What is more, there existed no official institution through which the population felt it could effectively express discontent. An increasing upward social mobility came to an abrupt halt in the latter half of the 1970s. A skillful and educated workforce found itself thwarted by the ability of middle- and higher-level management employees to protect their positions and interests. Only administrative and, to a degree, agricultural reform programmes had had any significant effect on traditional practices and had produced any fundamental change.[152] In 1980, therefore, many potential crisis areas of the political, economic and social systems remained unaddressed. The strikes were a spontaneous result of those failures, and the real life experiences of Gdansk workers in battling against government troops, winning concessions and then seeing them come to nothing. The organisational strength that the workers demonstrated far exceeded the expectations of intellectuals.

Having learned valuable lessons arising out of the failures of the 1970s, in 1980, workers returned to the traditional techniques of occupation strikes, and formed effective, ad hoc negotiating committees, pressing, initially, for compensatory wage increases.[153] They rejected the temptation of a solution based upon workers' councils

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149 For a detailed description and analysis of the 1980 strikes, see: 'August 1980· the Strikes in Poland,' RFE Research, October 1980 For an insight into the motivations behind workers' actions: J Staniszkis, 'The Evolution of Forms of Working-Class Protest in Poland: Sociological Reflections on the Gdansk-Szczecin Case,' Soviet Studies, April 1981, pp 204-31. For a comprehensive account of successive regime pronouncements throughout 1980-1981, see: K Ruane, The Polish Challenge, op cit, Chapters One and Two

150 J Rothschild, op cit, p.199.

151 N.Ascherson, op cit, pp.125-6

152 See V C Chrypinski, 'Political Change Under Gierek', in· A Bromke and J Strong (eds.), Gierek's Poland, op cit pp 36-51.

153 Jan B de Weydenthal, 'Worker-Management Bargaining in Poland,' in· 'August 1980 ' RFE Research, October 1980, op cit, pp 38-41.

and, instead, building on the theoretical work of the late 1970s, stood out for a permanently independent form of representation via free trade unions. Whilst there was no general strike, by the end of the month, the stoppages affected every region of Poland, with the exception of the Silesian coal basin. Official news of the strikes was heavily censored and suppressed However, building on the maturity of second society achieved in the late 1970s, KOR established itself as a form of information exchange, ensuring that any plans to isolate news of the strikes and prevent them spreading would fail, and so the workers soon became aware of all the major strikes and settlements agreed in different regions. In so doing, KOR, acting as the only source of news both internally and to the foreign media, helped to transform the strikes from a scatter of local disputes into a self-aware and co-ordinated movement of national protest. Significantly, however, the KOR dissidents did not initiate a single strike: they only reacted to the actions of the workers themselves.[154] Throughout 1980-81, the latter reacted to events, initially serving as important channels of information as the strike movement developed, and then providing initial programmatic and theoretical conceptualisations for action. The strikes of 1980 would almost certainly have occurred without KOR's existence, and the workers movement would almost certainly have reiterated its 1970 and 1976 demands for the creation of independent trade unions. What KOR did do, however, was to influence the subsequent *development* of Solidarity, both as a trade union, and as a mass movement in defence of the second society, bypassing the organisational structure of the Communist state. Such collective actions symbolised the more general emergence of a cross-class united movement of opposition, distinguishing 1980 from earlier manifestations of discontent in Poland. The regime's control over society, in turn, had visibly diminished.

Although this minimal co-operation between the workers and dissidents appears to have been crucial in the initial stages of the strike movement, and contributed significantly to its expansion and success, arguably one of the single most important factors in the development of the strike movement was the ambiguity of the Party and government response to the workers' actions. No clearly defined position regarding the strikes was ever adopted by the authorities who, whilst obviously hostile to such developments, preferred to ignore their existence. Repeated but largely abortive attempts to halt the workers' demands merely led, however, to the growing politicisation of those demands and, ultimately, to the expansion of the strike

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154 See Jan B de Weydenthal, 'Workers and Party in Poland,' op cit, p 6.

movement and its focus from demands for wage increases only, to those that would affect the operation of the entire Polish system of rule.

This growing politicisation was best exemplified with the creation, on August 16th, of an Interfactory Strike Committee (MKS) in Gdansk, with its headquarters at the Lenin Shipyard.[155] This action marked the beginning of the second phase of the strike movement. The new stage, which was to extend until the end of August and the signing of the Social Accords, was characterised by the workers' conscious attempt at large-scale self-organisation, directed by the advice of intellectuals. In contrast to the earlier strikes, which had been somewhat inchoate and geared to localised action, the workers' movement now became more cohesive and purposeful. This growing sense of unity found its practical expression in the establishment of co-ordinating committees that directed strike efforts in a number of plants and factories simultaneously.[156]

Concurrently, the strikers broadened their demands from basically economic issues to include more political ones. The main emphasis was now placed on the need to alter the political relations within the existing system, in such a way as to ensure the direct participation of the working class in decision-making on issues affecting their interests.[157] The government's immediate response to such developments was clearly antagonistic. A range of intimidating measures culminated in Gierek's August 18th live address to the nation, in which he ruled out the acceptance of any demands that would challenge the existing sociopolitical order.[158] On August 22nd, however, the first signs of a breakthrough were in evidence when Deputy PM Barcikowski began negotiations with the Szczecin strikers, quickly followed by talks between the government, and the Gdansk MKS on the 23rd.[159] More significantly, on August 24th, the government took symbolic steps to mark what can now clearly be seen as the passing of the previous political era. During a special session of the Party's Central Committee, four Politburo members and the main economic planner were

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155 L Walesa, A Path of Hope, op cit, p124.

156 K.Ruane, op cit, pp.18 and 26.

157 Ibid, pp 21-23.

158 A Sabat and R Kolaczkowski, 'Poland's Changing Information Policy: Where is it heading ?' in: 'August 1980,' RFE Research, op cit, October 1980, pp.159-168.

159 For transcripts of the proceedings, see: A.Kemp-Welch, op cit, pp.36-142.

removed from their posts. All had been directly involved in policy formulation with respect to either the economy, or the Party's relations with the workers. More politically significant, all had been members of the PZPR's inner circle of Gierek loyalists. After their departure, it was clear that Gierek's personal power would be sharply curtailed and his authority within the Party seriously undermined. An official statement issued on August 25th portrayed the true significance of the August strikes, as a whole, and of the growing strength of the workers' movement and of second society in particular:-

> "Our party wants to correct its policy honestly, taking to heart the criticism and proposals of the work crews and of all society. We want a genuine broadening of the public's participation in deciding on matters of the workplace, towns and villages, the entire country..." [160]

With this statement, the Party formally accepted what had long seemed inevitable: official negotiation with second society and an organisation created by the workers themselves. On August 30th, a formal settlement of the strike was signed by the representatives of the government and the strikers in Szczecin, and a tentative agreement was concluded in Gdansk.[161]

Viewed from the perspective of Polish politics, the Gdansk and Szczecin Agreements constituted a milestone. At a bare minimum, they served to emphasise the importance of self-organisation and determination in the successful defence of specific interests. They were also, however, the first occasion in the history of the socialist system, that the Communist authorities had formally agreed to the principle of a an independent group being allowed to legally organise itself outside the direct control of the Party and state. This, more than anything else, made the Polish developments unique. In August 1980, the Polish working class successfully turned their recently-learnt collective ability to influence the system into a positive force, and, combined with the guidance of the politically-activated intellectual elites, were responsible for the articulation of distinct political and economic *alternatives*.

Thus, in August 1980, the Polish Communist regime found itself confronted by a formidable and consolidated social movement, in particular, and a re-emerging second society, more generally. Having generated economic expectations beyond its

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160 J B de Weydenthal, 'Workers and Party in Poland,' op cit, p 10.

161 English language translations of the texts of all agreements in: 'August 1980 The Strikes in Poland,' RFE Research, October 1980, op cit, pp 423-434 and 439-443.

capacity to fulfill; having discredited itself via the promotion of social inequalities; and having resisted fundamental political reform, the PZPR was compelled to respond to irresistible pressures emanating from second society. With the subsequent creation of Rural Solidarity and an Independent Student Union, the regime, confronting an alliance of the working class, intellectuals, farmers, and the Roman Catholic Church became merely one part of a pluralised political structure.[162] The mere fact that the August Agreements had been concluded bear testimony to the growing strength of the second society beneath the surface of the Communist system, and laid the basis for its increasing centrality to Polish events throughout the 1980s. Admittedly, second society confronted a ruling party that was probably at its weakest point since coming to power: the PZPR was riven by factionalism and shaken by a succession of serious policy failures.[163] Furthermore, tolerance of second society was within certain distinct and restricted limitations - independence, but *within* the *existing* system of power relations. Subsequent to its first National Congress in 1981, the Solidarity opposition would graduate to demands and policy programmes focusing on the overthrow and demise of the prevailing system of rule, and its replacement with a democratically-oriented one.

(3 2 4) August 1980 – December 1981

The period between August 1980 and the imposition of Martial Law on Poland in December 1981 was characterised by a continuing see-saw of power between a maturing and developing second society, on the one hand, and on the other, a Communist state which, although attempting to reform itself and secure popular legitimacy, saw its membership base dwindle. This section will not provide a comprehensive record of the eighteen months of Solidarity's legal registration.[164] Its focus, rather, is on the specific development of the Union and of second society, on developments within the PZPR itself, and on certain key events which visibly demonstrated the apparent strength and maturity of the second society in Poland vis-à-vis the PZPR-led regime, and which prompted the imposition of Martial Law in December 1981.

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162 K Ruane, op cit, pp 148-151 for the legal registration of Rural Solidarity.

163 Jan B de Weydenthal, 'Workers and Party in Poland,' Problems of Communism, Vol 29 No 6, November-December 1980, pp.13-16.

164 For a detailed account, including extracts from official and Solidarity pronouncements, see. K Ruane, op cit, Ch s 7-14.

(3 2.4 1) The Crisis within the PZPR

Although Solidarity failed to effectively capitalise on the gains and successes of August, the PZPR leadership, in order to contain the threat of a further decline in support for the Party and to arrest the spread of popular discontent, developed a wide-ranging policy of appeasement.[165] In the early euphoric days of Polish society's "awakening," however, the eclipse of the Party seemed not only inevitable but also final.[166]

> "The organisation that had claimed for itself the right to set directions for all aspects of social and economic development was suddenly forced into relative obscurity...Its leaders appeared inert...signs of organisational deterioration proliferated, and the entire party was affected by widespread disillusionment, internal dissension and factional strife."[167]

It is significant that, in 1980, perhaps for the first time in the history of the PZPR, intra-party conflict developed largely as a response to external events, and continued to evolve under the influence of such events and developments.[168] There were two important consequences of this factor, both of which were significant for the further evolution of second society. Firstly, intra-party conflict was particularly intense in those Party sectors that were seen as responsible for the formulation and implementation of social policies. The military, police and security sectors by contrast remained relatively isolated. The significance of this would become evident at the end of 1981. Secondly, as second society developed, divisions between the various elements in the Party's organisational hierarchy emerged, particularly between the rank-and-file and all levels of officialdom.[169] Paralleling the wider moves towards social self-organisation within society, a process of "horizontal collectivism" within the Party, begun shortly after the conclusion of the August 1980 Accords, was a clear indication of crisis. In essence, as society expressed its dissatisfaction, so too did the Party's ordinary members, demanding an overhaul of both organisation and operations. In April 1981, the movement attained a level of organisational identity, with the establishment of the "Forum for Social Accord," which demanded essential

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165 Jan B de Weydenthal et al, The Polish Drama, 1980-1982, 1983 Toronto, Lexington Books, p 31.

166 L Walesa, A Path of Hope, op cit, p 145

167 Jan B de Weydenthal, op cit, p.36.

168 G Sandford, Polish Communism in Crisis, 1983 London, Croom Helm Ltd , Chapter 4, especially pp 83-95.

169 Ibid, pp 37-8.

changes to the tradition of democratic centralism within the Communist Party.[170] This resolution marked the first instance ever in which local Party activists had met in a national gathering to prepare their own positions independently of the leadership. Similar signs of crisis were evident in the calls for pluralism within the Party made by leaders of official organisations.

During the "Extraordinary Party Congress," hastily called for early July, the Party leadership attempted to solve the serious and protracted economic crisis facing the country, and to put an end to the widespread popular agitation, and intense ferment within the Party.[171] The explicit purpose of the Congress was twofold. Firstly, to sketch out the Party's future programme of action; and secondly, to rid the Party of its image as a mere appendage of Gierek. It did successfully complete proposed changes in Party personnel, and did democratically elect a new Politburo and Secretariat under the leadership of Stanislaw Kania. The process of horizontalism was also arrested. However, the future programme of action amounted to little more than a vague declaration supporting the principle of socialist renewal; the rapid decline in Party membership was not halted; and, more importantly, the Congress failed to improve relations between the Party and the public. During 1981, the PZPR lost over four-hundred-thousand (13 per cent) of its members;[172] and in August, a poll revealed that 68 per cent of the population blamed the authorities for fostering the country's crisis. By contrast, only 9 per cent laid the blame at Solidarity's door.[173]

The replacement of Kania as General Secretary by Wojciech Jaruzelski on October 18th appeared to confirm the failure of the PZPR leadership to strengthen the Party's role within Polish society. Despite the formulation of a programme of socialist renewal, Kania had failed to ensure sufficient support either within the Party, or throughout society for its subsequent implementation. Underlying the renewal strategy had been the assumption that the newly-emerging second society would support, and be satisfied by, limited change. However, as the movement of social self-organisation developed, it became obvious that the policy would not receive the

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170 K Ruane, op cit, pp 151-2

171 For a detailed account of the Congress, see. Ibid, Chapter 11, pp 188-215

172 Ibid p 153.

173 Jan B de Weydenthal, op cit, p.50.

support of the public and, in this sense therefore, Kania's replacement can be taken as an indication of the relative strength of second society vis-a-vis the state.

Hopes and expectations that Jaruzelski's appointment would lead to a decisive improvement in internal affairs soon proved false. Having called a ninety-day truce and outlined an anti-crisis programme in his first speech, Jaruzelski attempted to restrict the advances recently won by the independent opposition, through a series of agreements with farmers and students, and moves to begin legal proceedings against KOR and Solidarity activists.[174] Social agitation continued, however, and by the end of November, it was officially announced that demands for the "removal of party organisations from industrial enterprises" had been made in nearly 50 per cent of Polish provinces.[175] The entire system of government and state institutions appeared to be engulfed in insurmountable problems. As far as the public was concerned, the government appeared to be passive and lagging behind events, reacting to them, as opposed to leading society out of crisis. In this sense, according to Walesa, the Communist regime missed a real opportunity to maintain popular support by upholding the August Accords and admitting Solidarity to government.[176] Successive changes in party and government leadership appeared to have no impact on operations and ultimately contributed to the pervasive image of indecisiveness and procrastination. This failure to act was perhaps typical of an establishment facing serious disarray in its ranks. More significantly, it also contributed to the growing determination of various autonomous groups to take matters of economic and social policy into their own hands.

(3.2.4.2) The Further Development of Second Society

In August 1980, Solidarity's aim had been to secure the legal existence of the developing second society in Poland. Once secured, its aim had to be to defend that society, yet, intellectuals and workers alike, had not considered the 1980 developments as being remotely possible. Post-August, consequently, Solidarity had no specific policies or programme on which to build. To quote Walesa:

> "During the strike, we had been the driving force...the movement had followed a programme which itself dictated the tempo of events. Now the

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174 L.Walesa, A Path of Hope, op cit, pp 181-2

175 Henry Kamm, The New York Times, December 4th 1981, p 5.

176 L.Walesa, A Path of Hope, op cit, p 160

> situation had changed. It was a race against the clock and we no longer had control of events."[177]

This lack of clear direction manifested itself in visible disputes between members of the Union's leadership, in particular concerning the question of whether to establish an overtly political party post-August, or whether to continue to operate within the bounds of the Solidarity Trade Union.[178] Such divisions and general lack of direction "at the top" was, paradoxically, paralleled by increasing activity and social initiative "from below." The success of Solidarity in liberating a legal public space in August encouraged a further flourishing of independent groups and associations, all of which sought legal recognition in what appeared to be a qualitatively changed political system. For example, on September 22nd 1980, a national "Independent Association of Polish Students" was constituted;[179] TKN was able to extend its activities among both independent students and Solidarity supporters;[180] and intellectual life, more generally, bloomed in terms of what was being written and published. There were also growing demands for a loosening and revision of media censorship. In effect, one of the most important changes brought about by August 1980 occurred in the consciousness of the public. As opinion polls revealed an increasing political irritation at the operational deficiencies of the Communist system, the legal emergence of Solidarity served to break the mood of apathy, as the union provided the means to fill an institutional void. In this sense, as a consequence of *legal* change, the public became more confident and more determined to effect a permanent reform of the system.

Although the PZPR had formally conceded the right to organise independent trade unions in late August, it probably hoped to exercise a major influence over the form these would take by retaining control of registration procedures.[181] The Party had also stipulated that the new unions recognise the PZPR's continued leading role and that they declare their loyalty to socialism. This issue led to the first real

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177 Ibid p 147.

178 For details of divisions within the Solidarity leadership, see: K Ruane, op cit, pp 113, 147, 207, and 261. See, also, A.Touraine, Solidarity: The Analysis of a Social Movement Poland 1980-81, 1982 London, Cambridge University Press, pp 53-4

179 G Sandford, op cit, p 99.

180 See Information Centre for Polish Affairs (hereafter ICPA) 2/1981 for the TKN Declaration of January 6th 1981.

181 G Sanford, op cit, p.100.

confrontation between Solidarity and the PZPR in September-November 1980 over the former's registration.[182] However, this major contention only masked a wide range of subsidiary disputes, concerning such issues as wage increases, "free Saturdays," and access to the mainstream media. The significant point to note here, is that demonstrations of Solidarity's influence and strength and the levels of support it received from second society (the October 3rd warning strikes received 100 per cent backing in major industrial regions, for example) were decisive factors in the ability of the union to successfully press its claims against the wishes of the Communist regime. The final registration of Solidarity, and the later registration of Rural Solidarity inspite of the crisis which developed over the Bydgoszcz incident in March 1981,[183] marked the end of what has been termed "the first gestation period," in which the independent union had been formed and its place in the social structure more clearly defined. Solidarity's registration and its subsequent "victory" at Bydgoszcz confirmed to the authorities that their ability to control public activities was rapidly waning, and demonstrated that any attempts to use force to quell social agitation would merely strengthen the resolve of public opposition. For Solidarity, however, these conflicts provided testimony to the widespread popular support for their cause, whilst simultaneously indicating the government's relative weakness.

In summary, by March 1981, Solidarity was a highly integrated movement, increasingly identified with the whole of Polish society by virtue of the size of its membership and its ability to rally the population. More significantly, Poland had essentially witnessed the formalisation of second society via the legal registration of the Solidarity trade union. What had initially been a working class strike in mid-1980 had developed into a cross-societal movement encompassing all social strata. Identifiable working class and intellectual leaders had emerged; and, on an individual level, political behaviour was less marked by fear and intimidation. Polish society had effectively become pluralist with an identifiable and active second society in opposition to the Communist Party and state. The next stage in the evolution of the opposition would be "Solidarity's involvement in the constructive resolution of the country's problems."[184]

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182 K.Ruane, op cit, pp.71-75.

183 For details of the incident, see: ibid, Chapter 8, especially pp 137-140; Jan B de Weydenthal, op cit, pp.70-71; and G Sandford, op cit, Chapter 5

184 G Sandford, op cit, p 106.

In mid-April, Solidarity highlighted the PZPR's general alienation from the population by publishing a lengthy document entitled "Directions of Union Action in the Country's Present Situation." It was, in effect, a statement of Solidarity's ideology and a programme of action offered for discussion inside the union. Proclaiming an allegiance to political democracy and socialist-oriented social policies, and placing the blame for the Polish crisis on the faults of the existing system, Solidarity declared that the reserves of Communism had been exhausted, and that only the union was capable of safeguarding the renewal process.[185] This is significant, here, for two reasons. It was tangible evidence, firstly, of the maturity of second society, generally, and more specifically, of the extent of evolution of Solidarity post-August 1981. Secondly, it represented one of the first occasions on which Solidarity formally chose to challenge the primacy of the PZPR in the political arena. The demands of the workers in 1980 had to an extent challenged the manner in which the PZPR governed. However, the evolution of Solidarity in early 1981 and the publication of the Directions for Union Action suggested the emergence of a clear alternative to the Communist system in Poland. The explicit formulation of a rival political programme which undermined the political resources of the PZPR and, more importantly, attracted the support of the masses. This alternative vision assumed a more mature form at Solidarity's first National Congress in 1981.

The National Congress, held in September and October 1981, was an important landmark. At no point in Communism's history had an independent public movement been able to hold a formal gathering to debate its role and functions within the political system. The Congress, with Solidarity increasingly being seen as representing society as a whole rather than just the workers, emerged as a quasi-legislative body, adopting positions on the most important issues of public life, proposing solutions to various problems, and formulating social and economic programmes for the future.[186] In addition, the Congress elected Solidarity's national leadership and adopted uniform statutes for the organisation as a whole. By providing a formal organisational underpinning to the movement and a specific programme of action, the Congress turned perceptions into reality. Envisaging major changes in Poland's political system, the programme stated:

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185 K.Ruane, op cit, p 150

186 For an account of the major events and debates that occurred during the Congress, see· S Persky and H Flam, op cit, pp 186-204

> " Solidarity can no longer confine itself to waiting...We are the only guarantor for society and that is why the union deems it its basic duty to take all possible short- and long-term steps to salvage Poland from ruin...There is no other way to attain this goal but to restructure the state and the economy on the basis of democracy and public participation."[187]

By unambiguously pointing to the PZPR as the cause of Poland's crisis, Solidarity called into question the possibility of it continuing to exercise power and directly challenged the Party. In addition, the programme demanded access to the media; reform of local elections; the creation of a second legislative chamber and a "social council" to direct the economy; and, ultimately, free elections to Parliament.[188] All these provisions provided the elements behind the concluding appeal for the establishment of a "Self-Governing Republic," which would reflect the existing pluralism within the social, political and cultural spheres.[189]

The formulation of such a comprehensive and distinctly political programme undoubtedly reflected the shifting balance-of-power between the PZPR and Solidarity in the period to November 1981. During that period, the effectiveness of the political system and the ability of the PZPR to govern within it had declined considerably. Independence had spread throughout societal life to the extent that the opposition was capable of not only enforcing concessions onto the authorities, but also of strongly influencing decision-making at all levels of the political and institutional hierarchy. The system became overburdened with demands that it could not meet; and the rapidly deteriorating economic crisis weakened the PZPR's ability to lead. By December 1981, the second society in Poland had evolved to the extent that it occupied a legal public space and had been recognised by the Communist regime as being fundamental to Polish developments Furthermore, the numbers who joined Solidarity alone testify to the fact that second society was all-encompassing, uniting all social classes in opposition to the PZPR which, in turn, ensured that when Solidarity formulated a distinct and viable alternative political programme, with the support of the public, the threat to the existing regime was too great to ignore.

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187 'The Solidarity Programme,' ibid, pp 205-225.

188 Ibid, pp.211-218.

189 Ibid, p 213.

(3.2.4 3) Declaration of Martial Law, December 13th 1981

On December 13th 1981, General Jaruzelski declared Martial Law in Poland.[190] Throughout the autumn of 1981, there were increasing signs that the government was preparing to resolve the on-going crisis within society. At the end of September, for example, a six-man "Committee of National Salvation" (PRON) had been formed, headed by General Jaruzelski; and special units of the army and police had been formed to quell popular resistance. On November 4th, Jaruzelski met with Walesa and Cardinal Glemp. His offer of symbolic consultations and representation for Solidarity and the Roman Catholic Church was refused by both parties, as all vital posts and crucial decisions would continue to remain the prerogative of the PZPR.[191] It is, perhaps, significant that, inspite of second society's and Solidarity's evident strength, even in November, the PZPR did not permit independent organisations access to political power. Undoubtedly, the constraints imposed by the Soviet Union will have been a primary consideration in the imposition of Martial Law.[192] However, it was also evident that a growing percentage of the population was increasingly disgruntled with recurrent strikes, and disillusioned with the ongoing feuds within Solidarity. Within certain regions, polls revealed that over 25 per cent of respondents felt that the most recent strikes had been unnecessary; and similar numbers supported the Central Committee initiative to ban strikes completely.[193] It would be a mistake, however, to attribute the success of the Communist authorities in imposing a "state of war" on a slight waning of popular support for independent initiatives. A lack of preparation on the part of Solidarity for such an eventuality undoubtedly helped the authorities in December. In addition, the reaction of Primate Glemp was a decisive factor in reducing immediate resistance. In a sermon delivered on December 13th, he stated:

> "The authorities consider that the exceptional nature of Martial Law is dictated by a higher necessity...Assuming the correctness of such reasoning the man in the street will subordinate himself to the new situation..."[194]

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190 For an English translation of his speech, see ICPA 20/1981, p 8.

191 T.Garton Ash, The Polish Revolution Solidarity 1980-82, op cit, p.243-6

192 K Ruane, op cit, p.165, 275-7.

193 Ibid, p 250

194 ICPA, 20/1981, p 21.

In theory, Jaruzelski's move demonstrated the extent of the PZPR's continuing strength inspite of the gains made by Solidarity and second society during the preceding fifteen months. Walesa referred to the fact that Solidarity was no match for "the overwhelming measures undertaken by the government to bring Polish citizens to heel."[195] Conversely, however, Martial Law also demonstrated the Party's weakness vis-à-vis second society: the subsequent chaotic struggle between it and society merely served to destroy, irretrievably, any remaining legitimacy the PZPR may have enjoyed.

(3.3) Second Society and the Breakdown of Communism in 1989

On August 31st 1988, Lech Walesa met with Interior Minister General Czeslaw Kiszczak for high-level negotiations aimed at ending a new wave of strikes sweeping across Poland. Eight years after the signing of the Gdansk Accords, and more than six years since the imposition of Martial Law, government and the institutions representative of second society were talking face-to-face. Attempting to make sense of Polish developments in the period after December 1981 is a daunting task. The post-Solidarity period (I take, here, the Solidarity period as being August 1980-December 1981), however, can be divided into two distinct stages, with the crucial turning-point occurring in September 1986, when the PZPR declared a general amnesty, launched a series of meaningful reforms, and began to recognise second society as a fundamental part of any stable political system. It was the first period, December 1981 to September 1986, however, that led to this realisation.

Part III of this case-study chapter will not provide a comprehensive account of events throughout the 1980s. Certain years and events will be covered in far greater detail than others. The reason for this is deliberate and relates to the respective relevance of certain events and their contribution to the re-emergence of a second society in Poland, and to their effect on the mode of breakdown experienced by the Communist regime in 1989. The year 1982, for example, was crucial, if only for the developing arguments between underground opposition leaders over the most appropriate strategy and tactics to adopt following Jaruzelski's declaration of Martial Law. The end of that year witnessed the emergence of a concrete opposition programme aimed at the deliberate creation of an *underground society*. A large part of this section, therefore, focuses on the arguments and discussions that were rife amongst underground Solidarity activists during 1982, because of their significance for the re-emergence and further development of second society in Poland.

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195 L.Walesa, A Path of Hope, op cit, p 204

Furthermore, the discussions were testimony to the degree of maturity achieved by independent organisations pre-December 1981. In contrast, the years between 1983 and 1986 represented an effective stalemate between the opposition forces and the Communist regime, and, although events such as the release of Walesa did have a significant impact upon the fortunes of second society, the majority of opposition activity centred on protecting those structures that existed, as opposed to the construction of new ones.

This section, therefore, will outline the main lines of the opposition's internal response to Martial Law in terms of political strategy, tactics and organisational development; the internal debate over its political aims and programme; and its reaction to the authorities' policies. The main analytical and practical problem faced by the Solidarity-led opposition from the outset was whether to prepare for a single general strike, or whether to organise long-term social resistance.[196] The issue of a *"single outburst"* versus a *"long march"* conditioned views as to whether an *underground state* or *underground society* should be the principal aim, and the consequent degree of centralised or decentralised leadership and organisation.

(3.3.1) Underground Structures of the Opposition Post-December 1981

Post-December 1981, the reconstruction of Solidarity was of primary importance. By resorting to Martial Law in order to deal with a situation it felt it could no longer control, the Party had effectively declared war on a huge section of society and, in so doing, turned general dissidence into an all-encompassing mass movement for the liberation of second society. The process of reconstruction was to prove difficult, however, not only because of the virtual elimination of its leadership, but also as a result of the polarisation of programmes observable following the imposition of Martial Law.

Only approximately 20 per cent of the principal Solidarity leadership escaped internment at the outset of Martial Law in December 1981. The principal aim of dissident activists was to keep Solidarity "alive." Given the conditions discussed briefly above, it is hardly surprising that the underground[197] never succeeded in

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196 See, for example, an appeal for an immediate general strike issued in December 1981, Labour Focus on Eastern Europe, Vol 5 No s 1-2, Spring 1982.

197 Here, I define "the underground" as the sum of the Solidarity, Nationalist and Catholic groupings that existed and continued to operate, in some form, post-1981.

creating a nation-wide, hierarchically based organisation.[198] Its main characteristic was the local, autonomous, spontaneous and decentralised nature of its constituent parts. The underground's first National Resistance Committee (OKO)[199] was established in early 1982 by members of Solidarity's former National Presidium. Although it operated with the express consent of Walesa, it was organised without the support of the main leaders-in-hiding and was severely criticised for the anonymity of its leadership.[200] It adopted the generally accepted view that conspiratorial structures and terrorist measures were unnecessary and dangerous as Martial Law would be short-lived. What was required was a secret leadership body to stimulate and co-ordinate social opposition. The leaders, therefore, adopted the strategy of "organising a mass, society-wide underground resistance movement" calling on society to form autonomous "Circles of Social Resistance" ("KOS") to force the Communist regime to lift Martial Law and to negotiate an agreement with it on the basis of Solidarity's Oliwa Congress programme.[201] The organisation did, at least, fulfill a pressing need: the people needed to see and hear that Solidarity had recovered from the initial shock of Martial Law. It is also true, however, that, in practice, OKO barely existed. It had no organisational structures, no regional or propaganda base, and very few open supporters or activists.[202] Within one week of the imposition of Martial Law, it appeared that the regime had effectively crippled Solidarity, specifically, and second society more generally.[203]

OKO was replaced on April 22nd by the Provisional Co-ordinating Committee (TKK).[204] It represented specifically Solidarity's first effective underground, national leadership body.[205] Its founding communiqué was the first

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198 The changing variety of structures is chronicled in: M Lopinski et al (eds), Konspira: Solidarity Underground, 1990 Los Angeles, University of California Press.

199 Established at a secret meeting of Solidarity activists on January 13th. M.Lopinski, op cit, p 49.

200 M.Lopinski, op cit, pp 49-51.

201 ICPA, News Bulletin 1/1982, pp 7-11

202 N Ascherson, The Struggles for Poland, 1988 London, Pan Books, p 217.

203 M.Lopinski, op cit, p.36.

204 Also known as the 'Interim Coordinating Commission', see ibid, pp 74-77.

205 D.Ost, Solidarity and the Politics of Anti-Politics, op cit, p.153.

comprehensive programmatic declaration under Martial Law.[206] The "Statement on the Methods and Forms of Action" stressed that the reconstruction of the Union's activities entailed more than moral opposition. The three main efforts were to be directed towards the formation of KOS, the extension of publishing activity, and the creation of discussion clubs to formulate the movement's strategy and tactics.[207] The TKK's regional structure emerged earliest in Gdansk, Wroclaw, Warsaw and Krakow, and by the latter half of 1982, the bulk of its regional organisations had been established.[208] Most were styled as "Regional Co-ordinating Committees" (RKK); and, although largely autonomous, did back the TKK's calls for nation-wide action.

Overall, the underground was a haphazard mosaic of loosely connected and often parallel organisations. These formed and reformed depending upon the interplay between the Solidarity-KOR hardcore, social discontent, and state-police repression. The TKK operated as the "official" Solidarity, with individuals forming their own "Solidarity cells."[209] Despite the transitory nature of many groups, however, the mere fact that independent organisations were able to form and operate under the restrictions imposed by Martial Law, effectively demonstrates the maturity of second society achieved pre-1980.

(3 3 2) The Development of the Underground

Arguably, the entire underground's greatest success in the early Martial Law years (in spite of the continual arrest of writers, printers and distributors) was its publication and propaganda drive. Its supporters claimed that this was at over twice the level attained under what they termed the similar conditions of the first year of the German occupation in 1939-40.[210] By April 1982, some 149 separate titles could be

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206 An English translation can be found in: B Szajkowski, Next to God, 1983 New York, St Martins Press, Appendix Three.

207 ICPA, 9/1982, pp 3-5.

208 See: M Lopinski, op cit, pp 59-60 for details of the "bottom-up" tactics leading to the emergence of various regional structures and organisations. Also Chapter 5 for details concerning the construction of regional factory organisations, and the history/specifics/organisations peculiar to each individual region

209 D Ost, Solidarity and the Politics of Anti-Politics, op cit, pp.153-4.

210 'Poland's Flourishing Independent Culture', Index on Censorship Vol 15 No 6, June 1986, pp 24-26, S Bratkowski, 'Explosion of Independent Journalism', Index on Censorship, Vol.16 No 4, 1987, pp 17-18; T Konwicki, 'Dreams and Delusions', Index on Censorship, Vol 12 No 2, April 1983, pp 18-22.

identified; by December, this number had more than trebled.[211] Some reference should also be made here to the printing of leaflets, banners, flags, and badges; in the early 1980s, of Solidarity bank notes; to the emergence of clandestine newsletters and papers within the internment camps; and to the establishment of two news services: IS giving information on Solidarity activities; and NAI, providing foreign and domestic news. All are evidence of the depth of organisation and sophistication of the growing second society in the early 1980s.[212]

During the nineteenth century Partitions, the Poles developed a specific tradition of political emigration, which re-emerged during the Second World War, and continued post-1945 in the early years of resistance to Communist rule. What concerns us here is that the growing number of émigré Poles had a significant impact on internal Polish developments especially in the 1980s. Although regime propaganda denounced opposition activists in the West as CIA agents, and made the most of Solidarity's links with what it called the "Western centres of ideological diversion" and "information aggression,"[213] these external sources of opposition cannot be ignored, if only for their continuing psychological, financial and informational support for the internal opposition. They were also an important additional arena for debating tactics, strategy and programmatic aims during the entire period of Martial Law. As the flourishing underground cultural life bore witness, thousands of Poles in Poland looked to this exiled intellectual elite for their standards and inspiration. This "spiritual government-in-exile" was more representative of the people than Jaruzelski's government could ever hope to be.[214]

(3.3.2.1) Solidarity's Underground Strategy, Tactics and Programme

As discussed above, the first Solidarity political reactions to Martial Law were inevitably of a local or individual character, and Solidarity leaders themselves were divided in their assessments.[215] Zbigniew Bujak and the majority were optimistic about the level of social support. Their strategy was, therefore, to operate

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211 H.Gordon Skilling, Samizdat and an Independent Society in Central and Eastern Europe, 1989 Basingstoke, Macmillan Press, pp 23-24

212 J Haydn, op cit, pp.75-90.

213 L Walesa, A Path of Hope, op cit, p 263

214 T Garton Ash, The Other Poland, The Spectator, December 18 1982, p.11.

215 ICPA, 1/1982, pp 25-27

underground to organise peaceful resistance. The pessimists were a minority, led by Viktor Kulerski, who had earlier been the most prescient Solidarity leader on the possibility of armed repression.[216] They saw no point in going underground as they predicted the situation would last many years and, thus, emphasised "long-term information activity."[217]

Under Martial Law, however, KOR's pre-1980 strategies and organisational experience became very relevant. With the debate centred on whether Solidarity should retain its non-violent commitment, whether it should establish a centralised alternative state with clear lines of command, or whether it should establish a loose structure to help co-ordinate and encourage peaceful resistance, KOR's 1970s concept of the second society became central to the strategy that would be pursued by the opposition forces throughout the early 1980s.[218] This increased the influence of the interned KOR leaders - Kuron and Michnik - and of their ideas concerning the deliberate building of a political underground movement capable of long-term, comprehensive opposition to the Communist regime. The workers' Solidarity leaders - Bujak, Lis and Frasyniuk - however, thought, until the Spring, that Martial Law would prove short-lived and, thus, their problem was not so much to build permanent underground structures and to present a new Solidarity programme, as to organise widespread and continuing social resistance to demonstrate Solidarity's capability to force the authorities to end Martial Law and to negotiate with second society. In essence, then, from the very beginning of the Martial Law period, Solidarity''s thinking on strategy and tactics revealed sharp differences of opinion that determined the way in which individual regions organised themselves.

The notion of the *underground society* was formulated in Warsaw as an alternative programme to that proposed by Kuron. The internal Solidarity debate was fuelled by his "Theses for Getting Out of a Situation Without Issue," which predicted massive and widespread social discontent, as a consequence of the "complete" economic disaster and the recent "militarisation" of society.[219] He considered that a

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216 ICPA 3/1982, p.38.

217 ICPA, 2/1982, pp 26 and 39.

218 M Lopinski, op cit, Chapter 6

219 Published in February 1981. For an opposition discussion regarding Kuron's proposals, see: M Lopinski, op cit, pp.78-79. English texts of the exchange of letters between Kuron and Bujak/ Kulerski, during the Summer of 1982, were published in: Labour Focus on Eastern Europe, Vol 5 No s 3-4, Summer 1982.

"massive and well organised resistance was the only chance for the Poles to force the authorities into a negotiated compromise to prevent a social outburst or to head off Soviet intervention."[220] The opposition, therefore, should demonstrate its strength through a variety of actions designed to encourage the reformist elements within the PZPR regime into an agreement. Kuron's blast provoked a further major exchange concerning strategy between Bujak and Kulerski in March. The former wanted to form "an alternative, decentralised, informal and invisible union structure."[221] His recipe was for a multi-centred movement consisting of mutually dependent, and loosely connected, social resistance, informational and assistance groups. Kulerski, by contrast, argued that a peaceful, legal organisation would be more advantageous to the regime in coming to terms with the socio-economic crisis than a violent underground. This second line would succeed in encouraging them to accept political compromises.[222] Kulerski foresaw an erosion of the regime's power leading to gradual liberalisation and the rebirth of autonomous social life. The opposition should, therefore, seek refuge in an underground *society* not *state*.[223] Perhaps more significant here than the semantics of the opposition discussions that occurred is the mere presence of such high-level theoretical debate in the first instance. The undeground contained many political ideas and tendencies which was evidence of a real and thriving political pluralism within Poland. The fact that programmatic exchanges were evident is proof of the maturity achieved by the second society in Poland, with leading dissidents able to discuss viable alternatives in an effort to ensure that the opposition did not falter as in the past.

Demands from Kuron, Lis, their Western émigré supporters and grassroots pressure emanating from the large Warsaw and Wroclaw factories moved the TKK leadership to begin preparations for a general strike in June 1982, after the lessons of the first round of major disturbances in May had been digested.[224] The subsequent protests were particularly strong in Wroclaw.[225] The TKK then called off its

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220 T.Garton Ash, 'The art of the impossible,' The Spectator, September 11th 1982, pp.7-8

221 ICPA, 8/1982, pp 8-10.

222 ICPA, 6/1982, pp.7-10.

223 ICPA, 11/1982, pp 8-14

224 On the May 1982 disturbances see L Walesa, A Path of Hope, op cit, p 230.

225 Tad Szulc, 'Can Poland Be Free?' Parade (Washington D C.), July 18th 1982.

offensive, and all strikes and demonstrations in late June, for the period of one month. It claimed that the street demonstrations had decisively shown that "Solidarity is still a real power." This moratorium was proof of the TKK's willingness to reach an agreement, government rejection of which would merely "force the union to resume all sorts of pressure including a general strike."[226] "The Underground Society: the Basic Principles for a Programmatic Declaration" set out TKK's strategy for the second half of 1982, and argued in favour of the organisation of a decentralised movement of passive resistance within the framework of an underground society.[227] By August, decentralised "Regional Co-ordination Centres" existed in many of the main industrial centres throughout Poland, Wroclaw being by far the strongest of these with 60 per cent of its workplaces supporting underground Solidarity. Along with the broadcasting of the first Radio Solidarity transmissions in the summer, these provided evidence of a maturing second society inspite of Martial Law restrictions.

In summary, the rhetoric of the first Solidarity documents published after the imposition of Martial Law, revealed a characteristic change in the assessment of the democratisation of political life. In 1980-81, Solidarity looked for ways of *restricting* the PZPR's leading role with mechanisms that would broaden independent participation. Post-1982, the principal problem became how to *replace* the Party. At this stage, the numerous declarations issued by underground structures began to portray distinct and well-formulated *alternative programmes and principles,* which would give necessary direction and purpose to the activities of a maturing second society. Inspite of the fact that the Communist regime had won the battle for control of the legal public space, second society organisations were able to demonstrate their resilience in the face of a worsening crisis within Polish social and political life.

On August 31st 1982, to commemorate the second anniversary of the founding of Solidarity, massive demonstrations were held throughout Poland.[228] Significantly, the protests were hailed by the regime as a failure, in that they did not lead to a massive mobilisation of the population as predicted. Admittedly, during the first half of the year, Solidarity had shown that it had no power to influence the government or to force it to change course. Subsequently, many leading activists were of the opinion that the demonstrations merely allowed the military regime to make a

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226 ICPA, 13/82, p 3.

227 Ibid, pp 4-8.

228 M Lopinski, op cit, Chapter 8

calculated decision regarding the costs and benefits of delegalising Solidarity. Conversely, the impact on social consciousness cannot be ignored: the TKK had tried, and did succeed, in organising a mass demonstration and, in so doing, the events did have significant psychological consequences for the wider society. In that sense, August 1982 was a serious and developed social challenge to the authorities under the restrictions of Martial Law, and demonstrated the continuing ability of second society organisations to mobilise the public.

By Autumn 1982, however, the Jaruzelski regime had effectively won the battle for the banning of Solidarity[229] (the delegalisation of the Union in October 1982, for example, had revealed the wider-suspected weakness of the TKK) and had forced the Church to accept its conditions for normalisation, and the forthcoming 1983 Papal visit.[230] The TKK, thus, lost much of its political standing, especially when its role as the main opposition spokesman was largely taken over by Walesa following his release on November 11th. However, although a number of activists subsequently abandoned clandestine activity, the underground still constituted a strong informational and propaganda network with considerable support in specific workplaces.[231] This allowed it to pursue its own interests, and to support independent initiatives in the period following the suspension of Martial Law in 1983.[232]

By 1983, Jaruzelski had separated Solidarity and the Church, and was able to begin a long-term process of stabilisation. In spite of regime successes, however, it must be recognised that the Communist Party barely existed in the factories; and, although he had maintained cohesion within the leadership ranks, Jaruzelski had not gained the minimum social support required for effective economic reconstruction. In addition, the TKK continued to operate as an important working class pressure group,

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229 On the course of events between August-December 1982, see: L.Weschler, 'A Reporter At Large Poland. A State of War - II', The New Yorker, April 18th 1983, pp 71-93; J Kifner, 'Poland Will Lift Basic Restrictions by the Year's End,' The New York Times, December 13th 1982; 'Poland Under Jaruzelski - Part II' Survey, Vol 38 No 4, Autumn 1982, pp 60-68.

230 For more on the Church and the opposition in late 1982, especially the debate concerning a suspected "quid pro quo" between the PZPR and the Church, and worsening relations between the latter and Solidarity, see: D Ost, 'November 1982: Opposition at a Turning-Point,' Poland Watch, No 2 1983.

231 ICPA, 22/1982, pp 9-10

232 December 12th saw the formal "suspension" of Martial Law For details of Jaruzelski's broadcast, see: Contemporary Poland, January 1983, pp 36-40 For the opposition's response, see: ICPA, 14/1983, p 3, ICPA, 15/1983, pp 11-12; ICPA, 16/1983, p.14.

whilst the authorities also found it impossible to silence Walesa himself, through either police or judicial methods.[233] On the one hand, therefore, the Communist regime was the strongest actor within Poland in the early 1980s. Although Solidarity's delegalisation was both symbolic and effective, the authorities were, however, unable to dissolve the resistance movement and the developing second society. The TKK continued to appeal to all social groups to demonstrate the regime's complete isolation. In essence, the regime's apparent strength was accompanied by a number of identifiable weaknesses which, in turn, allowed second society to survive and mature inspite of the restrictions imposed by Martial Law.

(3 3 3) 1983-1986

Whilst Solidarity floundered, Jaruzelski rebuilt the foundations of Communist Party rule at the various levels of the administration, and throughout the economy. By mid-1986, Poland had returned to Soviet-type normality. However, it must also be recognised that a hard-core of permanent oppositionists had been created by the events of 1980-82, who could be neither eliminated nor reintegrated into a partially-reformed system. Subsequently, observers of the Polish scene post-1982, witnessed a familiar cycle of opposition activity, and regime repression (for example, the legal sanctions, such as the two-three year prison sentences passed on Lis, Frasyniuk and Michnik in 1985).[234] Furthermore, the Roman Catholic Church, although often dampening-down social outbursts against the regime, guaranteed that the latter was condemned to living with an uncontrolled society. In addition, second society groups remained relatively autonomous and consequently, the discontent of workers, peasants and intellectuals continued to have a destabilising effect on the entire system of rule.

A potent indicator of the continued vitality of second society was evident in elections to the provincial and lower-level People's Council of June 17th 1984, which were the first open test of the regime's mobilising powers following Martial Law. The results showed both the extent of regime stabilisation, and of national dissatisfaction. Turnout in the key provincial elections was just under 75 per cent, and between 66.8-

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233 Contemporary Poland, January 1983, pp 38-48

234On the various methods of repression employed by the Jaruzelski government, see: 'Military Penal Camps' in 'Poland Under Jaruzelski - Part II', Survey, Vol 38 No.4, Autumn 1982, pp 69-70, H Filipowicz, 'From Solidarity to Arts Control', Ibid, pp.13-26; T Mianowicz, 'The Department of Misinformation at Work' in 'Poland Under Jaruzelski - Part I', Survey, Vol 38 No 3, Summer 1982, pp 36-42, M Kolodziej, 'The Universities Under Martial Law,' Ibid, pp 47-52.

78 per cent for the Peoples' Council. The abstention rate was, thus, unprecedentedly high for a Communist election. In addition, 85 mainly rural districts in East Poland failed even to achieve the 50 per cent turnout for the election to be valid, and were forced to hold repeat ballots.[235] The number of voters who refused to support the PZPR was put at a figure of 25 per cent (six million) even by official sources. To quote Walesa:-

> "Our country was changing: people were beginning to reject the idea of a double standard...More and more people wanted to be able to express themselves openly."[236]

The Sejm election of October 15th 1985, again, showed both the successes and the failures of the Jaruzelski regime in extending and strengthening its hold over Polish society. Officially, a national turnout of just over 78 per cent was recorded, although the opposition considered the true figure to be nearer 65 per cent. Although candidate selection had been controlled, the voters had the opportunity to signal their discontent with individual candidates. Differential rates of individual support were again evident, highlighting areas of deep-rooted opposition. These individual distinctions were, however, much less significant than the battle over turnout. The opposition called for a boycott, while the regime attempted, and failed, to achieve a much better result than in the local elections. Predictably, the most disaffected areas were the Solidarity working class strongholds. It was admitted, officially, for example, that turnout reached only 65.81 per cent in Gdansk, and 68-71 per cent in Nowa Huta, Lodz, Lublin and Warsaw, as compared with the highest of 88 per cent in Bydgoszcz.[237]

The latter half of 1984, therefore, saw the beginning of a confusing period in Poland. On the one hand, most of the remaining interned figures were released during the summer as part of a general amnesty On the other, the amnesty failed to remove the causes of social discontent. However, as the amnesty was so comprehensive, it did remove an opposition rallying-point from Polish political life. In October, perhaps the foremost clerical ally of the opposition movement, Father Jerzy Popieluszko, was kidnapped and murdered by renegade security agents.[238] The end of the year

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235 See: G Sanford, Military Rule in Poland, op cit p 84

236 L Walesa, A Path of Hope, op cit p 298.

237 For details of the election results, see. G Sanford, Military Rule in Poland, op cit pp 274-5.

238 For further details, see: M.T Kaufman, Mad Dreams, Saving Graces Poland, A Nation In Conspiracy, 1989 New York, Random House; J Cave, 'The Murder of Father Popieluszko,' Poland

witnessed a succession of arrests, releases and then rearrests of interned Solidarity leaders, and it would not be until the September 1986 amnesty, that virtually all key figures were released.

Between 1984 and 1986, the gradual strengthening of the Communist system was demonstrated by the 10th "Congress of the Victors" in 1986, and the slow pace of economic improvement. By 1986, Jaruzelski appeared to have won the gamble undertaken in December 1981. The great question was whether Polish society would reassert itself, or whether the reconstructed Communist system would this time succeed in forcing it into the Soviet mould. The multiplying protests in the early years of Martial Law had reached their peak in the demonstrations of May and August 1982. Subsequently, their intensity and frequency diminished, as they failed to bring any tangible results. The failure of the November 1982 general strike was a significant watershed in this respect. After that date, public protests took place only sporadically, usually following Mass on anniversaries of patriotic or union significance. The reduction of the role of public demonstrations was accompanied by a return to the belief in activity at "lower levels," however, for example, in individual enterprises and under the protective mantle of the Church.

During the next year-and-a-half, the TKK continued to function. The leadership met and issued statements, and the underground publishing movement continued as prolifically as ever. Repression became somewhat more sporadic, and for the most part, detentions were limited. In part, the level of repression subsided because the regime became convinced that, for all intents and purposes, it had won: that after over six years, it had outlasted Solidarity, and achieved an acceptance – albeit an apathetic one - on the part of the public.

(3 3 4) 1986-1989: Protracted Death

The year 1986 was a watershed in the history of the post-1981 opposition, as the amnesty of September, which freed practically all remaining political prisoners, surprised the opposition forces.[239] The new policies of liberalisation and tolerant

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Watch 7 (1985), pp 1-26; detailed press reports in all 1984 publications of Uncensored Poland; P G Lewis, 'Turbulent Priest, Political Implications of the Popieluszko Affair,' Politics Vol 5, No 2, October 1985, pp 33-39, R Boyes and J Moody, The Priest Who Had to Die: The Tragedy of Father Jerzy Popieluszko, 1986 London, Victor Gollancz Ltd

239 Interview with General Kiszczak on Polish TV, September 11th 1986, reprinted in Uncensored Poland News Bulletin No 18, September 23rd 1986, p 15 For details of the differing views of various released Solidarity activists, see: Anna Pomain's summary in RFE Research, 'Polish Independent Press Review,' No 13, November 10th 1986, pp 3-8

repression demonstrated the extent to which the Communist regime now regarded opposition activities as trivial. When the remaining underground activists were released, many opposition supporters became resigned to inevitable defeat. Conversely, the amnesty also demonstrated an official recognition that the opposition was a permanent fixture of Poland's political landscape. Despite the fact that there was no formal dialogue or negotiations with Solidarity, the government displayed its desire to maintain some contacts.[240] Even if these initiatives were aimed at creating the impression of an opening without allowing for any real changes, they did contain an element of official recognition of independence, especially of the Solidarity opposition.[241] The release of political detainees also demonstrated the government's readiness to tolerate various forms of social pressure.

Immediately after the 1986 amnesty, new Solidarity organisations began to form above ground, parallel to those underground. For example, Solidarity's Interim Council was active alongside the TKK, which was to remain intact in case of worsening relations with the PZPR.[242] However, Lech Walesa and a group of his closest advisers acted as a separate entity, leading only to confusion, misunderstandings and a marked lack of co-ordination between various initiatives and decisions. Thus, inspite of the recognition of the opposition forces, by 1986, Solidarity was "a disparate collection of political oppositionists held together by the authority of Lech Walesa."[243] Essentially, the opposition found itself torn between the hopes and expectations of the "great past" and an increasingly apathetic society. Significantly, it was primarily the Solidarity opposition that had the identity crisis, with the focus of debate being whether solely trade union activity remained the way to proceed, or whether it should concentrate its efforts on systemic political reform.[244] Solidarity activists openly established "Regional Executive Committees of Solidarity," but failed to formulate a positive programme to haul the country out of the prevailing crisis.

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240 For example, the Vice President of the official labour union, Jerzy Uziemblo, met with Solidarity's press spokesman, Janusz Onyszkiewicz.

241 J Haydn, op cit, p.60.

242 D Ost, Solidarity and the Politics of Anti-Politics, 1990 Philadelphia, Temple University Press, p 159

243 Ibid, p 162

244 Ibid, p.161-169.

In 1987, however, Jaruzelski's strategy that had been applied since 1981 broke down. Instead of an economic take-off, there had been stagnation and a further lowering of the general living standard.[245] The political liberalisation after the amnesty of 1986 did not produce any greater support in the population. The fragmentation of the opposition and its difficulties to adapt to the new conditions did not strengthen the position of the Party. In November, the PZPR organised a referendum, looking for popular acceptance of the economic and political reforms, and particularly of the planned austerity measures including important price increases. The newly formed National Executive Commission of Solidarity (KKW) advised voters to boycott the referendum as a demonstration of the lack of public appeal of the Communist regime.[246] Although the boycott was not a complete one, falling 5 per cent short of its required majority, the answer of the population was negative.[247] The reform proposal was deemed too vague and contradictory, and its costs too high.[248] The abstentions and the votes against the authorities expressed protest against the planned price hikes, as well as a profound skepticism toward the officially declared determination to reform the economy and the polity. The referendum was, however, an indication that the government appeared to be seriously considering reform and that a definite pro-reform faction existed within the Party. The defeat, which came as a surprise for both the authorities and the opposition, was certainly an important destabilising factor, showing the limits of control and submission. Shortly after, the Warsaw Regional Executive Committee of Solidarity declared:-

> "all of us in Solidarity realise at last that we have entered a new phase...we know for certain: the war is over...The Polish referendum proves that the restructuring of the economy, of social ties, and of public life cannot be achieved against the wishes of society...We are ready to enter [into a] pact for the common good, but on one condition; that our right to express and represent social interests is respected."[249]

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245 A R Rachwald, In Search of Poland The Superpowers' Response to Solidarity 1980-1989, 1993 Stanford, Hoover Institution Press, p 36 Also, L.Weschler, 'Deficit,' The New York Times, May 11th 1992, p.46.

246 The TKK and TRS were dissolved on October 25th to be replaced by the Commission.

247 D.Ost, op cit, p 170

248 W.Echikson, Christian Science Monitor, November 17th 1987, p 10

249 Statement of December 13 1987, East European Reporter 3/2 (1988), pp 34-5.

Facing an increasingly independent second society, the regime had conducted an honest referendum, released political prisoners, relaxed censorship, legalised independent associations, and reduced central planning. Henceforth, the possibility of a pro-reform coalition began to emerge. By late 1987, both sides had come round to the idea of a new accord; and both had something that the other needed. The government needed the legitimacy and social stability that the opposition could provide; whilst, the opposition sought the guarantees of societal pluralism that the regime could give. Within this context, Bronislaw Geremek came forward with an "anti-crisis pact" in January 1988. In it, he argued that the opposition would help provide social stability, if the government would recognise the right to independent self-organisation, and agree to discuss political reforms.[250] The government's response was unexpectedly positive. There would be little movement on the issue, however, until after the wave of strikes across Poland in early 1988. In August, Kuron had written:-

> "The opinion can still be heard that all the recent changes in the system are just words without much substance."[251]

By December, however, such an opinion could have been said to betray a major misunderstanding of both the prevailing situation, and the entire basis of Communist Party rule in Poland.

The price increases that were introduced at the beginning of 1988 accelerated the change of mood within the country, especially among workers in large enterprises. Only a few months earlier, Solidarity was considered, on the one hand, as a symbol of the social, political and national aspirations of the population; and, on the other, as a symbol for an organisation in decay. In May, with the state of the national economy worsening, a new generation of workers activists made the reinstatement of Solidarity their principal demand. Although the KKW had not anticipated the force and strength of this new upsurge, its members maneuvered to offer support and guidance. Following the conclusion of the strikes, the government formally recognised that it could not continue to govern without the support of second society, and began to work with independent advisers, including former Solidarity activists, to draft a new law on association. By August, both the PZPR leadership and Walesa had explicitly recognised the need for negotiations.

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250 D Ost, op cit, p 181.

251 J Kuron, 'Landscape After The Battle,' Uncensored Poland News Bulletin No.3, November 30th 1987.

On August 31st 1988, the regime offered Walesa the prospect of a series of roundtable talks in which anything, including Solidarity's status, could be proposed for discussion. Undoubtedly, one of the main motivating forces was the series of Solidarity-inspired strikes in early 1988. With the economy in a state of collapse and no permanent settlement of the Solidarity-Party conflict in sight, Jaruzelski claimed in a 1990 interview that it became clear that stability was impossible without "social support."[252] Mieczyslaw Rakowski, Poland's last Communist Prime Minister, has since claimed that the intention of the negotiations was to expand the political legitimacy of the regime:

> "My belief was that we could arrange a political, social and economic situation that would allow us to retain power."[253]

It is apparent that Jaruzelski, Rakowski and their leading advisers felt that without negotiations, the PZPR would be unable to stabilise the economy or to either eradicate Solidarity or retain the Party's position within the existing system. The offer represented a major breakthrough in itself. The PZPR had recognised that the political future had to involve a genuinely and legally independent opposition within a pluralist society.

Negotiations between the regime and the Solidarity Citizens Committee (that was widely referred to as the official shadow cabinet)[254] began in February 1989 and culminated in April with the relegalisation of Solidarity as an independent trade union, and the calling of an election, to be held on June 4th 1989. Solidarity and other independent groups or parties were to be permitted to contest 35 per cent of the 460 seats in elections to the Sejm. The remainder were to be reserved for PZPR candidates and its two allied political parties (the United Peasant Party and the Democratic Party), and for official Catholic organisations. In addition, a new Senate was to be created with freely elected members. This electoral arrangement ensured that the Communist Party would retain its domination, but that Solidarity would be granted a voice in government. To quote Jaruzelski, he perceived the agreements as an

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252 Interview of General Jaruzelski by J Haydn in 1992. Details in J Haydn, op cit, pp 142-3

253 Ibid, p 90.

254 D Ost, op cit, p 186

opportunity to promote reform within the existing system through "a particular philosophy of sharing power."[255]

Against all expectations, Solidarity swamped the much better organised Communist Party. During the first round of elections in June, the union captured 160-out-of-161 Sejm seats and 92-out-of-100 Senate seats. In run-off elections, these figures rose to 161 for the former, and 99 for the latter. During the official presidential elections, Jaruzelski received only one vote more than the stipulated minimum-vote.[256] The roundtable negotiations had been intended as a process to guarantee incremental constitutional and political freedom to Solidarity in return for social peace and gradual economic development. However, the PZPR had failed to predict the possibility that the population would reject the Party outright.[257] Solidarity's immediate response to the results also appears to have been one of disbelief. Fearing a military backlash, leading activists maintained their pre-election stance that the union would be represented in parliament, but would not be taking part in or forming a government. One successful Solidarity candidate is quoted as saying:

> "...we cannot partake in a coalition or help form a government...We must not lose the confidence of the Warsaw Pact [and]we must leave space for the party to change..."[258]

Nevertheless, when the actual result finally registered, it proved so staggering and damaging to the Party's morale, that the Communist regime began to literally collapse. To quote Jaruzelski:

> "trying to stop Solidarity taking power after the election would have had a catastrophic effect, like trying to stand in front of a car going at 100 miles an hour."[259]

General Kiszczak, the official PZPR candidate for the position of Prime Minister, found it impossible to form a government when the United Peasant Party

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255 J.Steele, I Traynor and P Lennon, 'The Fall of Communism Ten Years On: What Price Freedom?' The Guardian, March 8th 1999, p 2.

256 J.Haydn, op cit, p 92.

257 J.Steele at al, op cit, p 2.

258 Statement by Jarusz Onyshiewicz, the new Deputy Minister of Defence, quoted in: Ibid, p.96.

259 J Steele et al, op cit, p 2.

and the Democratic Party declared their support for Solidarity.[260] Thus, the task fell to Tadeusz Mazowiecki, a leading Solidarity activist and writer throughout the preceding two decades. In theory, the PZPR had guaranteed itself control of the government no matter what the outcome of the vote. Undoubtedly, the formation of the first post-Communist government went beyond the roundtable agreements. In effect, Solidarity was forced to fill the political vacuum once it became clear that there would be no military defence of the old order or dismissal of the election results by a party anxious to hold onto power. On August 24th 1989, Solidarity took command of the levers of power in Poland.

(3.3.5) The Role of the Roman Catholic Church in the 1980s

During the 1980s, the Catholic Church remained one of the principal actors in Polish political life. Its role varied, however, between different periods in time and at different levels of its organisational hierarchy. With regard to the latter, for example, a distinction must be drawn between the opinions and actions of the Episcopate and those of the various parish priests who appeared to have far greater room for manoeuvre than did the Catholic hierarchy.[261] Furthermore, when assessing the role of the Church, the 1980s must be divided into three distinct periods.

(3.3.5.1) August 1980-December 13th 1981

1980 witnessed a broadening of the dialogue between the regime and the Church that resulted in the establishment of the "Joint Commission of the Government and the Episcopate" on September 24th. It was concerned with such problems as the legal and political status of the church, the catechisation of children, and the building of churches and chapels. In early 1981, it was responsible for the establishment of three working groups for legislation, publications, and for the upbringing of Catholic youth. In addition to the work of the Joint Commission, a number of meetings between the Primate, Jozef Glemp, and Jaruzelski were held throughout 1981 with the aim of securing "national salvation."[262]

With specific regard to the activities of second society and of Solidarity, the policy of the Church did not differ considerably from previous years. Undoubtedly,

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260 A Korbonski, op cit, p 144.

261 S Aris, 'The End of Solidarity?' The Spectator, October 9th 1982, pp.13-14.

262 H Lisicka, 'The Role of the Roman Catholic Church in the Political System of the Polish People's Republic in the 1980s,' in The Protracted Death, pp 157-159.

the Church did consolidate its own authority during this period, however, its principal objective remained the preservation and broadening of the scope for independent second society activities insofar as they safeguarded the rights of the individual.[263]

(3.3.5.2) December 13th 1981-July 22nd 1983 (Suspension of Martial Law)

Subsequent to the imposition of Martial Law, those who assessed the attitudes of the Church tended to condemn it for the lack of a determined stance vis-à-vis the actions of the PZPR. Inspite of an apparent declaration of support on December 14th,[264] it was expected that the Church would declare itself more firmly in defence of Solidarity.[265] Furthermore, such events as a meeting of the Joint Commission in early 1982 were widely criticised. The Church was blamed for having focused attention on the forthcoming Papal visit instead of defending second society.[266] Undoubtedly, Church proclamations did include exhortations for agreement and conciliation during this period. The adoption of a relatively conciliatory stance towards the regime was, however, necessary at this point: the Church contended that its main task was to prevent further bloodshed. Therefore, although the Church did participate in regular meetings with the Communist authorities, it also committed itself to the relegalisation of Solidarity and to assistance to victims of Martial Law.[267]

In its frequent role of mediator between the two parties, the strength of the Church in Poland systematically increased. Improved relations with the PZPR and the latter's recognition of the need for Church support, bestowed upon the Church certain privileges (lower taxes and the development of church building, for example) and a position of increased influence in domestic affairs. For second society, the Church remained a shelter for organised opposition, especially at the district and parish level.[268] The population again turned to it as the only organised independent institution in Poland. On a practical level, the infrastructure of the Church offered a foundation for the organisation of resistance.

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263 Ibid, p.159.

264 K Ruane, op cit, pp 279-280 for a transcript of Primate Glemp's sermon

265 T.Garton Ash, The Polish Revolution Solidarity 1980-82, op cit, p.196.

266 Ibid, p.197.

267 H Lisicka, op cit, p 160

268 S Aris, op cit, p.14.

(3.3.5.3) July 1983-1989

In 1988, the strike movement in Poland effectively demonstrated that the PZPR's reform effort had failed. Once more, the Catholic Church became a crucial negotiator between Solidarity and the Communist regime.[269] The presence of Church representatives during the Roundtable negotiations was crucial to their success. Although the Church abstained from representing a political programme, the Episcopate was active in the preparations for the negotiations, bringing the two sides together and forcing a compromise over certain issues.

Although the Church in general, and Primate Glemp in particular, had been criticised throughout the 1980s for their apparently supplicant policies vis-à-vis the regime, the Church (via its moral authority and organisational structure) continually supported the aspirations and programmes of the opposition. Throughout the electoral campaign of June 1986, it visibly supported Solidarity's candidates. The role of the Catholic Church in bolstering a scattered and weakened second society cannot be overlooked in any account of the breakdown of the Communist regime in 1989.

(3.3.6) Mode of Breakdown: Distinguishing Factors

It is important here, to assess the particular mode of breakdown experienced by the Communist regime in Poland in 1989. In order to do so, the typology outlined in Chapter II will be referred to.

The Polish example appears to demonstrate characteristics associated with the *negotiated* mode of regime breakdown. In the first instance, the gradual and peaceful nature of the breakdown is evident. It could be argued, for example, that the Communist regime in Poland began to break down in 1980 with the PZPR's legal recognition of Solidarity.[270] Admittedly, the imposition of Martial Law in December 1981, interrupted the process of change within state-society relations, and attempted to restore the pre-1980 power equilibrium. In 1988, however, having recognised the necessity of political and economic reform and following two damaging strike waves,

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269 A Korbonski, 'East Central Europe on the Eve of the Changeover: The Case of Poland,' Communist and Post-Communist Studies, Vol 32, 1999, p 150

270 This claim is supported by T.L Karl and P.Schmitter, 'Modes of Transition in Latin America, Southern and Eastern Europe,' International Social Science Journal, No.128, 1991, pp 276-7; and S P Huntington, 'How Countries Democratise,' Political Science Quarterly, Vol.106 No 4, 1991-2, pp 608-611.

the Communist regime willingly admitted the banned Solidarity trade union and the Catholic Church to roundtable negotiations. These were concluded in the partially free elections of June 1989. In response to an overwhelming vote-of-no-confidence, the PZPR effectively withdrew from government and permitted Solidarity to take over the reins of power. Thus, whether the starting point for the breakdown of the regime is taken as August 1980 or the strike wave in early 1988, it is evident that the process occurred gradually. In addition, at no point during the roundtable negotiations did either side attempt to sway the balance-of-power through resort to overt violence. Jaruzelski adhered strictly to constitutional principles, and Solidarity remained loyal to its pledge of non-violence.

Furthermore, at all stages in the process of change, second society actors played a significant role. This was particularly evident throughout 1980 and, in 1988, opposition forces figured prominently in the preliminary and roundtable negotiations. Even in the late 1980s, when the support for opposition initiatives had waned relative to 1980, second society actors were able to mobilise the people in public demonstrations against the Communist regime. The roundtable negotiations, therefore, were attended by two principal parties (the Catholic Church being a significant non-political participant) of relatively equal strength. Admittedly, it has been shown that the strength of second society in general and of Solidarity in particular had weakened during the 1980s. However, it must also be recognised that a similar process had occurred within the Communist Party. Martial Law restored the political initiative to the PZPR, yet it failed to return the pre-1980 status quo and an acceptance of the leading role of the Communist Party to Poland. By 1988, the failure of the PZPR in addressing the economic, social and political problems it faced was evident in the failure of the party to gain a "yes" vote in the 1987 referendum on reform. However, it must also be recognised that the 1989 negotiations were, in a sense, regime-led and, therefore, would appear to characterise the *elite-led negotiation* model outlined in Chapter II. The PZPR invited Solidarity as the main representative of second society to begin talks. Although both sides had formally admitted the need for a negotiated compromise, in early 1989, it is unlikely that Solidarity was in a position of sufficient strength to have forced them unilaterally.[271] Inspite of this, however, the central role of the Polish opposition at all stages of transition must be taken into account. The significance for Poland's political future of second society and Solidarity had been recognised by the PZPR. Therefore, I would argue, the

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271 A Korbonski, op cit, p.152.

Party's recognition that it could not continue to govern without some form of power-sharing agreement is more characteristic of *opposition-led negotiations*.

The roundtable negotiations produced an explicit, yet restricted power-sharing agreement and provided for partially free elections to be held in June 1989. It was expected that the PZPR would continue to be the majority political party in the Sejm and the newly established Senate. In this sense, there would have been a degree of continuity between the old and the new regime, which has been noted as a characteristic of negotiated breakdowns. However, the unexpected victory for Solidarity in the June elections and subsequent second ballot presented the Communist Party with no alternative than to accept a Solidarity-formed government. Essentially, having witnessed the extent of its unpopularity in June, the PZPR virtually collapsed and voluntarily withdrew from government. Therefore, June 1989 did represent a definitive break with the past as the PZPR withdrew from power. This particular factor is more typical of an *extrication* mode of breakdown, in which an incumbent government withdraws from power prompting the transition to a "new" political system. Therefore, I would argue that Poland demonstrates characteristics of both the *negotiation* and *extrication* modes of breakdown outlined in Chapter II.

(3.4) Conclusion

This case-study chapter has demonstrated the dynamics of the second society in Poland. Undoubtedly, because of repression and the widespread sense of a lack of clear perspectives, the society's energy dissipated post-1981. However, the history of Polish second society during the 1980s is not simply one of decay. Even though its ranks thinned, the Polish opposition survived on a scale unknown in the history of the Communist states. Despite growing public apathy, and Solidarity's fragmentation and dispersion, it was still a mass movement. Even during times of crisis, there was no real likelihood that second society would once again be reduced to the limited, intelligentsia-led protests accompanied by periodic workers' revolts of the past. On the contrary, various opposition groups continued to demonstrate a new dynamism and an ability to adapt to the changed conditions created by the more liberal policies of a government attempting to reform the economy and modify the political system. The fragmentation of second society post-Martial Law can also be viewed in a positive way. It represented a way of adapting to the prevailing conditions. Post-1981, there existed no realistic prospect for a mass organisation of several million that could threaten the ruling system by its very existence. Consequently, second society remained a real actor in public life with which the authorities had to reckon, if only because they were well aware that behind the tens of thousands of active opponents

were millions of silent supporters. The very fact that the PZPR attempted to wedge elements of pluralism into the existing socio-political system represented an explicit recognition of the success of second society in Poland.

Two further functions fulfilled by the second society in Poland must be mentioned here. First, it was the source of an independent circuit of information, breaking one of the most important monopolies held by the Communist regime. By the end of the 1980s, it was impossible to conceal information concerning many spheres of social life. Even those who did not directly identify with the opposition used its press to disseminate information. The Solidarity period prior to December 1981 also led to an explosion in the articulation of independent interests, and the emergence of a widespread belief that various interests had to have institutional expression and representation. So prevalent was this belief that the authorities were forced to accept the principle, despite the fact that the system was founded precisely on rejecting it. Thus, the continuation of the 1970s strategies of oppositional activity succeeded in spite of Martial Law. The pre-December 1981 period had been so successful in recreating an independent second society, that the Jaruzelski government had no choice but to maintain it.

Secondly, an essential monopoly held by the PZPR concerned the formation of social elites. The opposition, however, was a breeding ground of new elites able to influence the future of Poland. Walesa, in particular, was identified with second society and the independent opposition as a whole, and widely recognised as a "leader-in-waiting." By 1989 in Poland, there many independent activists from all social groups, who had organised collective actions throughout the period of Martial Law, and who henceforth became legitimate leaders of society. All these facts should be borne in mind when assessing the role of the opposition and the growth of second society in Poland. Its gains should be seen not only in the actions that were readily visible, but also in its indirect and unintended effects, which stemmed from the mere fact of the opposition's existence. It is not an exaggeration to say that the opposition of the 1980s, in particular, changed Poland's prevailing cultural, social, political and even economic landscape.

The process of fragmentation and the weakening of the opposition post-1981 were partly reversed in 1988. Admittedly, it was not possible to achieve the unity of the opposition that had existed in 1980. The old Solidarity of ten million members no longer existed, but what had taken its place was a vibrant and vigorous *independent second society* in which citizen initiatives of all kinds were emerging and maturing.

Poland's Communist system of rule had been under real and constant pressure since the formation of KOR in 1976. However, it was not until 1980 that society witnessed a real opening of the public space with the legal registration of Solidarity. In effect, Poland became a pluralist society within a socialist framework. The 1988 strike wave successfully demonstrated that the myth of Solidarity was not dead after nearly a decade of illegality and the repression of Martial Law. Illegal, divided into competing regional councils, and out-maneuvered by the PZPR, Solidarity remained the symbol of second society in Poland. As long as it was capable of suppressing or dispersing social conflicts, the continued existence of the PZPR and the Communist system seemed unthreatened. When faced with an organised resistance movement on a mass scale, which succeeded in surviving all the political reprisals aimed at destroying it, however, the political equilibrium of the system was so disturbed that the destruction of that system was inevitable.

CHAPTER IV: ROMANIA CASE STUDY

By 1989, Nicolae Ceausescu had governed Romania for twenty-four years, and his regime was the longest standing in Communist Europe. Having firmly resisted all calls from Moscow to adopt a reformist stance, and having consistently crushed any open manifestation of opposition, Ceausescu appeared to be standing his ground. In late November, however, unable to resist the cry for change – and in contrast to the other East European countries - the revolution in Romania was a violent and bloody affair. It resulted in the replacement of a hated ruling family, and the collapse of all Party and government structures. Bereft of power and authority, Communism appeared to simply collapse.

With respect to this thesis, the Romanian revolution is of significance as a counter-case. Located at one extreme of the continuum of modes of breakdown outlined in Chapter I, it serves to demonstrate (by means of contrast) the significance of the role of second society in the other two case-study countries. At least up until 1989, Romania exhibited a very low degree of second society development, and the Romanian revolution can, therefore, be taken as an example of a regime *collapsing*, as a direct consequence of its inherent weakness, rather than a negotiated transition as a consequence of second society activity. Furthermore, due to the lack of autonomous second society activity, regime collapse was both sudden and violent, with social movements virtually absent until much later in the process of transition

The Romanian case study will follow the same structure as that of Poland. Section I focuses on cultural, historical and political factors, and will specifically highlight those that had a direct bearing on the evolution (or not, in this case) of a second society in Romania. I do not intend, in this first section, to provide a chronological history of the Communist Party of Romania (RCP) during its early years, or indeed, a history of Romania itself. Rather, certain key historical dates and events will be referred to and examined, only when they are of significance for the (non-) development of second society. Section II will map out the development of opposition against the RCP regime because, having stated that there was little evidence of an active second society in Romania, some limited autonomous activity did occur. Dissident intellectuals spoke out against Ceausescu, and opposition did exist amongst workers, peasants and students alike. The final section will demonstrate how the under-development of a distinct, identifiable and coherent second society contributed towards the particular mode of breakdown experienced by the Communist Party in Romania.

(4.1) History and Political Traditions

(4.1.1) The Romanian Setting

Stephen Fischer-Galati has referred to three dominant characteristics of twentieth century Romania: "autocracy, orthodoxy and nationality."[1] In a similar vein, Vladimir Tismaneau cited the prevailing traditions of the Communist political culture as being those of "authoritarianism, sectarianism, anti-intellectualism, clientelism, ideological conformity and dogmatism."[2] These elements formed the fundamentals of the broadly accepted political culture of Romania, particularly during the Communist period, and contribute to an explanation of the evolution of the specific features of the Communist regime and the opposition forces that responded to its rule.

(4.1.1.1) Orthodoxy

Christian Orthodoxy had been the faith of most ethnic Romanians since at least the twelfth century,[3] and was synonymous with Romanian identity in all parts of the country, except in the Hungarian-dominated region of Transylvania. The Romanian Orthodox Church was by far the largest of all denominations with a membership of thirteen-fourteen million out of a total population of nearly twenty million.[4] In the twentieth century, from August 1944 until the establishment of the Romanian People's Republic (RPR) in December 1947, neither the Romanian nor Soviet Communists made any overt moves against the institution of the Church. Its Patriarch, Justinian Morina, was a willing servant of the Communist government: in keeping with a long tradition of collaboration by the Eastern Orthodox Church with the state, which dated back to the Byzantine Empire, the Romanian Patriarch set his clergy the task of serving the workers in a Communist society, believing that this was the best, and indeed the only, way in which to ensure survival. The hierarchy and the clergy were regarded, for tactical purposes, as patriotic Romanians supportive of the interests of the people and of the socio-economic and political goals of the Romanian Communist Party. Similarly, Church pronouncements regarding morality, honesty

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[1] S Fischer-Galati, 'Autocracy, Orthodoxy, Nationality' in the 20th Century. the Romanian Case,' East European Quarterly, Vol 18 No 1, March 1984, p 25.

[2] V.Tismaneau, 'Personal Power and Political Crisis in Romania,' Government and Opposition Vol 24 No 2, 1989, p 177.

[3] For a history of Orthodoxy in Romania, see. D Chirot, Social Change in a Peripheral Society: The Creation of a Balkan Colony, 1976 New York, Academic Press.

[4] 'Eastern Europe Towards a Religious Revival,' RFE, RAD Background Report/88, May 23rd 1984.

and justice were acceptable to the Communists, as long as belief in God did not interfere with commitment to the creation of a socialist Romania. Nonetheless, all Romanian churches were placed under the orders of a Department of Religious Cults, which controlled their appointments and administration, notably, with the help of church leaders. The Church, thereby, became thoroughly integrated into the state-Party organisation, adopting many of the same nationalist positions and other policies as the RCP itself.[5]

Furthermore, the Orthodox Church had traditionally concentrated its activity within a hierarchically independent, national organisational framework, to serve the interests of the local authority. In the Communist era, this ensured the existence and legitimacy of a single, undisputed source of authority and was, indeed, often instrumental in the process of nation and state building, helping to create a sense of indigenous national identity. The direct consequence was that the Romanian Orthodox Church "let itself be dominated by the interests of the state."[6] In short, unlike the policies adopted by many other dominant churches, that of Romania had no policies of its own, and only followed that of the state. This situation was in striking contrast to the policies pursued by the Roman Catholic Church in Poland, where independent religious affiliation was a constant reminder to the Communist Party of growing dissidence within society.

When Ceausescu assumed control over the RCP and the Romanian state in the mid-1960s and pursued an overtly nationalist policy, which he wanted legitimised by the Romanian historic tradition, the convergence of historic nationalist concepts with Communism was inevitable. His political emphasis on national independence singled out the Orthodox Church as a natural ally. The primary role of the Church in the historical evolution of the Romanian nation, from the Dacians to the Communists, was acknowledged by Ceausescu, while the Orthodox Church, in turn, agreed to bless Ceausescu's national goals and policies. Patriarch Justinian constantly stressed the traditional patriotism of his Church and its loyalty to the Communist state. Romanian Orthodox theology stressed the elements of social justice implicit in the doctrine of the Church, as Church officials joined the Front of Socialist Unity. Its aims were

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[5]With the election of the new Patriarch, Justinian Marina (a member of the Communist Party) on May 24th 1948, the state, which had always controlled the Orthodox Church in certain respects (the clergy was paid by the state, for example) entirely took over the direction of ecclesiastical affairs For example, all estates and funds belonging to the Church were nationalised and it effectively became another branch of the Communist government.

[6]M Shafir, 'Political Culture, Intellectual Dissent, and Intellectual Consent: The Case of Romania,' Orbis, Vol 27 Part 2, Summer 1983, p 406

declared compatible with the historic Orthodox commitment to the attainment of the ultimate traditional goal of the Romanian people: an independent, socialist Romania.[7] The Romanian Communist regime made constant use of the Orthodox Patriarchate and of the upper clergy in its promotion of Romanian nationalism and both were used by the regime as tools via which it hoped to gain legitimacy. Despite accusations from the proponents of "true Orthodox nationalism," who criticised both the Patriarch and his hierarchy as tools of the Communist regime or, at least, as opportunistic collaborators with a non-Orthodox regime, the policies espoused by the Church sought to secure the general acceptance of Ceausescu as the legitimate leader of all Romanian nationalists.

The Church's tradition of deference to authority, although saving it from widespread persecution, undoubtedly played a functional role in quelling discontent and contributed to the prevention of the full emergence of an independent second society within Romania. As a consequence of its official loyalty and subservience to the Communist regime, the Orthodox Church did not provide the kind of "shelter" for opposition activities witnessed in other Communist states (notably Poland), nor any degree of support for individual or group initiatives that ran contrary to the policies of the Communist Party-state. Minimal talk of independence or of freedom could be found in the sermons delivered from the Church pulpit; and no alternative leadership authority could be found in the Church hierarchy. Easily manipulated by every government both pre- and post-1945, the Romanian Orthodox Church was neither a major intellectual, nor a political force.

(4.1.1.2) Nationalism

As outlined above, during the 1960s and 1970s, one of the greatest sources of Ceausescu's strength was his ability to capitalise on Romanian history in general, and on the process of nation building in particular. During the formative years of the Communist regime in Romania, the RCP based its legitimacy primarily on ideological grounds, arguing that the Party embodied the interests of the working class and peasantry, and emphasised the international aspect of socialist patriotism.[8] During the early 1960s, however, there was a noticeable shift in the treatment of nationalism by the Party leadership, which was related to the evident change in the

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[7]See: The Romanian Orthodox Church in the "Front of Socialist Unity" of the Socialist Republic of Romania, 1974 Bucharest, State Publishing House.

[8] R King, History of the Romanian Communist Party, 1980 US, Hoover Press Publications, pp 120-121.

RCP's relationship with Moscow. Two aspects of this were crucial. Firstly, a greater emphasis on the positive values of national sentiment, and a significant decline in that given to the international aspects of Communism. And, secondly, the portrayal of the Party as the culmination of the whole process of Romanian history. Given its most explicit formulation in the Party programme adopted at the 11th Congress in November 1974, the RCP attempted to link itself with the nation's history. It repudiated certain inter-war policies, and lay the blame for Romania's stand during that period firmly at Moscow's door.[9] During the 1970s also, various historical national leaders (Prince Michael the Brave and Vlad the Impaler, for example) were made the object of officially-approved myths, their progressive policies portrayed as similar to those pursued by Ceausescu himself.[10]

Nationalist sentiments were not merely a consequence of, or a reaction to Communism, however. The policies evolved by the RCP reflected the fact that, to a far greater degree than citizens of Communist regimes elsewhere, Romanians were obsessed with national unity, tending to view regional autonomy, ethnic diversity and foreign domination as a constant and very real threat to their independent existence.[11] During the 1900s, Romania was a nation-state, but not a state for all Romanians, as millions remained under the control of the Habsburg and Russian empires. The unification of all Romanians in 1918, however, failed to institute a satisfactory arrangement, with the inclusion of the economically and culturally advanced Hungarian-dominated province of Transylvania into the new Romanian nation. Between 1918 and 1939, Romania was continually beset by its neighbours' territorial demands, and by deepening economic crisis.[12] Anti-Russian sentiment, in particular, was further intensified by the Soviet occupation during World War II. More importantly for an ardently nationalistic Romanian population, unity could only be achieved via the incorporation of many other ethnic groups. Thus, post-1918,

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[9] R King, op cit, p 123.

[10] G Cioranescu, 'Michael the Brave – Evaluations and Reevaluations of the Wallachian Prince,' RFE RAD Background Report/191, September 1st 1976; 'The Political Significance of the Thracians,' Ibid, Background Report/128, October 22nd 1976; and 'Vlad the Impaler – Current Parallels with a Medieval Romanian Prince,' Ibid, Background Report/23, January 31st 1977.

[11] B Haddock and O Caraiani, 'Nationalism and Civil Society in Romania,' Political Studies, 47(2), 1999, pp 258-9

[12] In this century alone the frontiers shifted five times 1913, 1918-19, 1940, 1941 and 1944.

Romania became a nation-state in which only one third of citizens were ethnically Romania.[13]

Appeals to Romanian nationalism post-1945, and particularly post-1960, then, can be seen as a means via which the RCP intended to secure a measure of popular support, by minimising its image as an alien, Soviet-imposed regime, and emphasising its indigenous national roots. In addition, appeals to nationalism were seen as a useful means to achieve Party goals by inspiring greater popular effort to achieve national economic progress. Thus, the Party sought, by inculcating patriotism and respect for national traditions, to win increased support and credibility, and to strengthen its legitimacy among the population. There is no doubt that nationalist appeals and calls for austerity among Romanian citizens did succeed. With a population generally willing to refrain from questioning the privations imposed upon it, one of the foundation stones for the creation of second society organisations was absent.

(4.1.1.3) Autocracy

Contentions that autocracy was one of the essential features of the Romanian political culture have abounded since the middle of the nineteenth century. Autocratic, paternalistic authority was almost universally accepted by both Romanian leaders and the masses before 1918, although advocacy, and even formal adoption in some cases, of democratic parliamentary institutions did occur throughout the lands inhabited by the Romanians.[14] Traditionally, then, attitudes towards power and authority were typically accepting ones. Radulescu-Motru also notes that, in economically under-developed, predominantly agrarian societies (of which Romania was a typical example) with the bulk of the population living in isolated villages where contact with individualist, liberal, Western-oriented values was practically non-existent, the predominant characteristic was one of a peculiar "individualism":

> "The Romanian kind of individualism includes no spirit of initiative in business and very little feeling for social and political independence...[here] very seldom arise enterprising persons willing to risk their tranquillity and

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[13] For a brief discussion of the position of the national minorities in Romania, see R King, op cit, pp 128-134

[14] In Transylvania, for example, the democratic tendencies of the Romanian leaders were more pronounced than in Wallachia, Moldavia, the Old Kingdom or Greater Romania. Even so, democratic pronunciations did not go so far as to question the ultimate political authority or legitimacy of the dictatorial Habsburg rule

their assets...*For the Romanian peasant, to step out of the prescribed order-line is not merely a risk, it is sheer insanity.*" [15]

In addition, fatalism was perceived to be a widespread attitude amongst the Romanian peasant society. Individuals believed that the events of their lives were pre-ordained and determined by either fate or supernatural forces. Common attitudes, therefore, towards the self-control of future events included passivity, pessimism, acceptance, endurance, pliancy and evasion.[16] In turn, such attitudes inevitably had a significant bearing upon political *behaviour*. Sidney Verba has remarked:

> "In a culture in which men's orientation toward nature is essentially one of fatalism and resignation, their orientation toward government is likely to be much the same."[17]

Shafir notes that such fatalistic attitudes were discernible in both Romanian folklore and in literary publications, many of which considered opposition and independent thought or action to be both meaningless and pointless.[18] The one point to be stressed here, because of its bearing on the development of an independent society within Romania, is that the political-behavioural implications of such dominant attitudes must be recognised. A strong belief that any participation that was permissible was also futile underpinned the average Romanians' perception of the political, social and economic spheres of everyday life. This belief not only survived into the Communist period post-1948, but was further strengthened by the peculiarities of that system, which further enhanced the citizen's understanding that his independent participation was not required unless officially directed. Such factors go a long way to framing an explanation of why the Romanian public appeared so acquiescent in the face of extreme adversity during the period of Ceausescu's rule, and why it took until December 1989, when a question mark over the process of change no longer existed, for the population to speak out against that rule.

(4.1 2) The Establishment of Communism in Romania

Post-1948 and the initial transition towards socialist forms of production, histories of the RCP have tended to divide the evolution of the regime into three main

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[15]C Radulescu-Motru, 'Psychology of the Romanian People,' Romanian Sources Vol 2 Part 1, 1976, pp 5-6. (Emphasis added)

[16]E M Rogers, Modernisation Among Peasants: The Impact of Communication, 1969 New York, Rinehart and Winston, pp 273-4.

[17]S.Verba, 'Conclusions,' in: L Pye and S Verba, Political Culture and Political Development, 1965 Princeton, University Press, p.522

[18]M Shafir, op cit, p 405

phases.[19] Firstly, the years 1948-1956 are seen to have encompassed the building of the base of socialist society. The second phase encompasses the period from 1956 to 1969 and is generally labelled the consolidation of the socialist society. The final stage began in 1969, lasted until the ousting of Ceausescu on the eve of the 1990s, and can be described as that of the multilaterally developed socialist society.[20] In this section, it is the first period that I intend to focus on, because of their relevance to the opposition - or rather the lack of it - in the final stages of Ceausescu's rule. I do not intend, as I stated above, to provide a detailed account of the early wranglings of the RCP as it fought to establish itself in Romania in the immediate aftermath of World War II.[21] It is sufficient, here, to state that the RCP, established in the early 1920s, had little place in the country's life before the War. In 1945, advocating the dismemberment of the country, guided by leaders appointed, dismissed or murdered on Moscow's behalf, and claiming to represent the workers in a country which was overwhelmingly agrarian, fervently nationalistic and devoutly religious, the Party stood little chance of winning power via democratic means.[22]

Similar problems were experienced by Communists in other East European states. However, the Bulgarian and Hungarian parties, for example, could claim credit for having led anti-Nazi rebellions within their own states; whilst the Czechoslovak and Polish parties could point to some serious pre-1945 parliamentary activity. In contrast, the Romanian Communists had little on which to fall back.[23] Their party failed to benefit from the substantial economic and social dislocation accompanying Romanian unity,[24] despite subsequent efforts to exaggerate their participatory role.[25]

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[19] I Ceterchi, 'The Exercise of Self-Management in the Political System of Socialist Romania,' in: I Citerchi et al (eds), The Political System of the Socialist Republic of Romania, 1979 Bucharest

[20] M Shafir, op cit, p 39

[21] For a detailed account and history of the RCP and an extensive debate on the origins of the Party, see· Robert R King, op cit, pp 9-38. Also, G Ionescu, Communism in Romania, 1944-1962, 1964 London, Oxford University Press, pp.1-70.

[22] Romanian Communists failed to generate mass political activities and were generally perceived as alienated elements They formed a small minority - before August 1944, never exceeding 1,000 members - who were unwaveringly committed to the Stalinist Comintern.

[23] There is some evidence to suggest a minimal degree of partisan activity in Romania See G Ionescu, Communism in Romania, op cit, p 81; and R.King, op cit, p 162 note 13.

[24] E.Weber, 'The Men of the Archangel,' Journal of Contemporary History, Vol 1 No.1, 1966, pp.101-127.

[25] See. S Fischer-Galati, 20th Century Romania, 1970 New York, Columbia University Press, p 35.

In 1945, this lack of national roots mattered little, for the rule of Romania's Communists was overwhelmingly based on the employment of terror backed by Soviet control. The feeling of detachment and alienation from the nation, however, did have important consequences. For example, it spurred Romania's Communists to pursue their socialisation policies with a speed unencountered among their counterparts elsewhere in Communist Europe. Especially when the interests of the RCP began to diverge from those emanating from Moscow (concerning, in particular, foreign policy initiatives), the establishment of a truly national base became a question of political survival. For the RCP, whose membership grew from 1000 to 800,000 in the four years after emerging from illegality in 1944, institutionalisation was a serious domestic concern.[26] Difficulties were further compounded by the other political, social and economic tasks that required simultaneous attention.

By early 1948, the RCP had succeeded in eliminating all organised opposition and was, thereafter, able to concentrate on developing a higher degree of institutionalisation that was furthered by a number of factors. Firstly, Soviet support and encouragement was certainly an element that should not be minimised. In addition, six years of dictatorship and war had resulted in the collapse of most traditional political organisations, and large segments of the population were politically inert or skeptical of the traditional parties.[27] At no time, however, could the Party pursue its policy single-mindedly, as it sought to simultaneously reorder the structure of the countryside, industrialise the economy, and carry out a social transformation in keeping with Soviet practice. Subsequently, there are important points to highlight during this early building stage that would have a direct and specific impact on the evolution of a second society particular to Romania.

(4 1 2.1) Politics

In the political sphere, the rapid expansion of Party membership between 1944 and 1948 cannot be overlooked. Members were admitted with minimal formality and membership requirements. Membership was accompanied by a strict and thorough ideological indoctrination.[28] From the beginning, the RCP had demonstrated its concern about the instruction of Party members. After 1948, the training of such

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[26]The Party had been outlawed in 1924. For membership figures, see: R Fischer-Galati, 20th Century Romania, op cit, p 78; M E Fischer, Ceausescu, op cit, p 45 Table 2.1; and G Ionescu, op cit, p 119.

[27]H L Roberts, Romania, 1951 New Haven, Yale University Press, p 261.

[28]P.Selznick, The Organisational Weapon: A Study of Bolshevik Strategy and Tactics, 1952 New York, McGraw-Hill, pp 17-73.

members increased in importance.[29] A verification of members in late 1948, and a purge emphasising newly imposed and more stringent membership requirements confirmed the higher standards required of those already in the Party, helping, in turn, to further institutionalisation.[30] It also guaranteed that those existing members thought along, and were active only within Party-defined guidelines. In turn, this ensured an increase in coherence and the reduction of disunity within the Party. Ultimately, these and similar restrictive policies reduced the potential for intra-Party splits, which, elsewhere in Eastern Europe, were sympathetic to the demands of opposition groups in society.

Stricter membership guidelines were accompanied by the increasing complexity of the Party apparatus post-1944..[31] Initial steps in this direction were taken in early 1947, with the creation of Central Committee (CC) sections for trade unions, women, peasants and youth.[32] These were paralleled by similar organs at the district level. Subsequently, all levels of Party bureaucracy, from central to local, grew in both size and complexity. This facet of Party development is significant for the consequences it held for the emergence of any viable challenges to Communism's leadership monopoly specifically, and to the non-development of independent opposition more generally. An expansion of the number of CC representative sections appeared to offer an effective channel of participation and representation to the Romanian public, thereby reducing the possibility that independent opposition aimed at securing greater participation would emerge. In addition, it further discouraged the development of intra-Party opposition.

Also significant was the offensive launched against actual or potential rivals outside the Party that started in earnest in mid-1947 with the arrest of National Peasant Party (NPP) leaders.[33] The obliteration of official political opposition was completed in February 1948 with the merging of the Communist and Social Democratic Parties. Significantly, the elected leadership of the new party (renamed

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[29]By 1955, most members had completed at least evening courses in ideology and other topics considered essential by the Party.

[30] R King, op cit, pp.60, 72-77.

[31]The mere growth in the number of local party organisations is a good indicator - between July 1945 and 1974, the number rose from 2,500 to 70,000

[32] R King, op cit, pp 68-72

[33] Ibid, pp 50-51.

the Romanian Workers' Party (RWP) until 1965, when Ceausescu restored its former name) remained in the hands of Communists at all levels. This absorption of some 260,000 members of the Social Democratic Party was an expedient required by both the Soviet Union and the need to consolidate the RCP's domestic power.[34] Consequently, the RCP effectively became the only *mass party* in Romania, with a large percentage of the Romanian population associated, directly or indirectly, with the RCP, and enjoying the benefits of Communist Party membership.

April 13th 1948 saw the adoption of the first post-war Romanian Constitution, marking the fact that Romania was in a state of transition from capitalism to socialism.[35] On January 15th 1949, a new law on Peoples' Councils' ensured that citizen representative institutions never acquired power of decision or leadership in the state. In addition, the decree was paralleled by the introduction of a judicial system modeled on that of the USSR that was amended in late January to include the death penalty for treason and economic sabotage. On August 12th 1950, it was further extended to cover crimes against order and domestic freedom; against national independence and sovereignty; negligence by workers leading to public disaster; theft and destruction of military equipment; and plotting against the state. The high level of control of the population and of any act deemed to be anti-state that this formal extension of the Constitution and legal system represented, must figure in any explanation of the non-development of independence and second society in Romania. For example, Romania was the first East European country to extend the use of the death penalty so widely, which undoubtedly discouraged a large proportion of the population from expressing any support for opposition activities. In essence, the legal price individuals would have to pay was too high, and the penalties too harsh to consider independent action a viable option.

(4.1.2 2) Economics

On June 11th 1948, the Grand National Assembly passed a bill nationalising industrial, banking, insurance, mining and transportation enterprises, which paved the way for the transition to a full-blown Communist economic policy. By 1950, 90 per cent of total industrial production enterprises had been nationalised. The command economy system was immediately adopted, with a State Commission of Planning in charge of the whole economy from mid-1948. The major target was industrialisation,

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[34] Ibid, pp.70-71.

[35] G Ionescu, op cit, pp 156-8

with little attention paid to the consumer sector or to the inevitable human costs.[36] Investments were consequently oriented towards "Group A" categories (heavy industry), with the ratio of investments to consumption as one of the highest in the world.[37] In addition, a campaign for the fulfillment of the first five-year-plan (1951-55) in only four years, put the country on the path of "industrial mobilisation," urging individuals to contribute as much as they could in the pursuit of the regime's economic goals.[38] This drive towards the fulfillment of national goals, and individual sacrifice for the sake of goals, would be a theme strongly echoed by Ceausescu.

Industrialisation was accompanied by a drive towards the collectivisation of agriculture. The decision to begin collectivisation was adopted at the Central Committee Plenum of 3-5th March 1949, and in July, this forum and the government jointly approved the establishment of the first five collective farms. Although resolutions provided for gradual reform, based on the principle of free consent, the countryside was subjected to an unprecedented reign of terror. Eighty thousand peasants, who resisted collectivisation efforts, were placed on public trial accused of supporting the class enemy. Despite such manifestations of opposition, at no point did the Party leadership envisage abandoning village transformation as a strategic policy, and the policy of collectivisation was decreed complete in April 1962.[39]

(4.1.2.3) Society

The RCP's decision to transform its agricultural economy and largely peasant society into an industrial and urbanised one, led to rapid and fundamental socio-economic change in the late 1960s and 1970s. During this period, economic growth ranked amongst the highest not only in Eastern Europe, but also the world. This growth was reflected in increases in industrial production; in social terms, a dramatic

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[36]For detailed studies of the industrialisation drive, see: M Montias, Economic Development in Communist Romania, 1967 Cambridge Mass , MIT Press Also, M R Jackson, 'Industrialisation, Trade and Mobilisation in Romania's Drive for Economic Independence' in: East European Economies Post-Helsinki A Compendium of Papers Submitted to the Joint Economic Committee, Congress of the US, 1977 Washington, US Government Printing Office

[37]According to official data, during the first five-year-plan (1951-55), over 57 per cent of investments were channeled into industry, of which nearly 87 per cent went to Group A. In 1951, investments were 7.3 times higher than those in the light and food industries, rising to 9 8 times by 1953.

[38]M Montias, op cit, p 117.

[39]The agricultural sector encompassed 96 per cent of arable land; 93.4 per cent of the agricultural land area, while 77.4 per cent of the arable land belonged to state and collective farms. The members of the former cultivated some 7 8 per cent of arable land in private plots, but these were not their own property.

movement of the population to urban areas; an improvement in medical care provisions, infant mortality rates, and life expectancy; and an expansion of the numbers entering higher education. Inspite of mounting hard currency debts, trade imbalances and labour-based problems, the RCP pledged to persevere in its drive towards the 1990 achievement of the status of a "developed socialist state." Such a policy, however, entailed heavy demands on worker productivity, high rates of industrial development, and a deferral of major consumption gains.[40]

The drive for both industrialisation and collectivisation is significant in this thesis in that it was accompanied by widespread social change.[41] By 1965, the proportion of the labour force employed in agriculture and forestry had fallen from 74.3 per cent to 56.7 per cent.[42] The 1966 census, moreover, indicated that the rural labour force tended increasingly to consist of women and the elderly, since many men and members of the younger generations - attracted by the benefits of urbanisation, such as better incomes and relatively better conditions in the industrial sector - became commuters, or migrated to urban sectors.[43] This transformation of society occurred not without its opponents, however. The years 1950-52, in particular - described as the "culmination of Stalinism"[44] - were also the years during which, in Romania, as in the other Communist satellite countries, the economic and political strains of government were at their most severe. As a consequence of the hardship and social dislocation that had accompanied rapid industrialisation, and the general opposition towards the regime's unpopular policy of forced collectivisation, the RCP found itself the object of a general loathing. This had been intensified by severe economic hardship and would be further exacerbated by the currency reforms of 1952. It is significant, though, that the three main productive groups within society - workers, peasants and the intelligentsia (including the technocratic elites) - had all

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[40]On Romania's economic situation and planning, see: Marvin R.Jackson, 'Perspectives on Romania's Economic Development in the 1980s,' in Daniel N Nelson, Romania in the 1980s, 1981 Boulder CO, Westview Press, pp 254-305. Jackson notes (p.275) that, during the 1970s, Romania allocated an incredible 35-40 per cent of the new increments of its national income to investment

[41] C A Taylor and D A Jodice, World Handbook of Political and Social Indicators, 3rd Edition, 1983 New Haven, Yale University Press, Part 1, pp 204-220

[42]N Spulber, The Economies of Communist Europe, 1957 New York, Wiley, p 5. Also, D Nelson, 'Romania,' op cit, p 199. By 1981, this figure had fallen to 28 9 per cent.

[43]M R Jackson, op cit, p 933. The population of urban and suburban areas grew from 23.4 per cent in 1948 to 33.7 per cent in 1965. By 1981, the figure accounted for 50.1 per cent of the population.

[44]G Ionescu, op cit, p 197.

been so absorbed within the Party-state apparatus, or become so controlled by it, that, at no point, did their opposition amount to any kind of serious challenge to the continued hegemony of the Communist Party, or lead to the emergence of second society institutions. The reasons for this are important.

Following the purge of Party members and the ensuing verification campaign at the end of the 1940s, the May 1950 CC resolution noted an increase from 38 per cent to 42 per cent in the proportion of worker-members, keen to capitalise on the benefits of Party membership. This figure, however, was still considered to be unsatisfactory, and the report set a goal of 60 per cent before 1953.[45] In the leading Party and state organisations, working class elements were further strengthened. The proportion of workers in leading Party bodies rose from 53 per cent to 64 per cent; and in the state, from 24 per cent to 40 per cent. Overall, the report specified that 80 per cent of new members should be from the working class, with the remaining 20 per cent to cover all other social categories. This drive to increase the proportion of workers was evidently successful after 1955. A CC resolution issued in June 1958 reported a 72.5 per cent worker-membership of the Party, and in industrial areas (Bucharest, Brasov, Ploesti, for example), the figures appeared higher.[46] At the same time, a greater emphasis was placed on drawing engineers and specialist technicians into the Party, a logical requirement in view of both the growing sophistication of the economy, and the need to command, at least a forced, sense of loyalty and Communist duty from the newly emerging technocratic sphere.[47]

Significantly for the evolution of working class opposition, although great numbers of workers (especially those employed in heavy industry) were absorbed into the Party and state apparatus, at no time was there a crystallisation of the desire by workers to attain leadership in industry, either individually, through the official trade unions, or through workers' councils. Some studies have attributed this phenomenon to such factors as the generally low levels of education experienced by new urban workers and the fact that large numbers were employed as unskilled labourers.[48] In addition, control of management was denied to the workers. The technical

[45] R King, op cit, p 73.

[46] See, M E Fischer, Nicolae Ceausescu A Study in Political Leadership, 1989 Boulder Co., Lynne Rienner Publishers Inc., especially pp.38-47.

[47] Ibid, pp 73-5

[48] P Ronnas, Urbanisation in Romania A Geography of Socialist Change, 1984 Stockholm, European Research Institute, p.148.

intelligentsia, both old and new and especially the RCP itself, ensured that no workers' opposition would endanger appointments to key industrial posts, or policy decisions. Official trade unions negotiated collective agreements, and failure to live up to these was punishable under the 1948 penal code. Absenteeism and strike actions were also punishable under the law. Such levels of control were unprecedented in Eastern Europe, and increased the dependence of the individual worker on the Party-state apparatus. When combined with the admission of large numbers of workers to the "lofty status of Party membership" which effectively muted any opposition to the Party, the two factors served to undermine the possibility of any serious or prolonged working class opposition. In essence, the personal costs of opposition to the RCP were too high for the individual Romanian worker to pay.

Turning to the peasantry, in the immediate aftermath of World War II, this social group came under specific attack from the Communist Party.[49] Not until 1949, however, did the RCP begin real efforts to subjugate the peasantry. These efforts were met with widespread, yet uncoordinated resistance. By the early 1950s, some 180,000 people were in jail or concentration camps as the RCP, effectively, found itself in a state of war with a large proportion of its population.[50] The collectivisation drive launched in 1957 aimed at rapid, thorough transformation of the agricultural sector. There was peasant opposition, as before, but in the late 1950s the situation was quite different from that earlier in the decade, and was one that precluded the emergence of a coordinated and coherent opposition to Communist rule. For example, collectivisation was better planned, less brutal, more beneficial to the peasants, and carried out more flexibly than the earlier attempt. Whatever opposition there was, was neither as effective nor as bitter, and, consequently, neither large-scale violence nor mass arrests occurred. Years of insecurity combined with the lack of agricultural investment had caused severe stagnation and, since a firm decision of some sort had to be made (one which would guarantee that Romania did not return to an atmosphere of agricultural backwardness), it appeared that the modified collective system did make life more bearable for the peasantry than it previously had been. The Party was able to allow a certain degree of flexibility (private plots, for example), secure in the knowledge that, as a potential political opposition, the peasantry had been decimated as a direct consequence of the Party's urbanisation and collectivisation programmes.

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[49]This was partly motivated by the fact that, in 1945 with the Fascists and political right wing in disgrace, the Peasant Party (NPP) was undoubtedly the most popular, and would have been victorious in any free elections.

[50]For a personal memoir, and a detailed analysis of social change amongst the peasantry in the 1940s, see: P Dumitriu, Incognito, 1964 New York, Macmillan

Industrialisation and the changed composition of the labour force that accompanied rapid urbanisation resulted in a massive migration to the cities throughout the 1950s and 1960s.[51] However, the social problems generally associated with rapid urban growth (crime, prostitution, and alcoholism) did not occur. In large part, this was due to the pervasive power of the state apparatus that served to ensure the prevention of hostile political opposition growing from social or economic concerns. In addition, as industrialisation occurred relatively evenly throughout the country, the state was able to regulate the entire urbanisation process.[52] This pattern of industrialisation also meant that the new urban workers were able to maintain strong links with their old families in particular, and with the whole rural sector more generally. In the early 1960s, over 60 per cent of the urban workforce consisted of individuals born and raised in the countryside.[53] Furthermore, a large number of villagers commuted between employment in factories and homes in the villages.[54] This had two significant consequences.

Firstly, the political development and demands that generally accompany the process of rapid urbanisation did not emerge. With large numbers of workers maintaining close familial ties, and such factors as the relatively slow and insufficient growth of urban housing and services, industrialisation did not produce the level or kind of political demands that might have been expected, and which were evident in other East European countries. Secondly, urban-rural links meant that, when times were hard, the production of food and crops on privately run plots meant that familial, rural sources were able to readily provide when the state could not.[55] Consequently, food shortages did not become political problems: political demands along, say, Polish lines for "Bread and Meat," were rarely uttered by the Romanian population. In addition, urbanised workers did experience a rise in living standards, a factor that cannot be overlooked when explaining the relative lack of opposition to the

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[51] T Gilberg, Modernisation in Romania Since World War Two, 1975 New York, Praegar, pp 97-206

[52] See. G.Turnock, An Economic Geography of Romania, 1974 London, G.Bell, Introduction

[53] J Cole, 'Families, Farm and Factory· Rural Workers in Contemporary Romania,' in D Nelson (ed), Romania in the 1980s, 1981 Boulder, Westview Press, p.75.

[54] J Cole, 'Fieldwork In Romania: An Introduction,' Dialectical Anthropology, No 3 1976, p.245.

[55] J Cole, 'Families, Farm and Factory Rural Workers in Contemporary Romania,' op cit, pp.90-91

industrialisation drive.[56] The particular forms that Romanian industrialisation and collectivisation took prevented the political mobilisation of the workers, and resulted in a situation where Romanians were able to "get by" with the help of family, friends and connections. Problems were solved on an individual or familial basis, *not collectively*, making it more difficult to mobilise large numbers to achieve long-term social goals via second society or independent activities. These factors are significant in this study for their cumulative ability to undermine both the desire and the potential to build collective second society organisations in Romania, and therefore contribute to an understanding of the lack of political opposition to Communism.

The final potential domestic source of opposition to the Communists was the intelligentsia. Here, it is essential to distinguish between the technical and the creative intelligentsia, as political acquiescence, though appearing at first sight to be similar for both groups was differently induced. In the case of the former, throughout the 1950s and 1960s, the growing sophistication of the economy and the increasing complexity of society made the need for technical expertise evident to the RCP leadership. The leadership also recognised, however, that it was not sufficient to merely recruit large numbers of individuals, but that the latter would require "coaching" in the appropriately defined "Party spirit." In order to achieve this ideal combination of revolutionary enthusiasm and technical competence, the Party adopted a dual approach. Firstly, a deliberate effort to co-opt technocrats into the Party ranks. By the end of 1971, 60 per cent of academicians, doctors of science, and university lecturers, and 52 per cent of engineers were RCP members.[57] This was combined with a policy aimed at the development of technical competence amongst existing Party activists. The most vigorous efforts in this respect were launched by Ceausescu in February 1971.[58] Specialised training programmes emphasising non-ideological areas of study were established under the direction of the Party; and Party workers were required to undergo periodic educational retraining. He further stressed that a Party member would be expected to "constantly increase his knowledge" in order to secure both his position; and his promotion, whether employed in production, economic or social spheres.[59] Admittedly, divergence did exist between the technical intelligentsia

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[56] S Bialer, Stalin's Successors: Leadership, Stability and Change in the Soviet Union, 1980 Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, p 156

[57] M Shafir, Romania, op cit, pp 86-92

[58] G Turnock, op.cit, pp 73, 195-197.

[59] D Nelson, Democratic Centralism in Romania A Study of Local Communist Politics, 1980 New York, Pergamon Press, 1980, pp 121

and the political elite. However, because of the inter-twining of the Party and state apparatuses, these tended to be "issue" rather than "system" conflicts.[60] Disagreements arose only over the *means* most likely to achieve *common* aims, rather than a questioning of the aims themselves.[61] In addition, studies demonstrate that a large percentage of the new technocratic elite consisted of individuals of peasant and manual worker backgrounds, whose upward social mobility had been promoted by the process of industrialisation.[62] Notably, however, the integration of the technocratic and Party elite occurred without significantly altering the existing power relationships therewithin: the latter remained predominant at all times.[63]

With very few exceptions, the creative intelligentsia appeared willing to comply with the new ruling elite after 1945. Such compliance, however, is not easily accounted for. Romanian émigré sources have suggested as one possible explanation, the scarcity of Communist intellectuals in both pre-war and immediate post-war Romania.[64] In contrast to the situation in other East European countries (Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia, in particular), in Romania, the lack of intellectuals able to argue against the Communist regime on Marxist terms, hampered the development of socialist intellectual opposition in both 1945, and later during the 1960s, when revisionist politics and demands were common to the intellectual oppositions of the other satellite states. Indeed, by 1945, those intellectuals that did exist in Romania were generally too tainted by past nationalist and anti-Communist positions to have any real choice but to compromise and collaborate with the new regime.

This explanation is a limited one, however, and additional factors must also be considered. A fuller explanation should incorporate Romanian intellectual and political culture in general, as well as the deliberate exploitation of the intellectual

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[60]For a discussion of the difference between the two, see: LaPalombara, Politics Within Nations, 1974 Englewood Cliffs, Prentice-Hall, pp 315-16, or S P Huntington, 'Social and Institutional Dynamics in One-Party Systems,' in. S.P.Huntington and C H Moore (eds.), Authoritarian Politics in Modern Society, 1970 New York, Basic Books, p 37.

[61]D.Nelson, Democratic Centralism , op cit, pp 110-120.

[62] W.D Connor, Socialism, Politics and Equality Hierarchy and Change in Eastern Europe and the USSR, 1979 New York, Columbia University Press, p.128.

[63]For a thorough examination of the topic, see: J Bielosiak, 'Political Change and Economic Development. A Study of Elite Composition in Eastern Europe,' PhD Dissertation, 1975 Cornell University, pp 153-9, 241-51, 283-90.

[64]P Dimitriu, 'Social Structures and Tensions in Romania,' The Review, Vol 4 No.4, 1962, for example.

classes by different regimes both pre- and post-1945. Shafir, for example, points to the "long-entrenched Ottoman tradition of dissimulation and in the similarly imported, but deep-rooted, traditions of corruption, nepotism and bribery."[65] An historical tendency to deference, dissimulation and conformity formed a recipe that many established literary figures had little difficulty in following, when the new Communist political elite came to power. A traditional passivity, typical of peasant societies, did lead to an almost inevitable degree of political inactivity. In addition, the customarily bestowed positive sanctions for the politically submissive in Eastern Europe were apparently more common and more rewarding in Romania than elsewhere. In exchange for their political acquiescence, Romanian writers were offered a level of rewards too high for must to ignore.[66] Under Ceausescu in the 1960s, also, a similar policy line was pursued. Writers demonstrating, or suspected of having, independent thoughts, were successfully tempted into at least public silence by being given positions of substantial material reward, guaranteeing a level of acceptance and submissiveness unknown in the rest of Communist Europe.

In addition, the acquiescent attitude of the creative intelligentsia is attributable to the overtly nationalist line adopted by the Party leadership, especially in the 1960s. For the creative intellectuals, an overtly nationalistic line was accompanied by an emphasis on specifically Romanian political and cultural traditions. One of the principal functions of intellectuals in Communist systems was to legitimise the central source of power. During the RCP's period of external legitimisation, the support of the Soviet Union had been sufficient to safeguard against the emergence of a serious internal challenge. In the early 1960s, as rifts between Romania and Moscow emerged and widened,[67] the RCP attempted to portray itself not only as the embodiment of the struggle for social justice, but also that of national aspirations to independence.[68] The intelligentsia subsequently found itself with a specific functional role. Intellectuals were permitted to give vent to suppressed nationalistic sentiments, aimed at Romania's traditional enemies (the USSR and Hungary), thereby channelling dissent and possible demands for reform away from internal problems. Very few intellectuals were unenthusiastic and, for the first time since the

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[65]M.Shafir, The Intellectual and the Party: The Romanian Communist Party and the Creative Intelligentsia in the Ceausescu Period, PhD Dissertation , 1981, The Hebrew University, pp 401-2.

[66]G Ionescu, op cit, p.180.

[67] J F Brown, 'Romania Steps Out of Line,' Survey, 49, No 4October 1963, pp.19-35.

[68] K.Jowitt, 'Inclusion and Mobilisation in European Leninist Regimes,' World Politics, Vol 28 No 1, October 1975, pp 79-80, and 93-4.

establishment of the RCP, Communists and intellectuals could cooperate on the basis of partially shared values and goals.[69] In short, an intense anti-Russian and anti-Hungarian nationalism, shared by all strata of the population easily lent itself to manipulation by a regime determined to deflect internal discontent to external referents, and did not lend itself to the development of a sphere of second society independence.

This liberalisation of the early-mid 1960s did not in any way renounce the monopolistic hegemony of the RCP, however. At best, it was intended as a guided liberalisation, with the specific purpose of co-opting intellectuals, who would, in turn, be responsible for steering the general population in the envisaged direction. The RCP faced no obstacles in its attempts to prevent the process from assuming a character different from that originally intended, for two principal reasons. Firstly, liberalisation had been induced by external (the conflict with the Soviet Union and the subsequent necessity of finding an alternative means of regime legitimation), not internal motives. And, secondly, it had not been initiated in response to intellectual pressure (as in Czechoslovakia and Poland) "from below," but by the Party's own initiative "from above." The former *responded to* the Party, as opposed to *winning concessions from* it. When combined with the decimation of both the peasantry and the workers as potential opposition forces, and the creation of a loyal working class by a cleverly manipulative regime, the likelihood of the emergence of an independent sphere of opposition activity was negligible.

(4 1.3) Ceausescuism

From his predecessor Gheorge Gheorghie Dej in March 1965, Ceausescu inherited a relatively dynamic economy, an embryonic national consciousness, and a growing prestige on the international stage. During the first stage of his rule (1965-71), the new General Secretary sought to consolidate his authority and power by stressing the values of national independence and patriotic consciousness, whilst simultaneously ensuring that any potential sources of opposition were eradicated. By the early 1970s, it had become evident that his regime had been founded on certain identifiable pillars: a supposed de-Stalinisation particularly of the cultural sphere; patriotic appeals to nationalism and a degree of independence from the Soviet Union in respect of foreign policy, combined with a certain rapprochement with the West; and a combination of policies directed at altering the Party-state and the Party-leader

[69]See G Schopflin, 'Romanian Nationalism,' Survey Vol 20 No s 2/3 1974, pp 77-104

relationships, including the "cult of personality." All these factors had a specific impact on the evolution of a second society in Romania

(4.1.3 1) Liberalisation

Romanian culture was to suffer widespread persecution during the latter half of the Ceausescu era. However, at least until 1971, Romanian creativity and learning temporarily gained some leeway. In the social sciences, for example, there was an expansion of research into topics and methodologies that had been repressed since the 1940s.[70] Ceausescu's guided liberalisation, launched shortly after his election, furthered Dej's re-glorification of the national heritage and allowed for the rehabilitation of many of the historical, literary and political figures who had fallen victim to his predecessor's reign of terror.[71] The dogmas of socialist realism were criticised, and the right to cultural diversity acknowledged. What followed was the first genuine thaw in post-war Communist culture, with the Party encouraging intellectual de-Stalinisation and temporarily renouncing the employment of bureaucratic-administrative methods in cultural matters.[72] Consequently, the writers were "free to criticise" the immediate past, including such "distortions of socialist legality" as forced collectivisation and the imprisonment of innocent individuals provided that, the responsibility for such actions was clearly laid at Dej's door and not that of his successor, or even that of the Communist system itself.[73] In short, criticism was acceptable as long as it also inversely expressed an acceptance of Ceausescu and his rule.

1971, however, saw the abrupt interruption of Ceausescu's limited liberalisation policies, in an attempt to restore the Party's absolute control over society. Following an official visit to China in 1971, he apparently became convinced that a cultural mini-revolution would cure the tendency towards liberalism amongst the intelligentsia.[74] Ceausescu presented his views in the so-called "July" or

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[70]D Nelson, 'Romania' in W A Welsh (ed), Survey Research and Public Attitudes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, 1981 New York, Pergamon Press.

[71]For Ceausescu's early cultural policies, see. M E Fischer, op cit, pp 148-150.

[72]V.Tismaneau, 'Personal Power ..', op cit, p 181.

[73]Ibid p 183, for the full extent of Ceausescu's efforts to portray Dej as the "Stalinist criminal." See, also N Ceausescu, Report to the Ninth Congress of the Romanian Communist Party, 1965 Bucharest, Political Publishing House, and Z Brzezinski, The Soviet Bloc: Unity and Conflict, 1967 Cambridge Mass , Harvard University Press, pp 92-95.

[74]M E Fischer, op cit, p 166

"Cultural Thesis," a model of Stalinism and political orthodoxy. This was followed by the November 1971 plenum's rehabilitation of Stalinist ethics, an attack on reformism within the RCP, and a call to combat intellectualism. By the end of 1971, his personal power had been effectively consolidated and he no longer needed to court specific groups in society.[75] The impact on second society was significant: independence had been curtailed at an early stage of development and its effective annihilation left practically no trace on which later generations could build.

(4.1.3.2) Nationalism and the Western Connection

The greatest source of Ceausescu's strength and apparent popularity, particularly during his early years, was his ability to capitalise on Romanian history in general, and on the process of nation building in particular. Between 1962-65, Dej had mounted a successful nationalistic propaganda campaign against increasing Soviet economic pressure on Romania. Policies included an interpretation of Party history with special emphasis on the struggle between Romanian and Soviet Communists; a gradual de-Russianisation of Romanian culture and a certain relaxation in domestic policy; and an April 1964 Declaration voicing the RCP's discontent on Romania's status within COMECON and the Warsaw Pact.[76] The Party was portrayed as the "champion of national interests. Ceausescu maintained Dej's course of distancing Romania from the Soviet Union. In order to bolster domestic legitimacy, the RCP began to give free rein to the nationalism that had remained latent, particularly among intellectuals. Such steps, however, should be seen less as a deviation from the Stalinist pattern, and more as a shrewd experiment on the part of the Ceausescu elite to avoid the path of even moderate de-Stalinisation. Foreign policy independence, because it ran the risk of a potential Red Army invasion, had to be accompanied by stringent orthodoxy in domestic politics.[77]

Ceausescu's stress on orthodoxy at home, then, was tempered by a strong attachment to the concept of the national road. In short, he repeatedly rejected rigid and unquestioning application of a supranational model of socialism, instead

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[75] See. R King, op cit, p.117.

[76]See: Gheorge Gheorghiu-Dej, Articles and Speeches, June 1960-December 1962, 1963 Bucharest, Meridiane Publishing House, pp 257-93

[77]For comments on an independent foreign policy line complemented by domestic orthodoxy, see: 'Report of the Delegation of the Romanian Workers' Party which attended the 22nd Congress of the CPSU,' in: ibid, pp 257-293

advocating a specifically Romanian way.[78] On virtually every major occasion, Ceausescu made plain his conviction that the RCP was a "national leadership vehicle which [would] propel Romania to its rightful place among nations and restore to the country a prominent place in the world..."[79] This nationalistic aspect of Ceausescu's outlook proved highly popular among the Romanian masses in a multi-ethnic country, which had always tended to view itself as an "outpost of Latin culture in a sea of Slavic underdevelopment."[80] The rejection of foreign interference held a double emotional appeal to the Romanians, because it made use of both tradition and nationalism, and it thus served as an effective tool of legitimisation for the Party post-1960. Ceausescu's refusal to allow Warsaw Pact military manoeuvres on Romanian soil, and his unequivocal anti-Soviet stand in a speech he gave in Bucharest following the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, prompted the Romanian press and radio to portray Ceausescu as a national hero.[81] In fact, the impact of the Czechoslovak invasion on Ceausescu and on Romania cannot be overemphasised. In the 1970s, Romanians disillusioned with other aspects of Ceausescu's policies would point to the events in Czechoslovakia as the major reason for supporting him and the RCP which, in turn, prevented the emergence of a viable source of independent opposition to Communism.

Romania's quest for independence and a national road had its greatest impact on relations with the USSR. However, it also involved the deliberate - and accidental - development of closer ties with the West. This opening up to the West served several policy ends. Domestically, it was part of Ceausescu's drive to achieve internal legitimacy via the manipulation of nationalist symbols. The implicit aim of the historical founders of the Romanian nation had been its transformation via the imposition of Western-oriented institutions and their rejection of Balkan status. Romania's subservience to Moscow was resented, particularly by the intelligentsia and therefore, Ceausescu's Western policy was initially very popular with most Romanians and contributed to the building of a base of genuine *personal* popular support. The development of closer economic relations was also important on two

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[78]T.Gilberg, 'Ceausescu's Little Cultural Revolution in Romania,' Osteuropa, October 1972, pp 726-28.

[79]T.Gilberg, 'Ceausescu's Romania,' Problems of Communism, Vol 23 No 4, 1974, p.33.

[80]Ibid, p.95. Also, G Schopflin, 'Romanian Nationalism,' Survey, Vol 20 No 2/3, 1974, pp 77-104.

[81] M Almond, The Rise and Fall of Nicolae and Elena Ceausescu, 1992 London, Chapmans Publishers Ltd , pp 66-68, for Ceausescu's immediate reactions to the Prague Spring and excerpts from his speech

counts. Firstly, it was a prerequisite for the entire reorientation of Romania's foreign policy. Secondly, the policy was led by practical considerations: access to Western technology, raw materials and markets were necessary in order to supplant Soviet ties. In 1957, 84 per cent of Romania's imports came from COMECON countries, in particular the USSR.[82] By 1965, the Soviet Union's share of total foreign trade had been reduced to 38 per cent, and that of the West increased to 36 per cent.[83] The world market presented the prospect of substantial economic advantages for Romania, allowing the country to exploit its natural resource base (over 80 per cent of Eastern Europe's total oil reserves) in exchange for Western raw materials and equipment not easily available in the East, whilst maintaining links with COMECON for trade in "soft" goods that could not find a market in the West.[84] This participation in the world market provided financing and technology that allowed the central command economy to survive longer than it could have, enabling the RCP to avoid the question of economic reforms undertaken in other East European countries, which could have provided the springboard for opposition as in Poland. Romania's independent course had significant political ramifications also. A visibly independent course, and a specifically Romanian interpretation of "peaceful co-existence," convinced many Western leaders and officials that Ceausescu was worthy of support.[85] They feted him personally with honours, and the country with billions of dollars of Western credit and investment.[86] This increased standing is also significant for the absence of opposition to Communism early in Ceausescu's rule: the special position he held meant that Romanian dissidents had no Western audience to whom they could appeal. On the contrary, Ceausescu was persistently courted by Western leaders, who felt he represented an independent voice within the Warsaw Pact, and Western media portrayed him as a "good Communist."[87] Who would listen to Romanian dissidents:

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[82]G Gross, op cit, p.24. Also, The Times, June 12th 1959, p 6, for details of Romania's volume of foreign trade with Western Europe

[83]W Crowther, 'Romanian Politics and the International Economy,' Orbis, Vol 28 No 3, Fall 1984, p 556 See, also, A C.Tsantis and R.Pepper, Romania: The Industrialisation of an Agrarian Economy Under Socialist Planning, 1979 Washington, The World Bank, pp 554-557.

[84]A.Brown, Romanian Foreign Policy Since 1965, 1978 New York, Praegar, p 4

[85]For example, Romania's moderate viewpoint adopted on specific East-West issues, especially the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis, the Vietnam War, and over joint actions with the United Nations. See. G Gross, op cit, pp 24-5.

[86] M.Almond, op cit, p 142

[87] J Simpson, The Darkness Crumbles, 1992 London, Hutchinson, pp 222-225

certainly not the workers or the dwindling peasantry; and, now, certainly very few who mattered in the West.

(4.1.3.3) The Party and the State - the Cult of Personality

Immediately upon his accession to the post of General Secretary in 1965, Ceausescu made clear his intention to change the mechanics of both the Party and state machinery.[88] The old Politburo, for example, was replaced with a new leadership body, the Executive Committee; and the Standing Presidium was to function as its operative nucleus. Despite institutional changes, political power was to be increasingly vested in the Secretariat, however, a body filled with Ceausescu's then unconditional supporters.[89]

The CC Plenum of April 1968 further revealed Ceausescu's intention to strengthen his legitimacy through an indictment of his predecessor's abuses.[90] The Plenum Resolution condemned Dej as personally responsible for the suppression of political adversaries; and the surviving members of Dej's Politburo became targets of attack.[91] Gradually, Ceausescu was successful in eliminating all survivors of the Dej regime and having rid himself of his predecessor's shadow, was able to claim sole credit for the nationalist line, adding it to the image of democratiser of a regenerated Party.[92] In addition, the 1965 decision to rename the RWP the Communist Party of Romania stripped Dej of the mantle of "founding father." The proclamation of Romania as a "socialist state" (instead of the former Peoples' Republic) opened up a new era associated specifically with Ceausescu, whilst simultaneously claiming for the new Socialist Republic a status equal to that of the Soviet Union. The effect of these policies on society and on the potential for opposition cannot be ignored. Ceausescu's attempts to forge an effective legitimacy based on policies appealing to

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[88]See: N Ceausescu, Report to the Ninth Congress of the Romanian Communist Party, 1965 Bucharest, Political Publishing House.

[89]See: M Shafir, Romania: Politics, Economics and Society, op cit, pp 64-84.

[90] 'Romania,' in: Richard F Starr (ed.), Yearbook on International Communist Affairs 1969, 1970 Stanford, Hoover Institution Press, pp 714-727

[91]V.Tismaneau, op cit, pp 70-71.

[92]With regards to the dynamics within the RCP elite under Ceausescu, see T Gilberg, 'The Communist Party in Romania,' in. S Fischer-Galati (ed.), op cit, pp.281-325.

popular nationalism undoubtedly contributed to the unprecedented levels of *popular* support enjoyed by the Communist leader and the RCP.[93]

Having stipulated at the July 1965 Congress that the principles of democratic centralism and leadership were to remain key components of Communist rule, by the end of 1967, it was obvious that the institutionalisation of collective leadership had merely been the first step towards the accumulation of Ceausescu's own personal power. The principal purpose of the 1965 stipulation had been to weaken the power base of Ceausescu's potential adversaries and to prevent intra-party opposition. Once the ruling had served its purpose, however, the statutes were duly changed, in December 1967, making it possible for Ceausescu to hold a number of positions in both state and Party.[94] Instead, the Party was to simplify the decision-making process and enhance responsibility by "having one comrade" deal with a particular sector in both Party and state.[95] Most importantly, it was suggested that the Party General Secretary should simultaneously serve as President of the Council of State (that is, President of the Socialist Republic of Romania), with the latter adopting a far more prominent role in policy formulation and implementation. A further consequence, therefore, of the 1967 amendment, adopted with the intention of consolidating Ceausescu's power, was the strengthening of Party control over the state apparatus at all levels. The measure was justified on the grounds of efficiency, but it also opened a new phase in the process of personal power consolidation as, from 1971, a "rotation principle" - "rotatie" - required the top Party elites to periodically (generally every two-three years) change positions in the central state and Party apparatus. The principle enabled a constant check on possible contenders for power who had advanced since 1965, with the Foreign Service and official trade unions experiencing especially high turnovers of top personnel. Whilst the rotation of cadres appeared somewhat arbitrary, the process occurred with a frequency which suggests that its main purpose was to prevent anyone from building a stable intra-party support base as a potential challenge to the leader's power[96] and consequently act as a rallying-point for opposition within second society.[97] By the spring of 1973, nearly 50 per cent of

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[93] M Shafir, Romania, op cit, p 51.

[94]N.Ceausescu, Romania On The Way of Building Up the Multilaterally Developed socialist Society, Vol 2. 1969 Bucharest, Meridian, p 553.

[95]Ibid, p.554.

[96]R King, 'Reorganisation in Romania,' Osteuropa January 1974, pp.37-46.

[97]M E Fischer, op cit, p 33 Also, M Shafir, Romania, op cit, pp.72-5. Turnover in CC membership was similarly high, reaching more than 50 per cent at the 12th Congress in 1979 Criteria were also

top government jobs were held by individuals belonging to one or more of the three principal RCP bodies. The remaining posts were filled by members of the CC, either as full or alternate members.[98]

Upon his appointment as President in 1974, Ceausescu personally held the most important political positions in both the Party and state hierarchies. His control over joint bodies such as the Supreme Council for Socio-Economic Development ensured his influence on matters pertaining to socio-economic planning, forecasting and production in the economy. He was also Commander-In-Chief and Chairman of the Council of National Defence, giving him complete control over the armed forces. His 1974 actions, therefore, united the functions of the Party leader, head-of-state and head-of-government at the national level. At the local county level, too, state administrations were headed by local RCP leaders personally subordinate to Ceausescu. This represented an unprecedented formal concentration of power in one man's hands, unique in Eastern Europe. Ceausescu effectively represented the main motor of Romanian politics: elites responded to *his* initiatives, criticisms and exhortations. In addition, however, it is also significant that the system was Ceausescu, and *he*, therefore, would be held personally accountable for any anomalies in that system. In essence, its weaknesses would become *his personal* weaknesses. This would be particularly evident in 1989, yet is crucial to an understanding of why Romanian dissidence did not move beyond criticisms of the way the system functioned under Ceausescu, and did not seek to develop a viable alternative to Communism. The peculiarities of the RCP-led regime were attributed to Ceausescu, not to the underlying ideology.

In addition, large proportions of top elite positions were held by members of Ceausescu's immediate family. A policy of "Party familialisation" (the promotion of direct family members into the hierarchy)[99] resulted in the pre-eminence of his family

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adopted in 1974 to ensure that not less than one-third of the members of the bureaux of local organisations and of Party committees, including the CC, were freshly promoted cadres In 1979. However, the turnover in CC membership alone far outnumbered the specified criteria, again suggesting that the measure was not aimed at inner Party democratisation but at strengthening the power of the leader vis-a-vis suspected uncontrollable elements.

[98]'The Romanian Party Leadership,' RFE Research, Situation Report Romania/4, March 30th 1973, p.4.

[99]By the 1970s, up to 50 family members enjoyed either senior- or high-ranking government or Party positions. For example, his son, Nicu, in December 1983 was "elected" First Secretary of the Union of Communist Youth, member of the RCP CC, deputy in the Grand National Assembly, and secretary in the Romanian Parliament. See M.Shafir, op cit, pp 76-80, for details and analysis.

unit best exemplified by Ceausescu's wife, Elena.[100] New criteria for the promotion of cadres were devised to permit the General Secretary's wife to reach the second-in-command position within the apparatus. The Party's Thirteenth Congress in November 1984 witnessed a deluge of praise bestowed upon the couple.[101] Ultimately, their relatives were to control the most strategic positions in the state: central planning, the capital city, the army, security services, foreign intelligence, the Party cadres, and its youth movements. The promotion of family members created a sophisticated advanced warning mechanism completely separate from Party institutions and state security services: the family firm saw to it that any threats to personal survival were located and eliminated well before they became dangerous. This factor undoubtedly prevented the development of intraparty revisionist ideologies, in particular, and of second society in general.

The cumulative effect of Ceausescu's blatantly manipulative policies found its ultimate expression in the "cult of personality" which began to penetrate the public arena in the late 1960s and, by 1974, had turned Ceausescu into the seemingly omnipotent ruler of his country.[102] The Party leader became a demi-god, portrayed as being adored both by his nation and by the world at large. Any observer of Romania in the Ceausescu era would be immediately confronted by this extreme adulation, which had the characteristics of a modern-day religious cult, with an iconography; inspired scriptures; an infallible leader; and rituals of mass worship.[103] In March 1974, when the position of President of the Republic was created especially for him, Ceausescu was sworn into office wearing a sash and carrying a mace: both suggestive

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[100]Elena was Romania's second highest official In addition to her membership of the Bureau of the PEC (she joined the Bucharest Municipal Party Committee in 1968, was elected a full CC member in 1972 and became an EC member in June 1973), Elena was director for the Institute of Chemical Research in Bucharest, and Chairwoman of the National Council of Science and Technology in 1979 (a position with ministerial status) In 1980, her ministerial status was raised as she became one of the three first Deputy PMs in the Romanian Government. In January 1979, she became Chair of the CC Commission for State and Party Cadres, responsible for the appointment or dismissal of personnel. A Maier, 'Elena Ceausescu Marches On and Up,' RFE Romanian Situation Report/17, December 17 1985, pp 21-25 With respect to her status in the Party hierarchy, see: M.E.Fischer, 'Women in Romanian Politics: Elena Ceausescu, Pronatalism and the Promotion of Women,' in S L.Wolchik and A G Meyer, Women, State and Party in Eastern Europe, 1985 Durham, Duke University Press, pp.121-137.

[101]Foreign Broadcast Information Service, (FBIS) Eastern Europe, December 3rd 1984; and FBIS, Eastern Europe, January 16th 1986, p H2.

[102]J.T.Paltiel, 'The Cult of Personality· Some Comparative Reflections on Political Culture in Leninist Regimes,' Studies in Comparative Communism, Spring/Summer 1983, pp 49-64, G.Gill, 'Personality Cult, Political Culture and Party Structure,' Ibid, Summer 1984, pp.111-121.

[103]M.E.Fischer, op cit, Ch 7, 'From Revolutionary to Idol The Emergence of the Leadership Cult '

of royal supremacy as opposed to revolutionary leadership on behalf of the working masses.[104]

In summary, Ceausescu sought to control Romanian society through the encouragement of nationalism, the fusion of the state and Party, and the destruction of any alternative power base. It is important to note that his aim was never to rely solely on sheer terror for his survival. Although many stories were created around the infamous Romanian Securitate, the organisation generally remained an instrument of last resort.[105] Romanians did believe that one-quarter of their co-nationals were Securitate informers; and that the organisation listened in to every phone call, and intercepted every piece of correspondence. Undoubtedly, it did employ a large number of informers and did intercept communications. Its predominant strength, however, lay in the common belief that it was all knowing, and in the fact that it operated in an effective legal void.[106] From the early 1960s, most East European dissidents knew the cost of their opposition: loss of employment, harassment, imprisonment, exile. The Securitate's response to opposition within Romania, however, was usually too arbitrary to avoid classification. Dissidents, although few and far between, were never put on trial; some escaped harassment, whilst others "disappeared" or experienced fatal "accidents." The Securitate's tactic was one of perpetual deference through the unpredictability of the potential punishment, and the effects of this factor on the development of second society should not be overlooked.[107] In essence, the stability of the Communist regime post-1945, rested, in part, on the deference of the population underpinned by the activities of the Securitate; and also on the successful construction of an encompassing and repressive regime centred on Ceausescu himself. It must also be recognised, however, that the perceived omnipotence of the Securitate also contributed to the pervasive weakness of the state structure, for once the fear of the Securitate disappeared in late 1989, so too did the fear of active opposition to the Ceausescu regime.

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[104]Dan Ionescu, 'A Touch of Royalty,' RFE Romanian Situation Report/2, January 22 1985, p 13.

[105]The Independent, November 28th 1987, reported that the security forces played only a marginal role in maintaining the stability of the regime. According to this report, the RCP was the principal instrument of control.

[106] S Sampson, 'Rumours in Socialist Romania,' Survey, Vol 28 No 4, Winter 1984, pp.142-164.

[107]See: RFE Research, Romania Situation Report 12, November 6th 1987. Also, Romania Today, June 1989, p.35, for a report on how the population did believe the rumours surrounding the Securitate's omnipresent strength

(4.2) The Development of Second Society

(4.2.1) Introduction

At first glance, Romania in the 1970s and 1980s presented a bleak scene of profound socio-economic crisis in which no second society was visible. Although unspoken dissent was, in the opinion of Vlad Georgescu, "deeply entrenched" in the minds of the people, open public expression of independent views (the necessary foundation stones for the subsequent development of a second society) was almost completely absent in a system characterised by a combination of ruthless repression and a generally inward-looking and submissive population.[108] Dissent was limited to committed individuals acting alone, and often took the form of emigration (not always voluntary).[109]It would, however, be a mistake to conclude that dissent in Romania was completely non-existent. Public opposition did emerge during the 1970s. Although it received little attention in the West (since it lacked the drama and newsworthiness of Hungary in 1956, Czechoslovakia in 1968, and Poland in 1980) small vocal movements were evident amongst workers, intellectuals, ethnic minorities and religious groups in particular.[110] Indeed, dissent in Romania ranged across all segments of society, and all occupational groups, from the peasantry and industrial working class, to the top Party elites. Although the challenges posed to the system were not substantial, the RCP and government were quick to recognise the broader significance of such manifestations of opposition, and reacted quickly and brutally to suppress dissident activity. Opposition leaders were arrested, harassed, co-opted into the Party-state apparatus, physically abused, exiled (internally and externally), or incarcerated either in forced labour camps, or psychiatric hospitals.

(4.2.2) Worker Perspectives

In Romania, worker-Party conflict was explicit in high levels of job dissatisfaction, workforce instability and low productivity levels. The particular pattern of Romanian worker-Party conflict reflected the country's level and pace of development. Bucharest, for example, consistently rejected the label of a "developed

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[108]V Georgescu, 'Romanian Dissent: Its Ideas,' in: J L.Curry (ed), Dissent in Eastern Europe, 1983 New York, Praegar Publishers, pp.189-191.

[109]Emigration was most widespread amongst the German and Jewish populations Although often hindered by obstacles and lengthy bureaucratic delays, significantly, emigration, particularly of the potentially troublesome ethnic minorities, served to eliminate a possibly potent source of opposition to the Communist regime.

[110] For a general overview of manifestations of dissent under Ceausescu, see: T Beamish and G Hadley, The Kremlin's Dilemma, 1979 London, Collins and Harvill Press, Ch.5. 'Deep Freeze in Romania.'

socialist state."[111] Instead, Romania was officially portrayed as a *developing* rather than a *developed* system. Domestically, such a classification provided a greater rationale for sacrifice by citizens in a developing environment, than in an allegedly higher socio-economic stage. Whereas in Poland, by 1980-81, the inherent contradictions of the developed Communist system had led to repetitive worker-Party conflict with the working class unwilling to accept the political status quo, Romanian society found itself at an earlier stage in the developmental cycle. Its labour force was just beginning to question Party hegemony in 1981, expressing its dissatisfaction through opinions that diverged from the RCP's accepted priorities that led to the Jiu Valley disturbances of 1977 and demonstrations centred around Bucharest in late August of the same year.[112] Such sporadic outbursts were, however, very much the exception rather than the rule.

Romania's path towards developed socialism generated working class disenchantment with both political and material conditions. In a survey conducted in the early 1970s, of 6000 workers aged 14-30 years, 50 per cent wanted to change their jobs; 25 per cent had changed employment at least once. In a system with few incentives, workers contended that productivity could best be increased by strengthening the connection with wage levels. A plurality of workers of all ages, and 58 per cent of 40-49 year olds, were dissatisfied with pay levels.[113] Overall, job dissatisfaction (focusing on the material aspects of employment) and the resulting low productivity and high turnover of the workforce, were severe and persistent problems for the regime.

Workers complaints focused upon inegalitarianism and a general lack of consumer goods. Furthermore, for Romanian workers watching the consumer societies of neighbouring Yugoslavia and Hungary, appeals to increase productivity were likely to fall on deaf ears, and inevitably led to the growth of potentially political grievances amongst the Romanian workforce. Such grievances, however, were not evidenced in forms familiar to both Western and East European experience, either in political parties, government lobbying groups or independent second society

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[111] Romania's "developing status" was portrayed as late as the early 1980s L.Graham, Romania: A Developing Socialist State, 1982 Boulder CO, Westview Press, Introduction

[112] V.Socor, 'Eyewitness on the 1977 Miners' Strike in Romania's Jiu Valley,' RFE RAD Background Report/118 (Romania), August 13 1986, p 9.

[113] D N Nelson, 'Worker-Party Conflict in Romania,' Problems of Communism, Vol 30 No 5, 1981, p 46.

associations, for example. Rather, discontent appeared to focus on bodies such as the Workers' Councils (COM), intended by a 1971 statute to be the organisational basis for worker participation. In other words, manifestations of discontent were channelled through official as opposed to independent channels.[114] Discontent did explode into genuine outbursts of worker dissatisfaction, for example, in the Jiu Valley in 1977 and in 1979 when attempts to form a free trade union movement surfaced.[115] Both demonstrated the persistence of disaffection from the RCP, yet the regime's harsh response to both incidents demonstrated two important factors. Firstly, the RCP's continued rejection of pluralistic voices; and, secondly, the extent to which the Party was out of tune with the real views of the average Romanian, which would ultimately undermine the entire party system in 1989. As the 1980s dawned, there were some grounds for believing that new outcroppings of pluralism would challenge the hegemony of the RCP given that it had eliminated neither inequalities nor other bases for discontent. Although Romania was far from replicating the volatile conditions of Polish society, signs of working class discontent and a restive society were in evidence.

The first sign of public worker dissent was evident in 1971. In reacting to the Polish events of December 1970, the Ceausescu regime, launched a programme designed to "Improve the Functioning of the System of Trade Unions." The launch was accompanied by official media encouragement to workers to participate actively in discussion on the issue. Vasile Parischiv, a former petro-chemical plant worker in Ploesti who, having resigned in 1968, had been associated with Paul Goma and the human rights movement, took the call for participation at face value, and sent a letter to the Central Committee (CC),[116] calling for the creation of free trade unions independent of Party control, to defend the workers' socio-economic and political rights and interests.[117] Trade unions, it was suggested, should have democratically

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[114] D N Nelson, 'Romania,' in. W E.Welsh (ed), Survey Research and Public Attitudes in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, 1981 New York, Pergamon Press, p 460.

[115]Founded in February 1979 by 20 individuals, and joined, in the same month, by 1,487 members of another free trade union created at the end of 1978 in Mures County. There was an attempt to create a third trade union in February 1980, but swift repression prevented its emergence An incomplete list of SLOMR members shows that in April 1979, it had approx. 1,600 members AFL-CIO Free Trade Union News, Vol.34, May 1979, pp 3-5.

[116]V Paraschiv, 'A Worker's Plan for Independent Unions,' Labour Focus on Eastern Europe Vol 2 No.1, March-April 1978, p 24

[117]See: D Nelson, 'The Worker and Political Alienation in Communist Europe,' paper presented at the Midwestern Political Science Association Meeting, Cincinnati Ohio, April 1981, p 15

elected leaders, and should be represented in all relevant administrative bodies, with a power of veto. He also demanded the abolition of censorship of the trade union press and freedom of thought and expression more generally. His proposals, however, were ignored, and he received no formal reply from the CC. Instead, Paraschiv found himself forcibly detained in a psychiatric hospital, and then, in late 1977, was permitted to leave Romania. Similar strategies of swiftly removing the dissenter from society before his concerns could be made public were employed frequently throughout the 1970s-80s. This policy prevented the generation of group or community support for independent thought and action, something that, in turn, could have formed a basis for the emergence of a coherent and active second society in Romania.

This mixture of coercive measures complemented by minor structural and procedural reforms remained clearly in place until the end of the decade. The Jiu Valley uprising in August 1977, for example, was met by the movement of government troops into the area, followed by an RCP-led campaign for workers' self-management in 1978.[118] The demonstrations that took place were, significantly, some of the largest witnessed in Communist Europe prior to the formation of Solidarity in 1980.[119] Earlier, in 1972, the area's miners had demonstrated their reluctance to toe the party-line, and in 1977, protested against increasing food shortages, and new regulations that forced many workers to take early retirement with reduced benefits. Recognising the seriousness of workers' strike in a supposedly workers' state, Ceausescu dispatched two CC members (Ilie Verdet and the Minister of Mining, Constantin Babalu) to negotiate with the strikers. The workers, however, expected nothing less than a face-to-face "discussion" with the General Secretary himself.[120] To isolate the disturbances and prevent them spreading to other key industrial areas, the district was entirely sealed off from the rest of the country before Ceausescu appeared in person.[121] In order to pacify the restive miners, he promised to give all their grievances due consideration, and make the necessary improvements. Measures were taken to shorten the working week, improve conditions, reverse the pension plan

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[118] Re the strikes and the arrest of strike committee leaders, see: Amnesty International Briefing, Romania, 1980 Nottingham, Amnesty International, pp.5-6.

[119] Approx. 35,000 people participated. M Almond, op cit, p.121; and E Freund, 'Nascent Dissent in Romania,' in J.L Curry (ed), op cit, p 61.

[120] See Z Csalog, 'Ceausescu and the Miners. Istvan Hosszu's Story,' New Hungarian Quarterly 30 (Winter 1989), pp 5-11, for a personal account

[121] 'Romanian Workers' Strikes,' RFE Background Report Romania/112, June 5th 1978, pp 7-8

reforms, and to increase salaries. In addition, the chief spokesman of the strikers, Costica Dobre, was ultimately co-opted into the Party-state apparatus, and, in the early 1980s, placed in charge of Securitate activities in Western Europe. This was typical of Ceausescu's regime that attempted to avoid head-on clashes at all costs. It preferred to isolate the area of discontent and reduce any opposition to its hard-core. So long as it could prevent news of discontent spreading from one area to another and igniting a bush-fire of revolt, the Party was able to restore its control relatively quickly and with little loss of life or authority. By co-opting potential opposition leaders into the Party and system hierarchy, and thereby bestowing on them the benefits and privileges associated with elevated status in Romania, the regime successfully removed those individuals from society who could have engineered the development of widespread opposition. Cumulatively, such policies prevented the emergence of popularly supported second society organisations and movements, and quashed any attempt to generate widespread sympathy for opposition causes.

A further significant point to highlight, here, is the miners had only formulated demands regarding their living and working conditions. That is, strike demands had been limited to the socio-economic sphere only. They had not developed into demands for political change that could have allowed them effective participation in the decision-making process. More significantly, miners' representatives had limited their demands regarding the official trade unions to the removal of untrustworthy or disliked officials; there had been no mention of formal political independence. Consequently, and also as a result of the fact that there were no links with the intellectuals that prevented the emergence of a viable opposition grounded in theory, the 1977 strikes brought down a works manager not the government itself as had occurred in Poland in 1970. It is significant in the context of second society development that these limited demands were typical of those promoted by Romanian dissidents throughout the 1970s and 1980s, calling for *minor* not extensive reform of the Communist system. However, although the immediate demands of the strikers were dealt with in the late 1970s, the underlying, root causes of discontent and the system's troubles, had not been tackled.[122] The subsequent effort by Romanian workers in 1979 to form a free trade union suggested the persistence of disaffection from the Party. It is important to examine these efforts to establish an independent trade union in detail, for the insight they provide into the reasons underlying the lack of opposition evolution in Romania more generally.

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[122]Over the course of 1977-8, the concessions granted to the miners were gradually revoked For Ceausescu's measures after the strikes, see· R F.Starr (ed), op cit, 1978, pp 60-61.

(4.2.2.1) SLOMR

In March 1979, an attempt to form a Free Trade Union of Romanian Workers (SLOMR) was initiated by forty people (sixteen of whom were workers, the rest intellectuals) dissatisfied at the progress that had been made in fulfilling Ceausescu's 1977 promises in relation to the Jiu Valley events.[123] In February, a group of twenty intellectuals and workers had signed a document with the hope of encouraging workers to organise themselves outside the control of the Party. The Charter set forth a series of economic, and also political demands. These included the recognition that Romania had an unemployment problem; demands for changes in retirement laws and improved working conditions; the abolition of "forced patriotic labour" at weekends, of elite privileges and of censorship; and the observance of human rights. The declaration included in its preamble all the legal rights supposedly guaranteed to workers by Romanian law, and all the international guarantees of the fundamental rights of man that Romania had ratified.[124] However, it must be noted that the union saw itself only as an *additional* voice for the workers, not an *alternative*, and, as was the case with the Solidarity Trade Union in Poland in 1980, did not challenge the political hegemony of the RCP. Although the declaration contained concrete demands, these were carefully formulated so as not to challenge the Party's right to exclusive political rule.

The Charter, however, was significant, not only as evidence of discontent in society, but also as an example of working class and intellectual cooperation, that, in theory, had the potential to act as a springboard for the evolution of a cross-class movement of opposition united against the Communist regime. The symbolic attempt and the growing appeal of the union by the regime, however, were not tolerated by the regime.[125] Union leaders were arrested or forced to emigrate, members harassed, and the union organisation was effectively crushed by the regime.[126] The RCP was, therefore, successful in demonstrating, again, its power over all forms of dissent in society. However, its actions also demonstrated that the Party continued to ignore indications of possible future weakness. The dissatisfaction that had led to SLOMR's formation remained. The 12th RCP Congress in November 1979 did little to further reduce the cause of discontent. It delayed the reduction of the working week, and

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[123] Amnesty International, op cit, pp 6-7.

[124] "The SLOMR Charter,' AFL-CIO Free Trade Union News, Vol 34 No.5, May 1978, pp 3-5.

[125] It eventually gained the support of 1500-2000 people G Schopflin, op cit, p 194.

[126] M Shafir, Romania, op cit, p 173.

offered only modest pay increases whilst demanding ever greater productivity.[127] A number of strikes and workers' protests was reported in January and October 1981; and between 1983-87, there were strikes protesting government legislation which replaced guaranteed wages and imposed restrictions on compensation. There was little incentive, however, for workers to form another independent union. Instead, they tended to express their dissent in less overt ways: general apathy, maintaining low productivity levels, and absenteeism,[128] behaviour which, by itself, was not conducive to the evolution of independence or of second society organisations.

In summary, it had become evident by the mid-1970s that, among Romanian workers, there was an increased willingness to air material grievance, and a nominal rejection by some of officially sanctioned channels for participation in the workplace. The strikes that did occur in the 1970s were certainly impressive and they could have posed a serious challenge to the Communist regime had they had the opportunity to develop further. They were impressive, however, precisely because they were set against a background of overwhelming conformity. The nascent grievances of Romanian labour, although an indication of worker discontent, in particular, and a restive society more generally, were far from replicating the volatile conditions of Polish society however. SLOMR failed to develop into a Solidarity-type movement for a number of reasons. Firstly, the government was successful in immediately isolating both the strike and its participants, with the result that very few Romanians were even aware that the union existed. SLOMR was effectively decapitated with the arrest and isolation or exile of its leaders. Secondly reforms, however transitory, were introduced where discontent appeared most hostile and vocal. This combination of force and early co-optation served to effectively weaken the union, and precluded its growth into a mass movement. More significantly, there was no ongoing, effective alliance or cooperation between the workers, the peasantry and the intellectuals, which could have formed the basis for cross-class co-operation against Communism.

(4.2.3) Intellectual Dissent

Some of the most vocal and articulate dissidents were intellectuals, many of whom were products of the Communist system itself.[129] The signing of the Helsinki Accords and the formation of Charter 77 in Czechoslovakia were significant events

[127]D Nelson, 'Worker-Party Conflict in Romania,' op cit, p 48.

[128]T.Gilberg, 'Ceausescu's Romania,' op cit, pp 39-40

[129]M Shafir, 'The Intellectual and the Party: The Romanian Communist Party and the Creative Intelligentsia in the Ceausescu Period,' op.cit, pp 123-160.

for many Romanian intellectuals, with Charter 77's emphasis on human rights appearing to offer the possibility of outside support to bolster domestic opposition. On February 8th 1977, a group of intellectuals led by prominent writer Paul Goma,[130] addressed an open letter to the CSCE's Belgrade Review Conference, attacking the Communist regime and condemning its violation of fundamental human rights.[131] The letter was unprecedented in Romania, and demonstrated a level of dissatisfaction and willingness to act, openly and publicly, that had not been witnessed before from the intellectuals. By April 1977, the letter had the support of two hundred signatories.[132] It marked, therefore, a significant turning point since, through signing, many declared that they were no longer prepared to remain silent or isolated in their opposition to the Communist regime. As with examples of working class discontent, however, the authorities reacted swiftly and brutally. Many signatories were arrested or harassed, and eventually forced to leave the country, thereby effectively quashing overt dissent in its infancy.[133] What the incident did accomplish, though, was to bring the whole question of intellectual dissent to the forefront of Romanian politics.

In contrast to the situation in both Poland and Czechoslovakia in the 1970s-80s, however, few if any dissidents adopted a directly confrontational stance against the Romanian Communist regime, arguing that such an unrealistic course would merely provide the RCP with a ready excuse for severe repressive measures. Their principal concern was to *reform* not *overthrow* the regime, yet many texts also recognised that the main stumbling block on the road to reform was the lack of active popular support for opposition activities.[134] Dissidents did focus on the general timidity of the population and its reluctance to join opposition movements and hypothesised on the reasons why. Some accepted submissiveness as being part of the Romanian national character, whilst others pinpointed the tactics and repressive strategies employed by the regime to crush and isolate manifestations of dissent from the masses. Significantly for the evolution of second society, there were very few

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[130] M Shafir, 'Who is Paul Goma ?' Index on Censorship, No 1, 1978, p.32.

[131] P Goma, Open Letter to the Participants at the Belgrade Conference, Document Archives, Columbia University, Romania 9 It defined the Romanian dictatorship as a system that did not recognise any human rights or respect the Constitution, and one in which the individual was a mere tool in the hands of the state See: M Almond, op cit, pp 134-6 for analysis and commentary.

[132] M Shafir, Romania, op cit, p.170

[133] Ibid, p.171.

[134] T Beamish and G Hadley, op cit, pp143-146.

attempts to actively address the question of how to attract genuine mass support for opposition activities.

Although many leading dissident theorists and others were forced to emigrate, dissent in intellectual circles did not merely fade away. However, as with workers' opposition, it tended to adopt more muted forms. For example, in the mid-late 1980s, there were demonstrations in Bucharest and certain Transylvanian towns, protesting violations of the Constitution, the Helsinki Final Act, and the UN Covenant on Human Rights. Intellectuals sought also to form a Romanian Association for the Defence of Human Rights.[135] Dissidents drafted a message of support for the four-country statement in 1986 to mark the anniversary of the Hungarian revolution but, as a result, were subjected to repeated interrogations and beatings.[136] During 1986, there were reports of demonstrations by *small groups* against Ceausescu's regime, and of *individuals* apprehended when trying to cross the frontier.

In the literary world, also, there were examples of independent thought amongst officially published works and, during the 1980s, the Writers' Union once again became a platform for public opposition, challenging the regime's cultural policies and the degree of censorship.[137] Between 1984-6, there were a number of typewritten letters circulated by distinguished professors, architects, leading cultural figures and members of the clergy, condemning the demolition of historic buildings in Bucharest.[138] These followed a significant statement critical of the regime's policies of urban and rural development in general, which had appeared in 1984. Overall, however, no serious attempts were made to circulate works in samizdat journals. Dissident thought did not reach or appeal to a mass readership, therefore, and produced no opportunities to build a base of mass support. Protests were centred on the individual or small groups only with no subsequent development of a society-wide coalition of support.

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[135] For an overview of the situation in Romania in the early 1980s, see: P.Moore, 'Romania in 1983,' RFE Research, RAD Background Report Romania/24, December 30 1983, pp 14-17.

[136]For examples of the draconian measures employed by the regime, see: V Socor, 'Prisoner of Conscience Radu Filipescu,' RFE Romanian Situation Report/17, November 17 1984, pp.21-23. Also, D Funderburk, 'Defiance in Romania ? Look Again, Anderson,' Washington Post, September 7 1985.

[137] RFE Romanian Situation Report February 24th 1982, p.12. For earlier policies and attitudes of the Union, see· M Shafir, Romania, op.cit, pp 414-420.

[138]See: D Giuresa, The Razing of Romania's Past, 1989 New York, for a thorough list of the buildings destroyed by Ceausescu Also, M Almond, op cit, pp.187-190

One further factor for the general inactivity of the intelligentsia should be noted. The power to move members of the intelligentsia from one post to another was one of the strongest levers of control that the Party and the state could exercise on this class. A large proportion of Romania's newly industrialised urban areas, although providing adequate urban services for the masses did not satisfy the cultural demands of intellectuals. Established bureaucrats in larger cities, therefore, considered transfers to newer industrialised towns as demotions and tried to avoid them at all costs, the price of which was an acceptance of the Party line and obedience with regards to its directives.[139]

Of all the issues raised by Romanian dissident writings, two appear to have been constant: the character of Romanian socialism, and the question of civil and political rights.

(4.2.3.1) Romanian Socialism

The aim, here, is not to list or detail the various letters and texts published by the intellectuals. Rather, I intend only to highlight certain points that had a specific bearing on the evolution of independent thought and activity and of second society in the 1980s.

The first significant point to raise is that, despite labelling Romanian socialism as a purely dictatorial system, the open letters of the Goma group accepted the generalised East European dissidents' approach that the Communist system per se could have been much improved, if "true" socialist values had been respected.[140] That is, they criticised the system's *functioning*, without being too condemning of the system itself, in the hope of effecting change by forcing that system to respect its own constitutional laws.[141] Such a *revisionist* approach was typical of East European dissidents during their early, formative years of activity. It typified an approach that, appealing principally to Communist Party members and intra-party reform movements, fostered neither widespread independent thought and activity; nor intra-

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[139] A.Amalrik, 'Open Letter to Kuznetzov,' Survey, No 74-5 1970, p 97.

[140] T Beamish and G Hadley, op cit, pp.144-145.

[141] See· V Frunza, 'Open Letter to President Ceausescu,' RFE Background Report Romania/201, September 1978, p 19 Frunza declared that very few Marxist principles had been put into practice in Romania, where "socialist democracy [was] just an empty word, a theory covering the real facts." He spoke of Romania's neo-Stalinism, dogmatism within the RCP, and lack of respect for the Constitution, yet continued to view socialist democracy, equity, equality, and Marxism itself, as potentially valid bases for the future

societal coalitions based on shared ideas, values or opposition activities. It is significant with respect to Romania, then, that unlike Poland and Czechoslovakia, where leading dissidents had broadly abandoned the revisionist approach in response to the Prague Spring in 1968 in favour of democratic alternatives to Communism, that Romanian dissidents persisted with revisionist sentiments until the late 1980s. In turn, consequently, second society remained backward compared to other East European Communist states that had abandoned revisionism in the late 1960s.

Admittedly, not all intellectuals shared Goma's approach. Mihai Botez, for example, condemned outright the ideas of Marxism as well as their implementation by the RCP; and others viewed Romanian socialism as a "lost cause," especially after the failure of the limited liberalisation experiment of the late 1960s, which had subsequently given way to a kind of neo-Stalinism.[142] However, their early acceptance of the Communist regime and their faith in Ceausescu's liberal promises of the 1960s, is one of the main explanatory factors for the relatively late start of Romanian intellectual dissent as a whole. In the 1970s, criticism of the system and the theory underpinning it, and of Ceausescu personally, was similar to that expressed by dissidents in Poland and Czechoslovakia in the 1960s.[143]

(4.2.3.2) Human Rights

It was widely perceived that human rights existed only in official reports. Intellectuals put forward demands, in particular, for citizens to exercise their right to travel. Several texts pointed to the feudal bondage of individuals to their place of employment, and to the impossibility of freely choosing a place of residence. This in itself is significant for the development of opposition and of second society in the wider sense: a concentration on securing the right to freedom of travel meant focus on only one single cause of intellectual discontent in Romanian society, and on a limited freedom, both in the sense of its lack of appeal to the workers and the peasantry; and also, in its failure to focus on a comprehensive list of rights and freedoms

Although they ultimately failed, the 1977 attempts to establish an independent human rights movement in Romania did challenge the RCP's claim to infallibility, and did succeed in bringing discontent into the open.[144] Unlike in Poland or

[142]Many intellectuals placed great hope and faith in Ceausescu's early promises. a vivid description of the intellectuals' dilemma during those early years was made by Botez. A summary can be found in: V.Georgescu, 'Romanian Dissent Its Ideas,' op cit, pp.183-4

[143] Ibid, pp 185-6

[144] Interview with Romanian Embassy official, Dr. Gheorghe Dragos, June 1996.

Czechoslovakia, though, opinions differed considerably about the kinds of rights to demand, and over how reasonable it was to expect these demands to be granted. This marked lack of unity amongst the intelligentsia as a social class precluded the evolution of a mass movement encompassing all social strata, and the formation of a common ground for action. In his Belgrade letter, for example, Goma appeared to push for radical political demands, including free elections. His followers, however, were less aggressive. Consequently, the movement's first text limited itself to an appeal for respect of constitutionally granted rights.[145] Such rights were considered sufficiently liberal by most dissidents; whilst other groups followed the lead, pressing simply to have existing laws respected. Very few questioned whether such human rights could be realised under a Communist system at all, and, therefore, did not threaten the system's rationale or longevity. Admittedly, intellectuals did form the most articulate and, therefore, potentially the most dangerous element in Romanian dissent. They did challenge some of the basic cultural and political symbols that had been used to legitimise both the Party and the regime. However, the common lack of questioning of the fundamentals of the prevailing system provided no basis for the evolution either of second society organisations, or of an alternative to Communism.

In addition, whilst dissident intellectuals were primarily concerned with securing general human rights and moral freedoms, workers, conversely, tended to emphasise economic and self-interest rights, with neither group being generally aware or concerned with the plight or interests of the other. Furthermore, dissident intellectuals were often prominent and potentially influential individuals, particularly from the viewpoint of the West, and herein lies their downfall. Frequently forced to emigrate, these dissidents did succeed in creating relatively strong centres of dissent outside Romania, albeit never on a scale akin to that of Poland.[146] This very fact, however, served to diffuse the opposition. Emigres lost contact with intellectual circles inside Romania and with the prevailing situation therein. In addition, because of Romania's tenuous position as the "odd-one-out" within the Soviet camp, those dissidents that did exist within Romania tended to be courted by official representatives of foreign countries. In turn, the traditional isolation of Romanian intellectuals was reinforced. Western contact proved to be counter-productive with respect to the building of a mass base of public support, given the general popular suspicion of foreign conspiracies. A suspicion of foreigners, even among disaffected

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[145] T Beamish and G Hadley, op cit, p 144

[146] Interview with Romanian Embassy official, Dr. Gheorge Dragos, June 1996

Romanians was exacerbated by the fact that Ceausescu himself enjoyed good relations with many Western governments.[147] For the masses, there were two principal consequences. Firstly, they had no regular contact with dissident intellectuals, either in person or via their theoretical and ideological works in such as samizdat literature. Consequently, they had no intellectual leadership or guidance to follow. And secondly, it further widened the traditional gulf that existed between the intellectuals and the workers in Romania, with the latter group treating claims from émigrés, that they remained concerned with the plight of the average Romanian, with a certain degree of cynicism.

(4 2 4) Religious Dissent

Movements of religious dissent in Romania were shaped by the state authorities' refusal to tolerate any group that did not adhere to the regulations stipulated by the Department of Cults.[148] Religion was further regulated by legislation prohibiting any religious activity outside officially designated places of worship. In exchange for permission to be active (along strictly regulated lines), furthermore, religious leaders were expected to be completely obedient to Party directives. Any signs of deviation or independence were not tolerated.

However, several religious groups (predominantly the neo-Protestants and Baptists) did fall outside the limits of officially permitted cults and demonstrated signs of independent activity. In Autumn 1976, for example, Baptist Pavel Nicolescu made a public statement broadcast by Radio Free Europe, denouncing the harassment of two of his students, in particular, and of the population in general.[149] In March 1977, six Evangelical Christians issued a "Call for Truth" which, by July 1978, had grown to include both Orthodox and Protestant Christians. This set forth a programme of demands, including demands for a "free church in a free state," and for human rights in accordance with international covenants.[150] In August 1977, a clandestine Committee for the Salvation of the Romanian Uniate Church addressed a letter to Ceausescu and to the United Nations Human Rights Committee, stressing its rights to

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[147] M Almond, op cit, pp 143-4

[148] The Department officially approved and supported 14 religious groups

[149] "Eastern Europe Towards a "Religious Revival"?' op cit, p 17

[150] Ibid

independence from the Orthodox Church.[151] A larger, primarily Baptist group organised itself to establish a "Romanian Committee for the Defence of Freedom of Religion and Conscience" (ALRC),[152] which sent a letter to the government demanding, amongst other things, a restructuring of Church-state relations, an end to state intervention in religion, and to the forced indoctrination of the population with atheism.[153] In April 1981, five Orthodox priests issued a "Testimony of Faith" in which they were critical of the regime, and called for the release of Father Gheorghe Claciu-Dumitreasa.[154]

Religion in Romania did, therefore, experience a short-lived revival, with non-sanctioned groups forming throughout Romania, ranging from standard neo-Protestant sects to Transcendental Meditation groups. Due to the official atheism of the regime, support for non-acquiescent religion proved a popular mechanism via which *individuals* could demonstrate public disapproval of the Communist government.[155] It must also be remembered, however, that the Orthodox Church remained the dominant religion for Romanians. Gestures of political defiance, such as those of the ALRC and Father Claciu, were unique and Romanians, in general, were prepared to accept the obvious acquiescence of the Church in political affairs. An article published in 1982 referred to the decreasing popularity of traditional religious denominations, especially amongst the youth, and furthermore, the Orthodox Church itself repeatedly collaborated with the authorities to silence individual priests who spoke out against official policies.[156] Official attempts to stem this rise in religious fervour ranged from outright repression, including dismissals, fines and arrests – most leading members of the ALRC, for example, were arrested or persuaded to emigrate - to more subtle forms of pressure and persuasion, such as lengthy articles in the

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[151] P Moore, 'Dissent in Romania An Overview,' RFE Research Background Report, Romania/112, June 5th 1978, p.12.

[152] Amnesty International, op cit, pp 5-7.

[153] See: T.Beamish and G Hadley, op cit, pp 140-147. See, also, Amnesty International Briefing, op cit, pp 5-7, for details of the demands and the harsh response from the regime.

[154] Claciu-Dumitreasa, an Orthodox priest, had continually criticised the atheist and anti-religious policies of the Communist government. He openly expressed sympathy for the ALRC, and for the earlier SLOMR, and had been associated with the banned Army of God movement within the Church. In so doing, he clearly broke with the Orthodox Church's policy of subservience and cooperation with the RCP.

[155] M Shafir, Romania, op cit, p.154.

[156] Ibid pp 152-5.

official media.[157] In a 1982 article published in the Young Communist League paper, for example, the regime warned of the dangers of independent religious activity, declaring that individuals who joined unofficial groups were, in effect, displaying acts of "anti-socialist activity."[158] Such subtle, and more direct, threats in the press demonstrated the regime's anxiety to deter the further development of unofficial religious commitment, as well as its continued policy of avoiding a head-on clash with the population if at all feasible. The regime further sought to undermine independent churches and religious leaders via the isolation of outspoken individuals, and a reduction of religious exposure for the population as a whole.[159] Employing such tactics, the government did effectively reduce Church attendance, and gradually strangle the anti-regime influence of religion more generally. Romanian citizens, therefore, were unable to look to the Orthodox Church or to other denominations either as a real source of potential opposition to Communism or as one of its main supports, as was the case particularly in Poland.

(4.2.5) Minority Dissent

Of all the elements of dissent that became evident in the 1970s-80s, minority dissent proved itself to be the most emotional and irreconcilable.[160] Among the substantial Hungarian minority, predominantly concentrated in Transylvania, there were constant protests against alleged national discrimination. The regime's deliberate policies of appointing ethnic Romanians as mayors of predominantly Hungarian regions; and strategies of subtler discrimination via policies of cultural assimilation, all combined to reduce the possibility of advocating national or cultural identities which deviated from the officially-prescribed Romanian.[161] Certainly, most ethnic minorities did not receive the benefits set forth under Article 22 of the

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[157] Anon , 'Religion Under "Real Socialism,"' RFE Research Background Report, Eastern Europe/123, May 31 1979, p.9. A press campaign aimed at discrediting these cults was launched in the late 1970s, and continued into the 1980s

[158] RFE Situation Report Romania, April 20th 1982, p 11.

[159] For example, religious education for the young was prohibited, and "voluntary labour" introduced on significant religious holidays

[160] T.Gilberg, 'Ethnic Minorities in Romania Under Socialism,' in B L Faber, The Social Structure of Eastern Europe: Transition and Process in Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Yugoslavia, 1976 New York, Praegar Publishers, pp 195-224 Ethnic Hungarians who were Romanian citizens numbered between 1 6-2 million - the largest minority within Romania - constituting 7 9 per cent of the population Ethnic Germans numbered approximately only 100,000, less than 1 per cent of the country's population.

[161] See The New York Times, February 1st 1978, for Kiraly's letter re "Romanianisation" protests by ethnic minorities in Romania

Romanian Constitution that, in theory, prescribed the right of representation on all official bodies.[162] Very few officials of non-Romanian descent could be found holding important positions either at local or national levels. Between 1981-3, a Hungarian-language samizdat journal - "Ellenpontok" ("Counterpoints") - appeared, focusing on the lack of fundamental human rights accorded to the national minorities within Romania.[163] Organisers were, typically, systematically harassed, arrested and forced to emigrate. In May 1983, a further samizdat publication, the "Hungarian Press of Transylvania," appeared and was still publishing in 1986. It recorded not only the plight of Hungarian minorities, but also the ills of the Romanian system in general, and carried reports of strikes throughout the country. Such samizdat publications are noteworthy examples of sustained opposition. They failed to attract a wide all-Romanian readership, however, if only due to the underlying and traditional nationalist feelings of anti-Hungarianism that were to be found throughout most social strata. With any manifestation of public discontent portrayed by the Ceausescu regime as being the product of foreign, hostile subversion, these ethnic dissidents stood little chance of attracting wider sympathy or support for their grievances.

The leader of the official Hungarian National Workers Council, Karoly Kiralyi, was perhaps the most prominent dissident voice.[164] In 1977, he sent a letter to the RCP leadership protesting the treatment of ethnic minorities in Romania and their relative lack of influence within the workers' councils. In a second letter, he criticised Party policy in general, attributing the evident problems of the Communist system to errors in the interpretation and application of fundamental socialist principles.[165] In 1979, a second high-ranking Party member, Laja Takacs, and Vice-President of the Hungarian Workers' Council, made public his "Eighteen Demands for Improved Minority Rights," outlining the measures necessary to improve the lot of Romanian minorities.[166] In addition, a small movement of young Swabian German writers

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[162] G Schopflin, 'The Hungarians of Romania,' Minority Rights Group Report, No 37, 1978 London, Minority Rights Group, p 8.

[163] Its editor, Geza Szocs, issued a memorandum to the 1982 CSCE Review Conference in Madrid, and in February 1985, prepared a proposal for the formation of a UN-supervised international agency for the protection of Romanian minorities' rights. In October of the same year, he sent a message focusing on the lack of freedom for writers to the official Cultural Forum in Budapest

[164] In the early 1970s, Kiralyi had been promoted to the RCP Secretariat as part of Ceausescu's policy to co-opt loyal "agents of control" from all groups within Romanian society. See· M Almond, op cit, pp 69-71

[165] G Schopflin, op cit, p 176.

[166] E Freund, op cit, p 66.

protested against the restrictions on German cultural traditions.[167] All attempts to build bridges between divided national minorities, however, were effectively crushed by the force of a pervasive mutual distrust. It is significant, for example, that none of the Hungarian intellectuals who protested the infringement of minority rights, denounced other forms of repression, and, conversely, that none of their demands were supported by Romanian dissidents other than by Paul Goma.[168]

(4.2.6) Technocrats

Rare strikes by industrial workers were swiftly quashed either by force or by the granting of concessions. Both were employed, for example, during the 1977 Jiu Valley miners' strikes, with the result that, although potentially dangerous, such examples of class conflict did not threaten the continued stability of the government. In the long-term, however, potentially the most dangerous class conflict was that between the technically skilled intelligentsia - the technocrats - and the Party. This potential conflict remained latent at all times and did, at times, break out into the open.[169]

During the 1960s, industrialisation and the rapid growth of higher education had greatly increased the size of the technocratic-managerial class, and the post-1965 liberalisation reform programme, with its emphasis on greater efficiency, precipitated a conflict. One of the forms the crisis took followed from the fact that these technocrats were co-opted into the Party hierarchy at all critical levels replacing loyal, but technically incompetent functionaries. Although a cause for rejoicing amongst the former, such policies, threatening as they did the old Communist political elite, in turn, threatened Ceausescu personally. Having briefly supported the rise of the technocrat reformers in 1965-69 for the sake of economic progress, by the end of the 1960s, he was forced to consider his then still unconsolidated position and recognise that it continued to rest on his control of, and loyalty from, the Party organisation. On his return from an official visit to China in 1971, Ceausescu initiated his "little cultural revolution" that reversed the late-1960s trend. RCP control over "economic managers and planners, technical experts, academic personnel, and the literary

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[167]G Schopflin, op cit, p 195.

[168] E Illyes, National Minorities in Romania, Change in Transylvania, 1982 New York, Columbia University Press, p 148.

[169]Such a conflict emerged in 1957, for example, and was resolved, ultimately, with the victory of the professional Party functionaries D Chirot, op cit, p 495.

intelligentsia" was reaffirmed. With the simultaneous encouragement of the growth of the personality cult, the renewed ascendancy of former Party functionaries, or their institutional followers, was assured. The crux of the problem lay, however, with the fact that such a return, albeit a partial one, to ideological purity threatened efficient economic growth as it attacked and reduced the room for manoeuvre of the very cadres who were responsible for managing the increasingly complex and advanced economy.[170] Continued growth would further enlarge both the size and the functional role of the technocrats, and it would, therefore, no longer be so easy to gloss over discontent.

The increasing sophistication of the economy and the stratification of Romanian society inevitably resulted in more influence for the managerial and technical experts, who had emerged in large numbers from the country's universities and research institutions. So long as the Party apparat remained in the hands of professional *political* cadres, whose technical education was basic, conflict was a distinct possibility. The former, admittedly, did need the latter in order to advance their careers, while Party cadres needed the technocrats to improve social and economic conditions, and to propel Romania forward to the over-riding goal of modernity and development. As their services became increasingly crucial, it became ever more improbable that they would perform those services without demanding greater political power. The technocratic opposition to the regime, however, remained an opposition *in potentia*.[171] Primarily as a consequence of the RCP's ultimate control over the bestowing, or otherwise, of elite privileges, and its ability to move those cadres who demonstrated any independence of the official Party line, the RCP was successful in preventing the emergence of technocratic opposition to the regime.

(4.2.7) Peasant Dissent

By the end of the 1970s, the primary aim of the Communist Party (the creation of a modern industrialised working class distributed throughout the country and the gradual elimination of the peasantry as a distinct class) was well on the way to completion. Over the longer term, also, the proportion of the population employed or involved in agriculture would further decline, as an increasing percentage of overall production came from large, mechanised collectives and state units. Many examples

[170]The early 1970s changes were accompanied by a renewed emphasis on the ideological education of Party cadres, and on "ideological appeals rather than material incentives" R K King, 'Ideological Mobilisation in Romania,' RFE Background Report 40, February 21st 1977, p 16

[171] V.Tismaneau, 'Personal Power and Political Crisis in Romania,' op cit, pp.177-198 for an account of the potential for elite opposition to Ceausescu at the end of the 1980s.

of gross inefficiency were detectable; and the synchronisation of production and transportation frequently created severe problems, yet the peasantry, especially in the 1980s, tended to remain silent. The reasons for this are significant.

In the early 1970s, in order to resolve some of the apparent contradictions between socialist collectivised agriculture and private interests, a series of reforms were introduced, emphasising the right of collective members to use privately worked plots, and allowing families who satisfied certain criteria to cultivate more land privately. What is notable is that, although production had been partially reprivatised, the reforms did not represent a retreat from the formal socialist principle of collectivised agriculture. The Party remained adamantly opposed to any return to private holdings in any area that had been collectivised.

Yet private production remained vitally important to Romanian agriculture. For example, while only 9.4 per cent of land in 1974 was privately owned, it produced 20.6 per cent of all fruit, 20 per cent of milk and 14 per cent of eggs. Private collective production fared even better, for while it represented only 6.5 per cent of land, it produced 33 per cent of potatoes, 29.5 per cent of vegetables, 38.5 per cent of fruit, 33.8 per cent of meat, 37.8 per cent of milk and 52.7 per cent of eggs.[172] Whilst the RCP remained willing to adopt a flexible approach, then, (albeit one within strict parameters), the situation remained under control, and, more significantly, so long as individuals were able to satisfy their own personal food consumption needs - and those of their immediate and dependent families - there was no need to press the government to satisfy unfulfilled promises.

These factors are important in an explanation of the under-development of second society in Romania, as they undermined the possibility of political opposition developing out of socio-economic protest along Polish lines. In Romania, unlike Poland or Czechoslovakia, informal networks were generally able to fill the gaps left by the failures of the official economy. The legacy of an overwhelmingly agrarian economy was one that tended to prevent the mobilisation of either the peasantry or the working class in opposition to Communism, as individuals maintained extensive links to the countryside and familial ties for such as food supplies. The extent of these networks successfully countered any attempts to mobilise large numbers in support of opposition activities

[172]D Chirot, op cit, p 483

Furthermore, it must also be noted that alongside the improvements in living standards enjoyed by the Romanian workers as a result of the industrialisation drive, as a consequence of reforms in the 1970s that granted minimum incomes and thereby reduced the peasant-worker differential, peasant family incomes rose significantly.[173] Although differences in remuneration remained substantial, and that benefits such as educational opportunities in rural areas were negligible, and that low status was generally associated with agricultural work, these factors tended merely to encourage further social migration of agricultural workers to the new urban areas, rather than to serve as the basis for a united opposition movement against the regime.

(4.3) Second Society and the Breakdown of Communism in 1989

By the 1980s, it has been shown that the establishment of second society institutions and practices was negligible in Romania. Admittedly, there was evidence to suggest the existence of independent thought and activity amongst all strata of the general population. It has been argued in Sections I and II, however, that the development of opposition peculiar to individual social classes in Romania precluded the emergence of cross-class unity in opposition to Communism. When combined with a lack of leadership from alternative sources of authority within society such as the Romanian Orthodox Church, to speak of an established second society would be a mistake. The regime that Ceausescu had built since 1964 was, it seemed, "safe," an example of an orthodox Marxist-Leninist state, within which there existed no area where opposition ideas could be sown and grown extensively. Although Ceausescu and his wife had engendered the intense hostility of the majority of the Romanian people, except for several scattered and ineffective strikes, there was no persistent, overt resistance to the Communist regime. Personally, Ceausescu was sure of his political survival, despite the democratic murmurs emanating from elsewhere in Eastern Europe in the late 1980s.[174] So much so that, on November 20th 1989, in a speech to the Congress of the RCP, Ceausescu declared, "Scientific Socialism is in absolutely no danger."[175]

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[173] M R.Jackson. 'Industrialisation, Trade and Mobilisation in Romania's Drive for Economic Independence,' in: East European Economies Post-Helsinki, 1977 Washington DC , US Government Printing Office, pp 394-6.

[174] 'Ceausescu Is Adamant He'll Resist,' International Herald Tribune, November 21 1989 Also, M.Shafir, '"Ceausescuism" against "Gorbachevism"' RFE Research, RAD Background Report Romania/95, May 30 1988, pp 1-15

[175] J Simpson, op cit, p 241.

What made the end of 1989 distinct from earlier public outbursts, however, was that, for the first time, the people recognised a real possibility for change. Throughout the 1980s, the Romanian system had altered. For example, the role of television had developed, and was to have a crucial effect on the evolution of the late December 1989 riots into a system-overthrowing revolution; individuals were beginning to recognise that formal organisation held the key to continuing success; and Ceausescu's treatment of the regular armed forces was to be central to the success of the opposition.[176] Although the army was, on the whole, weak and poorly trained, by December, it was "anxious to demonstrate the extent of its new allegiance to the people."[177] In order to make up for its failure to side with the popular cause earlier, it aimed to demonstrate its fitness to carry on serving the people, and to create a new public trust in its loyalty. This loyalty to the Romanian people was to be the decisive factor in the sustenance of the revolutionary momentum in late December.

However, accepting the non-development of distinct second society phenomena, how can the demise of Ceausescu's regime best be explained, given the fact that the instruments of control over the Romanian population were in place by the end of the 1970s, and still very much in evidence throughout the 1980s? With the benefit of hindsight, it is clear that the roots of the Romanian revolution are located in the early 1980s, when the policies of the RCP began to unravel. To this end, a number of potential weaknesses were highlighted throughout Section II. It is important therefore, to briefly summarise the key points that constituted the Romanian economic, cultural and political scene during the mid-late 1980s. By doing so, it will become evident that the December 1989 revolution was a consequence of the newly apparent weaknesses of the Communist state apparatus, as opposed to the result of sustained second society activity. It is my contention that, in December 1989, the state effectively imploded. Once Ceausescu and the Communist government had lost control of events, the state collapsed in on itself. It could not, as in the case of Poland, collapse into the hands of a Solidarity. Because of the absence of sufficiently developed second society associations that could have taken over the reins of power, power could only be "caught" by the support structures of the former Communist state – in this case, the army and the National Salvation Front (NSF).

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[176] For example, reducing their defence and military role in order to employ large numbers within a crippled agricultural sector, marginalising the army in favour of his personally-directed Securitate.

[177] J Simpson, op cit, pp 260-262.

(4.3.1) Economics

The continued pursuit of economic development and the rhetoric accompanying it had been part of Ceausescu's nationalist vocabulary for years. However, development did not imply that the Romanian citizens would share much, if at all, in economic advances. Indeed, as so much of the national income was ploughed back into investment, increases in consumer consumption were consistently deferred.[178] By the mid-1970s, a definite plateau had been reached in Romanian economic growth, and by the end of the decade difficulties and a definite downturn were in evidence. Accumulated debt grew rapidly, and by 1981, the debt service ratio had reached more than 33 per cent.[179] In the same year, Romania sought and received rescheduled payments on outstanding loans that, by then, had reached more than $10 billion.

At this point, Ceausescu made a critical decision. To him, the looming economic crisis had nothing to do with his flawed policies. Instead, the foreign debt was portrayed as the villain, and he proceeded to attack it, relying entirely on domestic austerity to produce the necessary results.[180] Exports were maximised, imports strictly forbidden, and investment in the agricultural sector was squeezed even further in order to allow for the accelerated pace of industrialisation. By 1982, rationing had been introduced; by 1985, most food products were persistently unobtainable; and by 1987, the population was subjected to serious malnutrition. Living standards fell by an average of 40 per cent.[181] Inspite of the increasing hardship experienced by the average Romanian, social and economic crises did not encourage the emergence of an identifiable or sustained opposition to the Ceausescu regime. There were reports detailing over fifty work stoppages, sabotage and other acts of spontaneous protest during 1980-1981.[182] However, the combination of the

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[178] M R Jackson, 'Perspectives on Romania's Economic Development in the 1980s,' op cit, p 275.

[179] S.Orescu, 'Multilaterally Developed Romania An Overview,' in: V Georgescu (ed), Romanian: Forty Years (1944-1984), 1985 Washington DC, Praegar, pp 13-15.

[180] A Maier, 'The Ceausescu Era – An Era of Restrictions,' RFE Romanian Situation Report, June 26th 1985, p 21 Also, P Lewis, 'Economy Tight, Romanians Face a Long Winter,' New York Times, December 15th 1985, p 3

[181] For details of the late 1980s austerity measures, see: R Gillette, 'Romania. A New Winter of Despair,' Los Angeles Times, November 28th 1985 Also, G Lee, 'Austerity Leaves Romanians Short of Food, Fuel and Fun,' The Washington Post, August 24th 1987

[182] The Globe and Mail, November 2nd 1981, and December 3rd 1981

pervasiveness of the Securitate, and the fact that familial networks and communal ties were able to compensate for state failures ensured the continued acquiescence of the population, and that manifestations of opposition were both isolated and sporadic.

Within the agricultural sector, since production failed to live up to expectations, Ceausescu formulated a programme of "systematisation": a plan to erase thousands of villages, partly in order to destroy the last vestiges of private agriculture, partly in order to eliminate the peasants as a group, and partly simply to increase the available area of arable land.[183] The policy aimed to demolish thousands of villages that were considered "less developed" and resettle the people where housing and population density would be optimal.[184] The response to the policies was one of widespread and vocal discontent. Indeed, the opposition was sufficient and the policy delays so prolonged, that some observers were led to conclude that the programme had been set aside.[185] However, and significantly for this study, manifestations of discontent failed to develop to establish identifiable opposition groups, and, subsequently, demands did not coalesce around a particular opposition platform. The Communist regime, therefore, was able to maintain political control over a demoralised society which was peppered with evidence of individual and isolated anti-state feelings amongst both the workers and the peasantry, but one which, without leadership and guidance form the intellectuals, failed to develop any kind of concrete or viable alternative to the status quo

(4.3.2) Socio-Cultural Sphere

Twenty-five years of Ceausescuism had been catastrophic for Romanian culture, and divisive for society, exacerbating tensions between Romanians and ethnic minorities, and creating cleavages between sections of the population, all of which had prevented the development of a viable society-wide base of opposition to the Communist regime.

Ceausescu's minorities policies have been outlined above. By the late 1980s, the consequences were evident. One dramatic sign of particularly Hungarian

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[183] 'Ceausescu's Speech re Systematisation,' Romania Today, May 1988, Special Supplement.

[184] 'Rural Reorganisation,' RFE Research Situation Report Romania/7, 1987, p 14. Also, M Shafir, 'The Historical Background to Rural Resettlement,' RFE Research Situation Report Romania/10, August 23rd 1988, pp 3-8.

[185] W Echikson, 'Hungarians Protest Romanian Plan to destroy Villages,' Christian Science Monitor, June 27th 1988, p 41.

frustration, for example, was the large flow of refugees across the border in the late 1980s.[186] Within Romania, prominent Hungarians became increasingly strident in their criticism of Ceausescu, as samizdat publications once again circulated within Transylvania, reporting on human rights limitations, and cultural and educational repression.[187] Hungarian minority claims failed to attract any significant degree of support from the wider population, however. Decades of intensely nationalistic policies ensured that the majority of Romanians continued to perceive the Hungarian minority as the enemy within national borders. Despite the fact that policies harmful to Hungarians inside Romania enflamed old disputes with Hungary about Transylvania, and that, by 1989, Hungarian complaints at meetings of the CSCE and other human rights forums, signaled that Ceausescu was losing support even from his fellow Communist leaders, minority dissent within Romania failed to present a serious challenge to the Ceausescu regime.[188]

Culturally, since the mid-1970s, Romanian intellectuals had existed within the most constrained environment in Eastern Europe. During the 1980s, inspite of the looming penalties they faced for their opposition, greater numbers did join the lists of dissenters.[189] All shared a common antagonism towards the cultural deprivations they experienced, but, significantly, and distinct from both Poland and Czechoslovakia, most were relatively pro-Marxist in their political leanings.[190] Although they criticised the regime for its deviation from true Marxist theory, at no point, did dissidents formulate a viable alternative to Communist rule, as in Poland in the early 1980s or Czechoslovakia towards the end of the decade. This apparent failure to develop a post-revisionist alternative ensured that, inspite of evident state weaknesses and of increasing independence in society, intellectuals remained isolated and failed to capitalise on the growing discontent amongst, particularly, the workers in Romania.

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[186]The number of citizens who fled is still unclear. Estimates range between 12-15,000 between January 1988 and June 1989 alone. By the end of 1989, between 250-300 were seeking permanent residence in Hungary every week. W.Echikson, 'Hungarian Refugees Spark rare East-Bloc Row,' Christian Science Monitor, June 13th 1988, p 6 Also, M McGrory, 'Hungary For Change,' The Washington Post, National Weekly Edition, July 24-30 1989

[187]V Socor, 'Dorin Tudoran on the Condition of the Romanian Intellectual,' RFE Situation Report Romania/15, 1984, pp.29-31.

[188]'The Dispute with Hungary over Transylvania,' RFE Situation Report Romania/4, 1988, pp.15-19.

[189]C Stefanescu, 'Writer denounces dictatorship,' RFE Situation Report Romania/4, February 22nd 1985, p 19. For an example of the intellectuals' condemnation of Ceausescuism, see: V.Socor, op cit, pp 29-31.

[190] T Gilberg, 'Romania's Growing Difficulties,' Current History, November 1984.

The formers' reluctance to broaden their concerns to include worker-oriented demands, ensured that the historical divide between intellectuals and workers in Romania remained un-bridged, and provided no impetus for the generation of mass public support for a united opposition.

It is significant, however, that dissent did surface in 1989. Idoina Cornea, a former university lecturer, for example, accused Ceausescu of crushing, humiliating and terrorising the Romanian people.[191] In addition, in early 1989, six men who had served in the RCP leadership signed a letter of protest to Ceausescu, accusing him of betraying both the nation and socialism. They expressly condemned the policy of systematisation, human rights violations, and the basic food shortages faced by the average citizen as threatening the future of the nation. Although they recognised the personal danger they would consequently face having written the letter and sent it abroad for broadcast, they stated that they felt compelled to do so because "the very idea of socialism, for which we have fought, is discredited by your policy."[192] Furthermore, it was rumoured that problems within the Securitate had emerged,[193] and the public silence of, particularly intra-Party, Romanian elites appeared to have reached its end.[194] Nevertheless, Ceausescu showed no signs of wavering and he appeared to remain firmly in control. In late 1987 and early 1988, following the Brasov disturbances of November, the security forces clamped down on critical intellectuals, heralding a heightened rigidity within the media, the arts and education, and policies aimed at eliminating the vestiges of Romanian culture which might have served as alternative symbols for allegiance. Unlike the increasingly vocal ethnic minorities, however, the presence of the Securitate and the sense of fear that preceded it, guaranteed the silence and the acquiescence of the majority of intellectuals. Fear operated daily to imobilise even the most alienated individuals.[195]

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[191] D Deletant, 'Crimes Against the Spirit,' Index on Censorship, August 1989, pp 25-34.

[192] The letter was translated in New York Review of Books, April 27th 1989, p 9. See, also, the analysis by M.Shafir and related materials in RFE Romanian Situation Report/3 March 29th 1989, pp 1-14.

[193] Rene de Fleurs, 'Are There Problems in the Secret Service ?' RFE Situation Report, Romania/4, February 22nd 1985, pp.25-7.

[194] On the widening gulf between Ceausescu and the RCP see: The Economist, March 8 1986, p 52

[195] For an explanation of how "fear" prevented the overt mobilisation of intellectual opposition, see. M Sturzda, 'Interviews with Romanians Published in Paris,' RFE Situation Report Romania/6, 1988, p 17.

(4 3 3) Politics

During the 1980s, Romania lost diplomatic credibility and aroused considerable enmity abroad. In the sphere of foreign policy, Romania's international role between East and West had become more limited by 1980-81. A combination of high levels of foreign debt, the regime's human rights abuses and espionage activities abroad,[196] and Ceausescu's personal distance from the new reformist leader in Moscow served to undermine the RCP's policies internationally.[197]

Domestically, the political disaster of the Ceausescu era was more evident, and potentially more threatening. Despite having commanded relatively widespread popular approval in the late 1960s, Ceausescu's unrelenting pursuit of an orthodox Stalinist economic model, and his continual repression of dissent, incrementally weakened his base of personal popular support. Before the onset of the 1980s, for example, domestic antagonism towards Ceausescu or his policies was largely restricted to the individual or to local environs. Rarely did strikes or protests emerge that affected the national population. The majority generally held the belief that the excesses of the Ceausescu system would not affect them personally. The economic and domestic austerity of the later 1980s, however, removed any remaining hope for the Romanian population, and towards the end of the decade, sporadic strikes that posed a real threat to the regime did become visible.[198]

Given the above disasters, the question of how Ceausescu was able to maintain his position throughout the 1980s must be posed. A number of factors should be noted. There are, for example (noting the average Romanian's deference towards authority figures) few instances in Romanian history of large-scale popular revolt against authority. Furthermore, there had been very little contact between the intellectuals and the workers within Romania, a factor that was perpetuated and emphasised under Ceausescu. In addition, there was no alternative political or moral authority in society, such as an independent church to provide the nucleus around

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[196] Amnesty International Report, 1983 London, Amnesty International, pp 272-73.

[197] M Shafir, '"Ceausescuism" against "Gorbachevism,"' RFE Research RAD Background Report/95, May 30th 1988, pp.1-5; and V Socor, 'Romanian-Soviet Relations on the Eve of Ceausescu's Visit to Moscow,' RFE Situation Report Romania/12, October 14th 1988, pp 17-20.

[198] For example, workers and students demonstrated in Iasi in February 1987, with industrial action spreading throughout the summer In Cluj and Timisoara, intellectuals and students protested, with rumours of fire-bombings in Bucharest in the Autumn of 1987. The most serious disturbances occurred in Brasov in November, with thousands of workers protesting additional restrictions on heat light and other domestic essentials

which a dissident movement could develop That is, there was no rallying-point to unite the opposition. The tenacity and resourcefulness of Ceausescu personally should also not be overlooked. He understood how to discourage political opposition, and how to disrupt it in its nascent stages. For an opposition to emerge or even coalesce, it needed visibility, and the ability to appeal to a variety of groups both internally and externally. Given the peculiarities of the Romanian neo-Stalinist political culture, however, the consolidation of such a collective dissident effort failed to materialise. The cult of personality must be given credit in Ceausescu's ability to retain power inspite of failed policies and popular antagonism; and his skills of personnel manipulation via the policy of "rotatie" should not be overlooked. Even though, by the late 1980s, the enforced adulation of the Romanian leader had exceeded the credibility of most citizens, Ceausescu's ever increasing reliance on the Securitate as a tool of repression safeguarded his position. What it also succeeded in doing, however, was damage the overall legitimacy of a socialist system in Romania. Yet intellectuals still failed to formulate ideas regarding any possible alternative.

(4.3.4) Revolution

(4.3.4.1) The Events

It is not my intention to describe the Romanian revolution in detail. Rather, the following section will highlight the events and factors that distinguish the events of late 1989 in Romania from those in Poland and Czechoslovakia. It will also identify the impact of second society on the mode of breakdown experienced by the regime in December.

The triggering event in the downfall of the Ceausescu regime was the escalation of a local issue in the city of Timisoara.[199] In December 1989, when Communist authorities exiled Laszlo Tokes, a Hungarian pastor, for preaching against the regime, Romanians in Timisoara, for the first time breaching nationalist-inspired animosities and, therefore, historical divisions within society, joined their fellow Hungarians in protest.[200] This evidence of mutual support within Romania was extremely significant as a sign of united opposition to Communist rule. Therefore, it was an important signal to the rest of society that December 1989 represented a qualitatively different point in time compared to previous manifestations of discontent. The reasons for this spontaneous demonstration of support are not

[199] For an authoritative version of events, see: L Tokes and D Porter, The Fall of Tyrants: The Incredible Story of One Pastor's Witness, the People of Romania, and the Overthrow of Ceausescu, 1991 Wheaton, Crossway Books

[200] The Observer, Tearing Down the Iron Curtain, 1990 London, Hodder and Stoughton, pp.125-146.

immediately obvious. However, there were a number of contributory factors. For example, the "domino effect" of the peoples' revolutions throughout the rest of Eastern Europe undoubtedly played an important role. Domestically, the unpopularity of recent policies such as the proposed systematisation of villages and increased rationing may well have further distanced the RCP from the Romanian population. Following perhaps the most severe repression in the whole of the Communist bloc, it is arguable that the discontent increasingly evident within Romanian society could have boiled over into crisis at any time.

Significantly, however, it was a series of miscalculations that followed that were more significant for the future of the regime, than the increasing voices of opposition within society.[201] The first mistake was the assumption that Romanians would remain insulated from the events in other East European states. In reality, Romanians were aware of what was happening in neighbouring countries from television stations broadcasting in Hungary and Yugoslavia, and from the BBC and Radio Free Europe. Secondly, Ceausescu's belief that the traditional use of force would contain the uprising was misplaced. The declaration of a state of emergency in Timisoara and the ensuing massacre ordered by Ceausescu simply fuelled discontent throughout the country, with the result that attempts to contain the demonstration as in the past ultimately failed.[202] His third mistake was to rely on the Securitate to maintain control. In the context of the "contained" challenges the regime faced in the Jiu Valley in 1977 or Brasov in 1987, the Securitate had proved sufficient to restore order. However, once the popular riots had spread to neighbouring cities in the aftermath of the Timisoara massacre, Ceausescu was forced to deploy the regular armed forces to work alongside the Securitate. The formers decision to support the popular demonstrations against Ceausecu was a decisive factor in maintaining the momentum of events in December 1989.[203]

On December 20th, only five days after the beginning of the riots, Ceausescu returned to Bucharest following a three-day visit to Iran, and delivered an address to the nation, blaming the troubles on "foreign agents, hooligans, fascists and traitors,"

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[201] G Prins (ed), Spring In Winter The 1989 Revolutions, 1990 Manchester, Manchester University Press, p 156.

[202] V Socor, 'Pastor Tokes and the Outbreak of the Revolution in Romania,' Report on Eastern Europe, February 2 1990, pp 19-26.

[203] The Observer, op cit, pp 129-130

and scheduled a demonstration of support for the regime the following day.[204] Having ignored the real opinion of his people for so long, he felt sufficiently confident to discount the evident warnings of crisis and to believe in the continuity of his omnipotence.[205] At the scheduled rally on December 21st Ceausescu unexpectedly found himself facing a hostile crowd. Instead of chanting the usual adulatory slogans, the people (surprisingly both to Ceausescu and to themselves) called for free elections and laid the blame for the deaths in Timisoara personally with him.[206] The fact that Ceausescu's address to the nation had been televised was a significant factor in the subsequent development of the revolution. The population had witnessed a moment of weakness, however brief, that appears to have been the only encouragement they needed to join the demonstrations. According to eye witnesses, many joined the thousands on the streets believing they had an opportunity to protest against such problems as the worsening state of the economy.[207] Between December 22-25th, many of Romania's major cities bore witness to a bloody civil war, as Securitate forces battled with the people and the regular army for control of the revolution.

The transition to a new government in Romania effectively began only on December 22.nd[208] Within hours of the Ceausescu's escape from Bucharest, a group of predominantly former Communist Party members joined together to form a provisional government, the Council of the National Salvation Front (NSF).[209] Immediately emphasising that it did not seek dictatorial power, and that its authority and membership were temporary, the NSF's earliest statements appeared to project weakness, panic and confusion, as it began to calm the population and to garner support. It is significant that, only that evening, did NSF leaders devise a programme

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[204] Ibid, p.132.

[205] There have also been suggestions that Ceausescu was deliberately misinformed as to the real extent of the mass demonstrations. J Simpson, op cit, p.242

[206] E Behr, Kiss The Hand You Cannot Bite: The Rise and Fall of the Ceausescus, 1991 New York, Villard Books, pp 3-27. For a detailed eyewitness account of events in December see: J Simpson, op cit, pp 244-249.

[207] J Simpson, op cit, p 245

[208] For details of the confusing events between December 22-25, see. M.Calinescu and V.Tismaneau, 'The 1989 Revolution and Romania's Future,' Problems of Communism, Vol 40 No s1-2, January-April 1990, pp 42-55

[209] The group included Communist officials, intellectual and political dissidents, and some military officers See, K.Verdery and G Kligman, 'Romania After Ceausescu: Post-Communist Communism ?' in: I Banac (ed), Eastern Europe in Revolution, 1992 Ithaca, Cornell University Press, pp.117-147.

for the immediate future, one that implied political change.[210] This fact alone is indicative of the surprise with which the Romanian events of late December 1989 took opponents. Given the complete absence of a recognisable opposition and the lack of viable alternatives, if anyone had been able to predict the fall of the dictator himself, few would have foreseen the collapse of the entire system of rule.

It is important here to emphasise the nature of the opposition to Ceausescu in 1989. Growing public protest in late December did not represent the emergence of a mass movement for reform commanding widespread popular appeal, along the lines of Solidarity or Charter 77. Manifestations of opposition, although spreading across the country, failed to generate either the desire or the willingness to establish a cross-class opposition to Ceausescu. Rather, the events should be understood as a spontaneous reaction to a perception of the possibility for some degree of change or reform of the existing systemic framework.

(4.3.5) Mode of Breakdown: Distinguishing Factors

Romania's revolution was altogether different from those witnessed throughout the remainder of Eastern Europe. Whilst Party chiefs were bowing to the will of the people in Poland and Czechoslovakia throughout 1989, in Romania the system remained unchanged. In late December, Communism was ousted in an altogether different way, in a spontaneous battle that no one had anticipated. After it had started, however, the momentum of events was unstoppable.

It is important, therefore, to assess what the Romanian example signified. In many respects, it displays characteristics associated with the *revolutionary* mode of breakdown outlined in Chapter II. In the first instance, the events of late December were preceded by mass mobilisation throughout Romania as support for the exiled Hungarian, Laszlo Tokes, spread from Timisoara to other regions. In addition, regime breakdown was both rapid and violent, as the population defeated Ceausescu's Securitate forces. Furthermore, the establishment of coherent opposition groups after initial public demonstrations is evident in the formation of the NSF as late as December 22nd. These four factors were noted as predominant characteristics of *revolutionary* regime breakdown.

However, certain factors do not fit into this catogory and are more characteristic of the *coup* mode of regime breakdown. Within this category, military

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[210] M E Fischer, 'The New Leaders and the Opposition,' in: D N Nelson (ed), Romania After Tyranny, 1992 Boulder, Westview Press, pp 45-65.

or other elites play a predominant role in ousting the incumbent government from power. In Romania, the central role of the Romanian political elite in dislodging the Ceausescu regime can be seen in the actions of the NSF. Certainly, it cannot be denied that thousands of Romanian citizens supported the revolutionary momentum in Romania. However, second society played virtually no part in *creating* a situation in which opposition to Ceausescu would bring about a system-overthrowing revolution, or in *directing* the momentum of events once begun. This task fell to the NSF as the only group capable of portraying itself as a viable alternative to Ceausescu's Communism. Other swiftly formed groups had no experience or organisational structures, however informal, on which to build.[211] What is significant is that, given the prevailing conditions within Romania and the lack of established independent organisation in society, this group could only have been composed of members of the Communist elite.[212]

Furthermore, it must be noted that the Romanian revolution produced something of a paradox. The overthrow of Ceausescu's regime produced a government led by a party devoted to the principles of the Communist system, albeit a reformed one. This fact was adequately demonstrated in the hastily arranged "democratic," yet restricted elections organised in early 1990. In addition, the provisional government established by the NSF was organised along Communist lines. For example, although ministerial government was established, real power was vested in an Executive Council reminiscent of the former Communist Politburo. At the provincial level, the new government included many Communist army generals and bureaucrats who had switched sides when it became evident that Ceausescu's regime was crumbling. In this respect, the Romanian "revolution" did not produce a definitive break with the Communist past. Therefore, the mode of breakdown experienced by the Communist regime in Romania should be located between the two categories of *revolution* and *coup*.

(4.4) Conclusion

On the surface, Romania demonstrated many of the necessary conditions for the emergence and development of a second society: serious economic difficulties; in

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[211] The ability of the NSF to effectively seize power so swiftly has led to many theories concerning the possibility of a coup d'etat in Romania. For a discussion of the various theories, see. N Ratesh, Romania: The Entangled Revolution, 1991 New York, Praegar Publishers, with the Centre for Strategic and International Studies, pp 80-119.

[212] The NSF was, indeed, an amalgam of former Communist officials The President was Ion Illiescu, the 1960s Party youth leader; his deputy, Dumitru Mazilu had served as a Securitate officer, along with Silviu Brucan, former editor of the Party daily and Romanian ambassador.

the political sphere, a ruling Communist Party with a powerful leader that was increasingly unrepresentative of the popular will, and in which institutionalised opposition was not tolerated; nationalistic traditions of anti-Soviet or Russian sentiments; and extensive citizen dissatisfaction with the internal economic and political scene. However, whereas a similar situation in Poland led to the formation of the Solidarity Trade Union, and in Czechoslovakia to Charter 77, in Romania the results were less significant: lower productivity levels, sporadic protests, incessant complaining, widespread apathy and cynicism, and mass emigration. Organised dissent did exist (in the Jiu Valley, via SLOMR, for example), however, no extensive second society or mass movement emerged. Why was this the case?

It has been suggested that not only were the Romanians a passive population, but that, also, the effectiveness of the security apparatus, particularly in the 1970s-80s precluded the development of any opposition to the Communist regime. Both explanations are important. However, a number of additional factors need to be noted here. Firstly, the interplay between the goals of industrialisation and nationalism must be considered. During the 1970s, in particular, Romania's industrialisation became a national goal, which demanded that sacrifices were accepted for a brighter tomorrow. Industrialisation was also seen as a means to achieve a greater independence from the USSR, thereby capitalising on the intensely nationalistic sentiments shared by the majority of the population. Secondly, with the focus of industrial and economic investment being on heavy industry, the predictable outcome could have been a massive rise in the number of calls to satisfy increasing demands and needs within the consumer sector which, as in Poland and Czechoslovakia, was crucial to the maintenance of systemic stability. Although shortages and queuing were an accepted part of everyday life, so, too, was an increasing reliance on extensive informal networks and underground economies. In Romania, these networks appeared to function adequately, as individuals maintained extensive links to the countryside and to familial ties for food supplies. The traditions of the Romanian agrarian economy prevented the Romanian working class from mobilising in support of economic demands. In addition, in contrast to Poland, the urbanised working class was a much smaller entity in numerical terms and, therefore, not as threatening to the survival of the Communist regime, despite the very real protests and challenges that emerged in the late 1970s.

In addition, Romanian workers lacked the experiences of the working classes in other Communist states, paralleling the generally lower levels of socio-economic development in Romania. The 1977 strikes, for example, brought down, not a

government, but the works' director, which reflected the limited extent of Romanian workers' demands. Furthermore, the working class was highly fragmented, with few living within industrial towns or cities, as the majority maintained close links with the countryside. There were also further divisions along ethnic lines. Most significantly, however, a large gap between the workers and the intelligentsia existed, the two classes divided by mutual suspicion, if not outright hostility. In early 1977, Paul Goma criticised the RCP on the grounds of its anti- or non-socialist development.[213] Not only was this revisionist stance typical of early East European dissent as a whole, and indicative of the lack of development and progress within Romanian opposition forces in particular, it is also significant for its focus on issues of human rights. By contrast, those espoused by the working class continued to centre on economic and self-interest demands with no reference to the wider political system. This was in stark contrast to the distinctly political *and* socio-economic demands put forward by the Polish Solidarity Trade Union in 1980-81. Admittedly, in Romania, SLOMR did begin to develop a distinctly political emphasis with, for example, demands for civil rights for soldiers, and free access to the press and radio. However, its predominant emphasis was on economic bread-and-butter issues. There was notably, moreover, no subsequent attempt by intellectual dissidents to protest against the imprisonment or exile of SLOMR's leaders or to form a society-wide alliance in support of the workers. Even informal contacts between working class activists and intellectual dissidents were almost non-existent, a situation in large part attributable to the policies enacted by the Communist regime which successfully isolated manifestations of dissent, and to the level of overall control exercised by the Securitate.

This lack of real, mass popular support was a major stumbling block, which could, perhaps, have been overcome if the intellectuals had been successful in developing popular or viable alternatives to the Communist system of rule, which could have convinced the average Romanian of the possibility of change. Here, is one of the single most important factors that distinguishes the Romanian events from the Polish and Czechoslovakian. Through its inability to formulate and develop a society-wide alternative, the Romanian opposition was unable to put itself in the position of being a force that could attract the support of the population or one that the Communist regime would have to contend with. Because of its lack of well-established and extensive second society institutions and practices, the Romanian opposition was unable to portray itself as a government-in-waiting. In 1989, therefore, the revolution could only have been a spontaneous one; the people buoyed up by the

[213] T Beamish and G Hadley, op cit, pp 143-145.

recent events in neighbouring Communist countries, protested without intellectual or other independent leadership prior to the emergence of the NSF.

With regard to the issue of nationalism, it must be recalled that Romanians were ardently nationalistic. During the Communist period, there were no Soviet troops within Romanian borders; the RCP pursued policy initiatives independent from Moscow, particularly in the foreign policy sphere. Consequently, capitalising on historic anti-Russian sentiments, the RCP leadership commanded a relatively higher degree of popular legitimacy than elsewhere in Eastern Europe. Anti-Soviet nationalism had the effect of binding the state and the people in such a way that the RCP was able to use this ideology to stifle internal dissent and the emergence of second society institutions. The Party elite consistently used the threat of a Soviet invasion to justify its retreat from liberal reform. This threat helped to keep a rein on domestic protest, particularly among intellectuals. The Orthodox Church, too, adopted many of the same nationalist positions as the RCP and, therefore, was thoroughly integrated into the Party-state organisation. At no time, unlike the Roman Catholic Church in Poland, did it act as a saviour of independence or as a shelter for independent dissident activity.

Romania provides us with an example of an apparently strong and repressive state apparatus and a very weak second society. It has been shown, however, that the Communist state did have a number of inherent weaknesses. Consequently, when these were exposed in 1989, the system, having no effective support structure, collapsed. Furthermore, as a consequence of the under-development of second society, regime transition was predominantly dependent upon former RCP members cashing in on the popular uprisings throughout Communist Europe, to give leadership and direction to the spontaneous demonstrations that occurred in Romania. The second society, such as it existed, lacked any form of organisational basis with social movements forming distinct political opposition groups only post-1989.

Consequently, in many respects, Romania represents the counter-case of this thesis, with its marked absence of second society or other independent activity during the 1980s. The absence of a well-developed second society and of organised dissident movements meant that, even when the weaknesses of the regime were exposed, it proved more resilient to genuine political transformation. 1989, therefore, saw a relatively old guard of dissident Communist elements within the existing state structure take-over the reins of power. The "from below" spontaneous revolution was eclipsed by a coup "from above" which aimed at preserving the old system with only

a minimum of concessions. Furthermore, the lack of restraint that would have been imposed by the existence of an organised second society resulted in high levels of accompanying violence. Only later in the 1990s would the process of second society strengthening and coalition building occur in Romania.[214]

[214]See. V.Tismaneau, 'The Revival of Politics in Romania,' in Nils H.Wessell (ed), The New Europe: Revolution in East-West Relations, Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science, 38/1, New York 1991, pp 85-91.

CHAPTER V: CZECHOSLOVAKIA CASE STUDY

Waves of East Germans flowing through Czechoslovakia and Hungary to the West towards the end of 1989 held the attention of young Czechs and Slovaks, opening their minds to the possible impotence of their security police and the potential for mass action. In August 1989, not one Czechoslovak foresaw the collapse of November. Miroslav Holub, for example, could only have predicted a "burst of positive feeling."[1] The possibility of change had been represented in neither opposition theorising, nor in the more popular medium of Czechoslovak literature, and it was, therefore, neither foreseen nor expected. The surprisingly rapid collapse of Communist power in Czechoslovakia, however, was representative of the failure of the Soviet system to secure legitimate popular support throughout Eastern Europe post-1945. In a sense, if the Soviet Union could not impose Communism on Czechoslovakia, it stood no chance of doing so elsewhere. The Czechoslovak Communist Party (CCP) and government apparatus were never as repressive as in Poland or Romania; Czechoslovakia, itself, had emerged from World War II, the least damaged country economically in Eastern Europe; and both the Czechs and Slovaks had retained a minimal cultural and political affinity with the Russians.

However, in the late 1980s, the Soviet Union often appeared blind to the steadily eroding base of popular Czechoslovak support for the Communist regime and the alliance with the Soviet Union. In Czechoslovakia, there was a growing sense that the enormous Soviet power network - permeating the Party, the trade unions, the secret police, the army and the media - was profoundly out of touch with the realities of the country, precisely because those institutions appeared out of touch themselves. The Czechoslovak population was turning inward, engaging in what was called "anti-politics," or internal immigration into their own private lives.[2]

The intention of this case-study chapter is to analyse the impact of the second society on the mode of regime breakdown in Czechoslovakia. Post-1945, the country witnessed a relatively low development of second society. Periodically, independent activity was certainly intense, however these efforts were strongly controlled or repressed, and tended to be isolated from mainstream political life. It is my contention

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[1] Interview with Miroslav Holub by A.S Byatt, 'In Search of an Enemy Symposium,' Cheltenham Festival of Literature, Friday 6th October 1995

[2] V.Havel, 'The Power of the Powerless,' in: Vaclav Havel et al (eds.), The Power of the Powerless, 1985 London, Palach Press, pp 23-96 See also his essay 'Anti-Political Politics' in: J Keane (ed), Civil Society and the State, 1988 London, Verso, pp 381-398.

that, as a direct consequence of this, in 1989 the country experienced sudden regime collapse following some of the most severe repression of the decade, with second society playing only a minimal role in conditioning the mode of breakdown experienced by the Communist regime. Only during the actual period of transition can we talk of coherent social movements embedded in a second society having a distinct impact on the political process. The transfer of power in 1989 from the Communist Party to the democratic wing, represented by "Civic Forum" and "Public Against Violence" was, however, peaceful, suggesting that the unofficial activity that could be witnessed had a tempering effect on the potential violence of the breakdown situation. In this respect, the Czechoslovakian "velvet revolution"[3] takes on significance being the case-study example located between the two extremes of Poland and Romania.

The Czechoslovak case-study chapter will follow the same structure as that of the preceding two. Section I will consider historical cultural and political factors, and will specifically highlight those features that had a direct bearing on the evolution of second society in Czechoslovakia. To that end, only certain aspects of the country's history will be examined in the light of their impact on the development of opposition to Communism. Section II will examine the development of opposition to Communism, focusing on the post-1968 period until the early to mid-1980s, in particular. Principal attention will be paid to the immediate post-1968 opposition and to the issuing of the Charter 77 document and its impact on Czechoslovak society. The final section will examine the late 1980s and the impact of Mikhail Gorbachev's policies introduced in the Soviet Union on the Czechoslovak Communist regime itself, and will demonstrate how the particular form of second society that was in existence contributed towards the form the breakdown of Communism took in Czechoslovakia.

(5.1) History and Political Traditions

The purpose of this section is to examine certain characteristics of Czechoslovak history that had an impact on the evolution of a second society in the post-1945 Communist period. In that respect, particular conditions in Czechoslovakia prior to the establishment of the Communist system differed in many ways from the other East European satellite states, and indicate the existence of a qualitatively

[3] The Observer, Tearing Down the Iron Curtain, 1990 London, Hodder and Stoughton, pp 100-101.

different state in 1945 when compared to both Poland and Romania.[4] Reflected in the country's level of economic development, social structure, culture, political organisations and traditions, as well as in the values, attitudes and beliefs of the population, such factors had a significant impact on the way in which the Communist system was established, and on the evolution of second society. Although certain elements did undergo a process of change between 1945 and 1989, the distinctive features of the country's history influenced both the options open to political leaders, and the way in which the citizenry reacted to elite initiatives and they are, therefore, significant to any analysis of the development of opposition to Communism in Czechoslovakia.[5]

Economically Czechoslovakia had a relatively developed economy from the outset, with higher levels of industrialisation and urbanisation than neighbouring Poland and Romania.[6] Consequently, while political leaders elsewhere in the region embarked upon programmes of rapid industrialisation and were forced to deal with accompanying social demands, the process in Czechoslovakia was already well under way in 1945. In the political realm, also, Czechoslovakia diverged.[7] Unlike neighbouring Communist regimes, democratic government survived in Czechoslovakia until "ended" by outside forces,[8] and did not succumb to pressures to establish a republic or constitutional monarchy in the name of stability.[9] The persistence of democracy was also facilitated, firstly, by the existence of the acknowledged social prerequisites (widespread literacy, a large middle class and strong traditions of autonomous pluralistic activity, for example) and by the values and actions of many Czech and Slovak leaders. Their general respect for democratic

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[4]For a history of Czechoslovakia during the inter-war period, see: R.W.Seton Watson, A History of the Czechs and Slovaks, 1943 London, Ch 16, and Robert J Kerner (ed), Czechoslovakia: Twenty Years of Independence, 1940 Berkeley.

[5]For a brief overview of the importance of historical factors, see H Gordon Skilling, Czechoslovakia's Interrupted Revolution, 1976 Princeton, Princeton University Press, Ch.1.

[6]Vaclav L Benes, 'Czechoslovak Democracy and Its Problems,' in: V.S Mamatey and R Luza (eds), A History of the Czechoslovak Republic, 1919-1948,1973 Princeton, Princeton University Press, pp 42-3. See also. A.Janos, 'The One-Party State and Social Mobilisation. East Europe Between the Wars,' in S P Huntington and C Moore (eds.), Authoritarian Politics in Modern Society, 1979 New York, Basic Books, p.208.

[7]Josef Korbel, The Communist Subversion of Czechoslovakia 1938-1948 the Failure of Coexistence, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1959, pp 67-71.

[8] V L Benes, op cit, p.44.

[9] Josef Anderle, 'The First Republic 1918-1938,' in: Hans Brisch and Ian Volgyes (eds.), Czechoslovakia, the Heritage of Ages Past, New York, Columbia University Press, 1979, pp 89-112.

procedures and awareness of the necessity for compromise in a democracy, were reflected in the general stability of the coalition governments throughout this period.[10]

Notably, Czechoslovak democracy also benefited from the fact that there were fewer alienated groups within society than in many other East European countries. In particular, the CCP remained legal throughout the life of the Czech Republic and succeeded in attracting a considerable degree of genuine support. Founded in 1921, the Party had emerged out of a long-standing socialist movement that had substantial public support before the country gained its independence. The fact that it existed in what was to remain the only functioning democracy in the region was a mixed blessing for the Party leadership. On the other hand, the necessity of operating in an electoral democracy did impose certain constraints and led the CCP to adapt its structures and actions to the particular demands of the Czechoslovak environment.[11]

The impact of certain aspects of the pre-Communist culture was evident in a number of ways throughout the Communist period. The continued influence of the pluralistic elements in Czechoslovakia's political traditions, for example, was reflected in the reform movement of the 1960s. Although revisionist in orientation and led by intra-Party reformers, the movement evoked broad support for political reform and pluralism amongst the wider population. These democratic traditions adopt a greater significance via their apparent absence during the 1970s and early 1980s, however. This would appear to indicate that despite having the appearance of a state that would be supportive of democratic procedures in the polity, economy, and society, Czechoslovakia succumbed to Communism by the early 1970s. Furthermore, it was the particular characteristics of that Communist system which prevented the emergence of independence in society during the later stages of Communist rule.

(5.1 1) The Czech Lands and Slovakia

In 1939, Czechs and Slovaks experienced very different levels of economic development, political experiences, national traditions, and histories.[12] The cultural heritage of these two peoples also differed substantially and it is significant that these

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[10] J Korbel, op cit, pp.38-62, and V S Mamatey, 'The Development of the Czechoslovak Democracy,' in. V.S Mamatey and R Luza, op cit, pp 99-166.

[11] Zdenek Suda, Zealots and Rebels: A History of the Ruling Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, 1980 Stanford, Hoover Institution Press, Ch 2

[12] Z.Krystufek, The Soviet Regime in Czechoslovakia, 1981 Boulder, Columbia University Press, pp 13-14

differences continued into the Communist period also and ultimately prevented the evolution of a united cross-societal movement of opposition to Communism.

In the economic sphere, the differences were most noticeable. The Czech Lands were, for example, far more developed industrially than Slovakia, and were more urbanised. In 1921, for example, 336.4 of every 1000 inhabitants in the country as a whole were employed in industry, and 395.6 in agriculture. In Bohemia and Moravia-Silesia (Czech Lands), the figures were 406 and 378 per 1000 employed in industry respectively, but only 175 in Slovakia, where much larger proportions of citizens were employed in the agricultural sector (606.3 per 1000).[13] Slovak experiences during World War II, when the republic suffered more extensive war damages than the neighbouring Czech Lands, merely served to reinforce these historic economic disparities. In 1946, Slovak national income accounted for only 21.6 per cent of the Republic.[14] During the 1950s and 1960s, Slovakia's share of industrial production did gradually increase, and the stratification of the population did level off considerably. Complete equality with the Czech Lands, however, was never achieved. Post-1968, differences in the average annual income of the two increased further.

The political experiences of the population also differed in the two parts of the country. Ruled from Vienna, the Czech Lands benefited from the moderation of Austrian rule that occurred in the late 1800s. Czech politicians and citizens, therefore, had an increasing number of opportunities to participate in public life within the framework of imperial and regional institutions.[15] In Slovakia, by contrast, as in other areas under Hungarian rule, there was little room for non-Magyars to participate in the political sphere.[16] In addition, Slovaks faced much greater pressure to relinquish their cultural identity altogether and to assimilate to the dominant nationality.[17] Such historical divergences are important in explaining the relative lack of commitment to opposition causes on the part of the average Slovak, when compared to that of the Czech population during the 1970s and 1980s, and is significant with regard to the

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[13]Owen V.Johnson, Slovakia, 1918-1938: Education and the Making of a Nation, New York, Columbia University Press, 1985, p 77, and V L Benes, op cit, p 43

[14] Z.Krystufek, op cit, p 13.

[15] O.Johnson, op cit, pp 15-49

[16] S H.Thomson, Czechoslovakia in European History, 2nd Edition, 1953 Princeton, Princeton University Press, pp 260-275.

[17]O Johnson, op cit, pp 15-49.

failure of dissidents to form a united national movement of opposition against Communist rule.

(5.1 2) Religion and the Role of the Church

The Czechs and Slovaks who came together in the inter-war republic were also separated by religious differences which influenced the political ideas and values of each group post-1945, and had a specific impact on the development of second society. Although the majority of both groups were nominally Roman Catholic, the nature of Catholicism differed among the two, as did the relationship of religion and nationalism, and the overall impact of religion on politics. Although most Czechs were Catholics, a more secularised culture had come to predominate in the more developed Czech Lands before independence, and the Roman Catholic Church played a negligible role in the political life of the Czechs during the inter-war period, a feature which prevailed after 1945.[18] This was in sharp contrast to the historical role of the Church in Poland, where Catholicism had long served as a bulwark of the Polish people in their various struggles for independence against foreign rule. Catholicism in the Czech Lands was not tied to a sense of national identity that grew out of the efforts of historical leaders as in Poland, or Slovakia.

Slovakia, too, developed a Protestant tradition during the period of the Reformation; and Protestant intellectuals did play a prominent role in early efforts to develop a national movement in Slovakia. However, despite the continued significance of Protestantism in Slovakia, the Catholic Church came to exert a much stronger influence on the personal lives and political beliefs and behaviour of Slovaks pre-1945. Given the lower urbanisation and literacy levels there, the Catholic clergy became important public figures, and, as the inter-war period progressed, clerics used their traditional authority as a base for developing a more explicit political role. Giving voice to mounting Slovak resentment, they became leaders of the movement to promote Slovak national aims.[19] Furthermore, it is significant that the tie between Catholicism and nationalism in Slovakia was strong. When national aspirations were, to an extent, fulfilled by the 1969 reform of the country's federal structure, the Church was seen to adopt a more regime-supportive role, and did not switch its attention to the defence of human and civil rights as did the Catholic Church in Poland. It therefore failed to become a shelter and a support for a democratically oriented opposition.

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[18]S H Thomson, op cit, pp 69-119 and 257-259.

[19]Ibid, pp.334-5.

(5.1.3) A Submissive Nation

A particular facet of Czechoslovak tradition which should not be overlooked is the supposed willingness of the nation and its leaders to adapt passively to any given political system, and their apparent reluctance to oppose authority via violent or revolutionary means. A traditional Czechoslovak saying states that, "The Czechoslovak population may dissent but they do not actively oppose."[20] The opposition was traditionally done by a much smaller group of active dissenters on behalf of the people.[21] It must be pointed out, however, that such traditions relate primarily to the Czechs and not to the Slovaks. The former do lack a revolutionary past along the lines of that of the Poles, and this particular Czech characteristic was very much in evidence during World War II. Czechs generally contented themselves with acts of passive resistance or adaptation and collaboration with the German rulers, which did not bode well for the future of opposition.[22] Unlike in Poland, Czechs did not have a conspiratorial or revolutionary tradition on which to build post-1945. In Slovakia, by contrast, a country with a history of opposition to social injustice and a strong sense of Slovak nationalism, opponents of the regime did organise themselves more effectively during the war. In August 1944, for example, the resistance movement staged an armed uprising. Although unsuccessful it did, however, give Slovaks a basis for nationalist claims of consideration in the formulation of the post-war order, the non-fulfilment of which would provide the foundations for all forms of Slovak opposition to Communist rule until 1969.[23]

(5 1 4) 1945-1948· Institution of Communist Dominance

(5.1 4.1) The Establishment of Communism in Czechoslovakia

In many of the East European states that became Communist after 1945, a Communist system was clearly imposed by outside actors.[24] Such factors also played an important role in Czechoslovakia, where the proximity of Soviet troops and the advantages the CCP derived from the country's special relationship with the Soviet

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[20] J Korbel, Twentieth Century Czechoslovakia The Meaning of its History, 1977 New York, Columbia University Press, p 253.

[21] J Pelikan, Socialist Opposition in Eastern Europe· The Czechoslovak Example, 1976 London, Allison and Busby Ltd , p 36.

[22] Ibid, pp 160-4

[23] Arina Josko, 'The Slovak Resistance Movement,' in V S Mamatey and R Luza (eds), op cit, pp 362-86

[24] J Rothschild, Return to Diversity, 2nd Edition 1993 Oxford, Oxford University Press, pp 76-8.

Union and its association with the liberating troops clearly aided the imposition of the Communist system. However, the CCP also had a substantial degree of indigenous domestic support. In part, this reflected the Party's strength during the inter-war period, when Czech and Slovak Communist leaders were able to capitalise on generally progressive political traditions. In addition, although liberated in large part by the Red Army, Czechs and Slovaks managed to retain some freedom of action and to sustain a political system in which non-Communist forces played a significant role longer than any other country in Eastern Europe. From 1945 to February 1948, the country enjoyed a modified form of pluralism, with the CCP sharing leadership of the state with representatives of other parties.[25] From 1945 onwards, however, the CCP did enjoy certain advantages over its democratic opponents, which were crucial to its consolidation of power at the end of the decade. These included, for example, the political and other benefits derived from the Party's association with the liberating Red Army.[26] The Communists were also the beneficiaries of post-war agreements that banned those parties that had collaborated with the Nazis and the wartime Slovak state. This effectively limited the number of legitimate parties to four Czech and two Slovak.[27] The CCP also benefited from the fact that it controlled numerous key industries, including the Ministries of Information, Education and Agriculture. These positions allowed the Communist Party to have a disproportionate influence on the availability of information and control of the police, as well as to garner popular support by distributing confiscated German lands, and controlling admission to educational institutions. They were thus able to attract genuine support through measures that consistently appealed to the patriotism of the population.

As a result of these factors (and also, to a certain extent, of the opportunism of those who saw the CCP as the probable victor in any post-war political struggle) the CCP's membership increased substantially, and reached over one million in 1946.[28] Furthermore, the Party enjoyed considerable support amongst non-members in the immediate post-war years, particularly in the Czech Lands, a fact supported by the results of the 1946 elections, in which the Party received 36.8 per cent of the national

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[25] Z Brzezinski, The Soviet Bloc: Unity and Conflict, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1967, pp 18-19

[26] H Seton-Watson, The East European Revolution, New York, Praegar Publishers, 1956, pp 339-71.

[27] Z.Suda, op cit, pp 178-84

[28] Ibid, p 195.

vote, the largest percentage gained by any political party.[29] By means of fierce anti-German campaigning - especially following the annexation of the Sudetenland - and other nationalistic propaganda, the CCP portrayed itself as the most consistent guardian of national interests. In addition, in domestic policy, there were no radical socio-economic transformations beyond a limited commitment to the nationalisation of certain industries and the redistribution of large land estates to the peasantry; and the CCP did not abuse its control of the police apparatus or other instruments of intimidation to the extent of its Communist comrades throughout Eastern Europe. Thus the CCP nourished the widespread impression that it was different from other Communists and embodied the principles of patriotism, reform and reliability.[30] During the 1946 election campaign the Party adopted a pragmatic policy programme, tactfully omitting any reference to socialism, instead emphasising nationalism as opposed to the class struggle or other Marxist-Leninist inspired doctrines.[31] Thus, whereas in Poland, the Communist system had clearly been imposed by the Red Army and was therefore perceived as illegitimate from its inception, in Czechoslovakia, the new system originally had a sizeable number of genuine supporters. In 1945, the USSR did not move into Czechoslovakia as an enemy: it was a victorious power and more-or-less welcomed as a "big brother" with Germany perceived as the natural enemy.[32]

In essence, threats of German revisionism gave the Czechoslovaks a powerful national interest in an alliance with the Soviet Union as a guarantor of their territorial integrity after 1945. In Czechoslovakia, therefore, the Communist Party could draw on attitudes that were favourable towards the Russians. This factor was in marked contrast to the post-war situation in Poland and Romania, where the Soviet Union was perceived as the country's traditional aggressor. The popularity of the CCP overall was attributable to a number of factors: to its pre and inter-war nationalistic positions; on its central role within the resistance movement, especially in Slovakia; and to the traditional pro-Russian stance of both Czechs and Slovaks. It must also be noted, however, that the CCP held specific attractions for virtually all social strata, with the

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[29]See S L Wolchik, Czechoslovakia in Transition: Politics, Economics and Society, 1991 New York, Pinter Publishers, pp.17-19. Also, P Zinner, Communist Strategy and Tactics in Czechoslovakia 1918-1948, 1963 New York, Praegar Publishers.

[30] J Rothschild, op cit, p.91.

[31]H Renner, A History of Czechoslovakia Since 1945, 1989 London, Routledge, p 15

[32]Miroslav Holub, Interview, Cheltenham 1995, op cit

workers and youth being particularly susceptible to aspects of Communist politics.[33] Given the collapse of the democratically oriented inter-war system, sections of the population - particularly the academic and scientific elites - were seeking, and willing to support some kind of viable alternative in 1945.

A further point should be made here, which relates to the divergence between the Czech and the Slovak experience post-World War II. In 1945, out of a total population of 12.2 million, Slovaks numbered 3.4 million, living within a predominantly agrarian Slovakia. Slovak national income accounted for only 21.6 per cent of the entire Republic reflected in an income per capita equal to only 70 per cent of that of the Czech Lands.[34] In 1945, the declarations of Communist Party leaders appeared to suggest their support for Slovak national requirements. However, the discrepancy between words and intentions particularly with regard to the question of autonomy, meant that Slovakia resisted the Communist lure much more effectively than its Czech counterpart. In the immediate post-war years, for example, CCP membership in the Czech Lands increased rapidly, by nearly 700,000 between March 1945-March 1946. In contrast, Slovakian membership of the CCP reached only 197,000 (including 20,000 former Social Democrats) at the end of 1945. By March 1946, this figure had *dropped* to 151,330.[35] These figures were reflected in the May 1946 elections to the Constituent National Assembly, in which the Czech Communist Party received 40.1% of votes, the Slovak only 30.37%.[36] Although the 1948 Constitution did provide for organs of Slovak self-government and, rhetorically, the CCP did continue to recognise the separate identity of the Slovak nation, in 1946, the CCP reacted to the election results with a sharp reversal of its previous policies re Slovakia. All promises of autonomy were forgotten, and in June 1946, via the 'Third Prague Agreement,' Slovak Party autonomy was abolished altogether, thereby creating the basis for the relations that existed until 1968.[37] Internal Party arrangements also completely ignored Slovak desires for autonomy.[38] It is particularly significant with regard to the evolution of second society that the evident pre-war

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[33] H Renner, op cit, pp 16-18

[34] Z.Krystufek, op cit, pp 13-15.

[35] Ibid, p.19.

[36] Ibid, Appendix 6, p 229

[37] Ibid, pp 19-20

[38] The 1969 Constitution openly articulated extreme centralism and reduced the existing forms of Slovak self-government to nil.

divergences continued post-1945 which, in turn, had a specific impact on the possibilities for national unity.

The 1948 Coup

The uneasy truce between the CCP and other political forces in Czechoslovakia ended in February 1948.[39] The immediate catalyst for the institution of a government clearly dominated by the Communist Party was a crisis over control of the police that led to the resignation of the non-Communist ministers in government.[40] Although other parties continued to be nominally represented, the reconstituted government was clearly controlled by Klement Gottwald and the CCP. The May 1948 elections, which offered voters a choice between candidates approved by the CCP only, reflected the new political realities. A perceived declining public popularity after the high of the 1946 elections had also been reflected in an increased militancy amongst Party leaders, which had intensified efforts to ensure Communist dominance in positions of power in both the state bureaucracy and the police force.[41] It is also significant, however, that the Communist take-over was legal, constitutional, and free from overt violence. This factor is significant with regard to the claims of legitimacy the CCP could make post-1948.[42]

1948-1962: Implementation of Stalinism

Post-February 1948, the CCP leadership began the implementation of the Stalinist model of political organisation, social transformation and economic development in earnest.[43] The desire to emulate the Soviet experience, though it conflicted with the dominant historical political and cultural values, was evident in the severity of the purges and the terror that accompanied the consolidation of Communist authority. In the political realm, earlier attempts to discredit and reduce the power bases of non-Communist actors were escalated, as were measures designed to strengthen the organisational base of the CCP, and ensure its domination over all

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[39]For a more detailed analysis of the Communist take-over of Czechoslovakia, see: Karel Kaplan, The Short March: The Communist Take-over in Czechoslovakia 1945-1948, London, C Hurst and Co. Ltd, 1987. Also, M Myant, Socialism and Democracy in Czechoslovakia 1945-8, 1981 Cambridge, Cambridge University Press

[40]J Korbel, op cit, pp 210-20

[41]Ibid, p 244. See also: J Lettrich, History of Modern Slovakia, 1955 New York, Praegar Publishers, pp 236, 257-8

[42] V F Kusin, 'Czechoslovakia,' in. M McCauley (ed.), Communist Power in Europe 1944-9, 1977 London, p 92 for details of the levels of popular support for the coup

[43] D Adams Schmidt, Anatomy of a Satellite, 1952 Boston, Little and Brown, pp 109-110, 134-5.

things political.[44] Party loyalists were brought in to fill government offices, and government organs at all levels were subordinated to the Party. A system of strict censorship was imposed, as the CCP attempted to politicise all areas of life, including education, culture and leisure. Anti-Communist newspapers and periodicals were closed and non-Communist ones purged, followed by universities, professional bodies, sports clubs, the publishing industry and the civil and military services. The Party leadership also embarked on a renewed campaign of recruitment. By spring 1948, membership had reached two million, approximately one-fifth of all adults.[45] The campaign supplemented the influx of members from the former Social Democratic Party, which, significantly, further diversified the CCP's social composition by bringing in large numbers of middle class and white-collar members [46] The associational life of the country - which traditionally reflected the pluralistic and multiparty history of the country - was further simplified. Voluntary associations - including trade unions, student groups and women's associations - had been centralised since 1945, reflecting the requirement that they be part of nation-wide umbrella organisations and the National Front. After February 1948, the non-Communist groups were dissolved, and all unified mass organisations subordinated to the CCP. A system of mass, unified organisations was established in order to mobilise members to carry out goals determined by the CCP.

Prior to the Communist take-over of power in 1948, legal parties in Czechoslovakia, not just the CCP, were committed to a policy of nationalisation, which was essentially completed before the Communist coup. In 1948, earlier nationalisation policies were supplemented with a programme designed to increase central control over the economy. Political measures were, therefore, supplemented by economic policies, including the further nationalisation of all enterprises employing more than fifty workers, all breweries, bakeries and dairies, and all those engaged in foreign or wholesale trade; severe restrictions on private inheritance; and currency reform.[47] The policy was specifically designed to reduce the economic

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[44]Ibid, p 255; and P.Zinner, Communist Strategy and Tactics in Czechoslovakia, 1918-1948, New York, Praegar Publishers, 1963, pp 196-223, for details of the propaganda campaign against the leaders of other parties.

[45] J.Rothschild, op cit, p 96

[46]Z.Suda, op cit, pp 225-6

[47] For brief discussion of socio-economic changes between 1945-8, see: J Korbel, op cit, pp 38-41; and J Stevens, Czechoslovakia at the Crossroads: The Economic Dilemmas of Communism in Post-war Czechoslovakia, Boulder CO, East European Monographs, 1985, pp 7-11.

power base of non-Communist elites in society. The process was so rapid that, by 1949, all but 4% of the labour force were employed in state enterprises,[48] and, ultimately, legislation was enacted abolishing all private ownership.[49] As was the case throughout Eastern Europe, planners adopted ambitious programmes of rapid industrialisation, with a particular emphasis on heavy industry and the mobilisation of all available labour resources. A typical Stalinist five-year plan was adopted on January 1st 1949,[50] and the agricultural sector was transformed through a collectivisation drive that began in earnest in 1950.[51] A mixture of material incentives and coercion was used to induce farmers to join collective farms and, thereby, succeeded in greatly increasing state control over the entire sector. By 1960, over 90% of all farmland in Czechoslovakia had been collectivised.[52]

The CCP recognised the Roman Catholic Church to be a potentially dangerous factor and mounted a concerted campaign against religion during this period.[53] Until the 1948 coup, the CCP had refrained from religious persecution and, consequently, there had been no radical changes in the status of the churches. After February 1948, however, the CCP launched a campaign to bring them under complete state control. Directed mainly against the Roman Catholic Church, which embraced 75% of the population, the campaign passed through several stages. Between February 1948 and the summer of 1949, the regime adopted an outwardly conciliatory attitude toward the Church, but one also combined with measures designed to destroy its economic independence. Seminaries and religious schools were closed, and Church property confiscated. The second stage from Summer 1949 to February 1951, was characterised by the regime's all-out offensive with policies aimed at converting it into a pliable instrument of domestic and foreign policy, and culminated in the breakdown of the Church's open resistance. Priests were subjected to political

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[48] J Korbel, Twentieth Century Czechoslovakia, op cit, p 261.

[49] P.Zinner, op cit, pp 226-8

[50] J Rothschild, op cit, p 96.

[51] M Myant, The Czechoslovak Economy 1948-1988 the Battle for Economic Reform, 1989 Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, pp 4-8. Also, A.Teichova, The Czechoslovak Economy 1918-1980, 1988 London, Routledge, p.101.

[52] J.Stevens, op cit, pp 16-57.

[53] For a more in-depth analysis of relations between the Church and the state in Czechoslovakia, including an historical background, see: Vatislav Butek, 'Church and State,' in: V.Butek and N Spulber (eds), East-Central Europe Under the Communists: Czechoslovakia, New York, Praegar Publishers, 1957.

controls and their numbers significantly reduced, with members of the clergy virtually becoming state-paid civil servants following the introduction of a late 1949 decree which demanded that an oath of loyalty to the government was required of all clergymen. Harassment of churchgoers was widespread and, consequently, outward manifestations of religious belief declined.[54] With the final capitulation of the Bishops to the regime's demand for all to sign the loyalty oath, instead of their traditional role of spiritual guardians, the priests were then forced to echo the Party line and to preach unquestioning obedience to the state. In February 1951, the CCP took steps to further the disintegration of hierarchical authority within the Roman Catholic Church, which had effectively born the brunt of the regime's attacks on the churches. In addition to 43 per cent of parish priests, all dignitaries who were unwilling to compromise were purged.

Concurrent with its principal campaign against the Catholic Church, the regime gradually destroyed the autonomy of other denominations. As with the Catholic Church, all international connections of the remaining churches were severed. When combined with their general numerical weakness[55] and traditional dependence upon the state for financial support, the non-Catholic churches found themselves in the position of being "out-numbered, isolated and surrounded" from 1948 onwards.[56] Intimidation, arrests and other repressive measures swiftly broke any remaining open resistance. The "Association of Protestant Pastors" and the "Evangelical Union," for example, were disbanded, their property confiscated, and their collaboration effectively secured by removing all dignitaries and officials and replacing them with men of "progressive" persuasion. The Slovak Lutheran Church (which had played a prominent role in the nation's cultural and political history) initially refused to surrender its spiritual independence, but found all its leading officials replaced with men of the CCP's choice. The Church's publishing house was placed under state management and its administrative regions delimited to enable more effective control of contacts among them. In so doing, the Communist Party successfully removed the one existing alternative source of authority within Czechoslovak society, and effectively undermined the evolution of an opposition movement even before the seeds had been sown.

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[54] P Ramet, 'Christianity and National Heritage Among the Czechs and Slovaks,' in: P Ramet (ed), Religion and Nationalism in Soviet and East European Politics, 2nd Edition, Durham, Duke University Press, 1989, pp 279-281.

[55] M P., 'Protestant Churches in Czechoslovakia: Less Than Complete Loyalty?' RFE Background Report/93, July 10th 1986, pp 1-8

[56] V Butek, op cit, p 151.

As in the Soviet Union and elsewhere in Eastern Europe, Czech and Slovak leaders increasingly relied on coercion to implement these and associated policies. Despite the fact that there had been a degree of genuine support for the CCP in the inter-war and immediate post-war periods and, regardless of the fact that there was no serious challenge to the institutions of the new system post-1948, Czechoslovakia also experienced political purges and widespread use of terror as the Stalinist system was consolidated. The Communist Party's seizure of power by the skillful application of non-violent force in February 1948, followed by the imposition of a highly repressive regime that contrasted vividly with the apparent moderation of the years 1945-7, culminated in a succession of Party purges that, arguably, left the country the most Stalinist in Eastern Europe bar Albania.[57] The intra-Party purges, which began in 1949 with the wholesale replacement of members of several regional Party organisations, were amongst the most severe in Eastern Europe.[58] The Slovak Party was particularly hard hit, the purges involving show trials of numerous leaders - including Gustav Husak - on charges of bourgeois nationalism.[59] As the Stalinist system was consolidated, the secret police came to play an increasingly important role.[60]

(5.1 6) De-Stalinisation

In contrast to Poland, the Stalinist system persisted relatively unchanged in Czechoslovakia after Stalin's death in March 1953.[61] Throughout the 1950s, the country remained insulated from the Khrushchevian "thaw" that was the cause of domestic opposition in neighbouring Communist states. In January 1957, Party Chief Antonin Novotny still denounced the term "de-Stalinisation" as being synonymous with "weakness and yielding to the forces of reaction."[62] Admittedly, some surviving

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[57] J Rothschild, op cit, p 166.

[58] J Pelikan, The Czechoslovak Political Trials, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1971, pp.37-147.

[59]See: H Gordon Skilling, op cit, 1976, Ch 13; and Z Suda, op cit, pp.233-57, for analyses of the purges and subsequent trials

[60]Some estimates placed the ratio of citizen secret police at 2-5 per cent, an unprecedented figure in Eastern Europe V.V Kusin, 'Husak's Czechoslovakia and Economic Stagnation,' Problems of Communism, Vol 31, May-June 1982, p.26.

[61] R.Selucky, Czechoslovakia: The Plan That Failed, 1970 London, Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd, for an analysis of Stalinism in Czechoslovakia.

[62] G Golan, The Czechoslovak Reform Movement, 1971 Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, p 4.

victims of the CCP purges were quietly released in 1956-7, but without publicity or exoneration. Aside from minor shifts and the division of certain top positions, there was little change in leadership personnel. The secret police remained a crucial institution, and there was little change in the relationship between the CCP and the populace, or in the former's style of rule.

The persistence of the Stalinist system until the mid 1960s had a significant impact upon the development of opposition to Communism in Czechoslovakia, and can be traced to a number of factors that differentiated the country from its neighbours. These factors influenced both the pressures for change from below, and, therefore, the evolution of second society. Due to its higher level of economic development prior to Communist rule, for example, the Czechoslovak economy was not as severely affected by Stalinist economic policies as, say, Poland by the mid 1950s. In turn, this meant that economic discontent (one of the primary reasons for mass pressure for change in Poland in 1956) was not as pervasive in Czechoslovakia. For example, the workers' riots that had taken place in Plzen in 1953 had protested against proposed currency reforms not against the system itself.[63] Indeed, the Communist system had brought about a situation in which the workers fared far better than they had previously. CCP efforts to improve the status of previously disadvantaged groups, and the need to use financial incentives to draw workers into high priority branches of the economy such as heavy industry, led to marked changes in the wages of particular categories of workers and other employees. These policies had also resulted in a decrease in income differentials between Czechs and Slovaks and to a substantial levelling of the living standards of the population.[64] Thus, workers generally had little incentive to protest and provoked no significant shows of resentment that could possibly have resulted in political action. The swift response of the Communist authorities and the harsh prison sentences given to strikers also acted as an effective deterrent after 1953.[65]

In addition, the CCP benefited from a loyal intelligentsia and there was, consequently, less pressure for change from either Communist or non-Communist intellectuals during the 1950s. During the spring of 1956, the first rumblings among the intelligentsia, noticeable in all Communist states, did find an echo among writers

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[63] R.Selucky, op cit, p 29.

[64] W.Connor, op cit, 1979, pp 83-6

[65] R Selucky, op cit, pp.30-31.

and university students in Czechoslovakia. However, the culminating explosions in Poland and Hungary only convinced the CCP of the correctness of its orthodox Stalinist policy, which duly took every repressive step necessary to quell opposition forces.

Unlike the situation in Poland, by the mid-1950s, no potentially powerful opposition movement of workers and/or intellectuals had been created. Furthermore, the Party also benefited from the fact that there was no real tradition of animosity towards Russia or the Soviet Union in either Slovakia or the Czech Lands. The severity of the 1948 purges and the high levels of political controls also inhibited demands for change, the harshness of the Stalinist system generally precluding the possibility of a political challenge. Finally, the differences in cultures, levels of economic development, and the historical experiences dividing Slovakia and the Czech Lands inhibited the emergence of a unified, countrywide opposition.[66] Consequently, the almost complete lack of pressure from below, combined with the leadership's clear lack of interest in steps that may threaten its position, allowed Czechoslovakia to avoid the kind of developments that rocked the Polish system in 1956.[67]

(5.1.7) The Prague Spring

By the early 1960s, the economy, the one principal factor in keeping the population quiet, slowed markedly.[68] The crisis of the economy affected every facet of life and evoked discontent among all social groups, and, in increasing numbers, the rank-and-file of the Party.[69] In the early 1960s, creative intellectuals began to challenge the prevailing intellectual orthodoxy and Party control of cultural life. Philosophers, historians and social scientists, whose work was heavily influenced by official views concerning the nature of socialist society, participated in a rethinking of the basic tenets of that society. Consequently, Czechoslovakia experienced a relative cultural revival. Literature, theatre and Czech films impressed critics throughout the world; and in 1965, a group of writers was able to publish an independent literary journal "Tvar" ("Face"). In 1967, several writers spoke out boldly at the annual

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[66]Z Brzezinski, The Soviet Bloc: Unity and Conflict, 1967 Cambridge Mass., Harvard University Press, Ch 8.

[67]Miroslav Holub, Interview, Cheltenham 1995, op cit

[68] W Shawcross, Dubcek, 1970 London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, p 96

[69] G.Golan, The Czechoslovak Reform Movement, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1971.

meeting of the official writers' union.[70] Youth also began to voice its discontent with the regime. Student radicalism – which arose from concerns over housing, poor employment prospects, and the nature of a controlled educational process – soon came to reflect the thinking of older intellectuals concerning the need for political change.[71] The activities of certain mass organisations displayed reformist tendencies, most notably the womens' organisations and the writers' union, during the mid to late 1960s. There were also pressures from the legal profession throughout the country, to restore the rule of law, with protection of individual rights and judicial independence. This pressure succeeded in yielding a series of laws and decrees between 1963-9 that went far toward correcting the "distortions of socialist legality" that had been rife since 1948.[72] Reformist pressure also extracted some changes in the economic system, entailing less comprehensive centralised planning, fewer controls for plant managers, more flexible prices, and realistic incentives for workers.

In reaction to these developments and to the general crisis that was, in large part, the product of the imposition of an alien system, as well as growing Slovak dissatisfaction with the position of their country within the common state, Party leaders and affiliated intellectuals became the chief articulators of the need for social change.[73] Divisions developed between those who wished to maintain the status quo (Novotny) and others (Alexander Dubcek) who supported economic and/or political change. The latter proposed reforms in an attempt to alter the system to make it conform to the needs of a developed European country. The fact that the outburst of demands for change did not come until the mid to late-1960s is testimony to the special intensity of Stalinism in Czechoslovakia and the overall slowness of de-Stalinisation that can be attributed to an official realisation of the danger of opposition forces that being unleashed as had been the case in Poland and Hungary.[74]

The effort to create "socialism with a human face" became popularly known as the "Prague Spring." Under the leadership of Alexander Dubcek, CCP leaders attempted to remove the distortions that had occurred during the Stalinist period and

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[70] Gale Stokes (ed), From Stalinism to Pluralism, 1991 New York, Oxford University Press, p 153

[71] V.Kusin, The Intellectual Origins of the Prague Spring, 1971 Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, pp 125-142. Also, H Gordon Skilling, op cit, pp.72-82.

[72] J Rothschild, Return to Diversity, op cit, p 168.

[73] J Pelikan, Socialist Opposition in Eastern Europe The Czechoslovak Example, 1976 London, Allison and Busby Ltd , pp 17-19.

[74] V Kusin, op cit, p 80.

to create a socialist system that would attract genuine support and legitimacy.[75] Dubcek later referred to the objective as being the creation of "a Marxist democracy genuinely responsive to the wishes and aspirations of its people."[76] As the Party began to call for more participation by citizens and recognised the need to discuss far-reaching changes in the mid-1960s, debate over the nature of Czechoslovak Communism was widely reported in the official media. At first wary of what appeared to be only a further change in Party leadership, the population gradually came to take advantage of the new freedom to criticise past mistakes and to discuss public events. By 1968, the growth of public pressure had become a broader movement for political reform.[77] After initial scepticism, public opinion polls showed that 90-95 per cent of the population supported the basic ideals of the movement.[78]

The Prague Spring can be seen simultaneously as a reform plan espoused by the forward-looking leaders of the CCP, and as a spontaneous social movement in support of these reform Communists. The reform movement was genuinely popular and national, winning support from all sectors of the population.[79] During the eight months of the Prague Spring, the CCP unprecedently became a genuine mass movement that could claim the support of the vast majority of the nation. As a social movement, however, it is vital to point out that the Prague Spring could and would not have evolved if the Party leadership had not taken a reformist turn. The impetus for reform would not have emanated from independent society itself. During the 1960s, the public was able to express its discontent precisely because the CCP contained a group of pro-reformists who, while retaining their belief in socialism, believed the system could be softened and made to work in a more democratic way.[80] Dubcek's 1968 "Action Programme" did produce enormous ferment in Czechoslovak society. Characteristically, however, there were no calls for the

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[75] W.Shawcross, op cit, p.131. Also, J.Pelikan, op cit, p 14.

[76] W.Shawcross, ibid, p.223

[77] For an in-depth analysis of the Prague Spring, see: H Gordon Skilling, Czechoslovakia's Interrupted Revolution, op cit For good, brief accounts of the 1968 events, see: A Pravda, 'Czechoslovak Socialist Republic,' in: B Szajkowski (ed), Marxist Governments A World Survey Vol II, 1981 London, pp 261-292; and H Renner, A History of Czechoslovakia Since 1945, 1989 London, pp 49-85

[78] A Pielkakiewicz, Public Opinion Polling in Czechoslovakia, 1968-69, Results and Analyses of Surveys Conducted During the Dubcek Era, New York, Praegar Publishers, 1972.

[79] H Gordon Skilling, Czechoslovakia's Interrupted Revolution, op cit, Ch.18

[80] Pavel Tigrid, 'Czechoslovakia: A Post-Mortem,' Survey, Vol.73 No 4, Autumn 1969, pp 133-164.

abandonment of Communism [81] In July 1968, opinion polls revealed that 87 per cent of the population was satisfied with the Communist government, and only 5 per cent wished to see a return to capitalism.[82] The social movement in support of the Prague Spring reforms must be seen, therefore, as a movement of *support* not of *opposition*. The active participation of the Czechoslovak population in the late 1960s should not be interpreted as evidence of an independent second society. Rather, it should be seen as the public endorsement of a regime-initiated reform policy. This interpretation is crucial to explanations of the lack of political opposition post-1968.

(5.1.8) Summary

The purpose of this section was to examine particular characteristics of Czechoslovak history that were crucial to the evolution of opposition and of second society. In this respect, the pre-Communist historical divergences (political, social and economic) between the Czechs and the Slovaks cannot be ignored for their legacies during the post-1945 era. Their persistence ensured that a national movement of opposition against Communism was virtually impossible to attain. The level of genuine public support for the Communist Party in 1945 was also unique in Eastern Europe, where the installation of Communist systems post-World War II was largely achieved by the force of the Soviet Red Army. Undoubtedly, this factor had a delaying effect on the emergence of an opposition to the Communist system in Czechoslovakia in the 1950s. In addition, the fact that, once established, the CCP did not initiate a period of de-Stalinisation post-1953, as did the regimes in Poland and Hungary, had an undeniable effect on the prospects for opposition from society. There were instances of discontent in Communism's early years. However, bolstered by an economy more buoyant than elsewhere in Eastern Europe, Czechoslovak workers, for example, protested specific Party policies, yet failed to turn their attention to more politically-damaging demands or to attract mass support for their strike actions. The traditionally subservient role of the Church, especially in the Czech Lands, deprived any potential opposition of, perhaps, its staunchest ally against Communism. The campaign of repression enacted by the CCP during the 1950s against all religious denominations not only bears testimony to the fear with which the regime regarded the potential impact of Church-led dissent in society, but also ensured that any future role played by the Church in Czechoslovakia, in stark contrast to Poland, would be a Communist-dictated one. Furthermore, in a cultural atmosphere still suppressed by

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[81] V.Havel, Open Letters: Selected Writings 1965-1990, (Translated by Paul Wilson), 1992 New York, Vintage, p.30.

[82] W.Shawcross, op cit, p.165.

Stalinist policies, the intellectuals found no openings, other than those provided officially to voice independent thoughts. Rather than risk alienation from the benefits the Communist regime undeniably afforded them, their remaining option was to retreat into the private sphere.

As the economy began to falter in the early 1960s, however, demands for reform of the prevailing system did emerge, notably, from *within* the Communist Party itself, not from society. Admittedly, by 1968, the population was almost unanimously supportive of the CCP-led reform movement. Therefore, it would be understandable to presume that, in spite of the defeat of the reform effort, society would continue to support democratic-oriented reforms post-1968. The fact that it did not can be explained only with reference to the policies of normalisation introduced by Gustav Husak and their continued hold over society throughout the 1970s.

(5.2) The Development of Second Society

(5.2.1) Normalisation

In Czechoslovakia, political developments from 1969-1989 were dominated by two principal factors. Firstly, the state of the economy and secondly, the legacies of 1968. The principal concern here is the policies introduced by the Husak leadership after 1968 in an attempt to introduce a degree of normalisation in society. This had a distinct bearing on the evolution of dissent in the 1970s and 1980s. "Normalisation" can be defined as:

> "An attempt to promote an ideologically motivated and consumer-created legitimation of an unpopular regime under the close supervision of the USSR which retains the prerogative of supreme arbitration but prefers to work through domestic agents."[83]

The effort to turn back the clock to the pre-1968 reform period and return Czechoslovakia, once again, to the position as the Soviet Union's so-called "most loyal ally," intensified after the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia on August 20-21st 1968,[84] and the ouster of Dubcek in April 1969.[85] In the political realm, normalisation included efforts to reassert the leading role of the CCP, and the

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[83] V Kusin, 'Challenge to Normalcy: Political Opposition in Czechoslovakia, 1968-77,' in: R L Tokes (ed), Opposition in Eastern Europe, 1979 London, The Macmillan Press Ltd, p 26

[84] For the text of the Brezhnev Doctrine that was quoted to justify the invasion, see Robin A Remington, Winter in Prague, 1969 Cambridge Mass, MIT Press, Document 65.

[85] For details surrounding the "removal" of Dubcek, see W Shawcross, op cit, pp.222-237.

reinstitution of strict control over the media. The leadership took steps to restore Party discipline, presided over a crackdown on independent groups and a "cleansing" of the CCP's membership. Dubcek himself was appointed as Ambassador to Turkey in January 1970, thereby removing a crucial rallying point from the post-1968 opposition.[86] His supporters were removed from positions of influence within the Party and elsewhere, to be replaced with those who had opposed reform or who had refused any involvement in the reform process. The impact of these changes on the composition of the CCP was heightened by the voluntary resignation of others, thereby, effectively removing all reformist elements from the Party. During the first quarter of 1969, 4,035 new members entered the Party, whilst total membership decreased by 21,050.[87] There was a corresponding decrease in the number of basic Party organisations. What is most notable, here, is that overall the Party lost almost 28 per cent of its total membership in an extremely short space of time. When combined with the number of Czechoslovak emigrants (140,000), in theory, such numbers could have presaged the evolution of a society-wide mass movement of opposition to the Communist Party.[88] Paradoxically, however, the purges were, in large part, responsible for the almost complete stagnation and even regression of social life in the 1970s and early 1980s. Similar changes were made in the leaderships of the mass organisations and in the top positions within the country's universities and research institutes, whose activities were redirected along orthodox lines.[89] Centres of intellectual life, as potential foundation stones for the development of opposition thought, were particularly hard hit, the changes affecting half a million people between 1969-70 alone.[90] In the long-term, personnel purges had significant repercussions in Czechoslovakia, for they depleted the talent the post-reform leadership could draw on to help formulate public policy in all areas of life that would be responsive to genuine public demands. In turn, this increased the general alienation of the CCP from the mainstream of society and contributed to its apparent exhaustion in the late 1980s.[91] In the short-term, however, the purges undoubtedly ensured that

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[86] Ibid, p 231.

[87] Richard F Starr (ed.), 1970 Yearbook in International Communist Affairs, 1970 Stanford, Hoover Institution Press, p 23.

[88] V.Kusin, 'Challenge to Normalcy Political Opposition in Czechoslovakia, 1968-1977,' op cit, p 36.

[89] V Kusin, 'Czechoslovakia and Economic Stagnation...' op cit, 1982, p 29.

[90] P Payne, 'Four Years of Normalisation: the Academic Purge in Czechoslovakia,' Index on Censorship Vol 2, 1972, pp 33-52

[91] V.Kusin, The Intellectual Origins of the Prague Spring: The Development of Reformist Ideas in Czechoslovakia, 1956-1967, 1971 Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, Conclusions

popular sympathy for opposition causes did not manifest itself in active support for second society activities.

Until the mid-1980s, the CCP leadership relied on similar methods to neutralise any overt intellectual opposition also. Most directly affected by the personnel and academic purges between 1969-71, and the reinstitution of effective Party control over society, many Czech and Slovak intellectuals joined other citizens in "retreating to the private sphere."[92] Those who did not, found themselves the direct targets of a policy of co-optation initiated by the CCP in order to quell any possibility of future dissent. Once a part of "the team," the belief was that an individual would have too much to lose to risk confrontation with the regime. An intensified campaign to discredit the reformist leadership and to force its members to assume personal responsibility for 1968 led to the publication of various personal accounts and previously unpublished documents in an attempt to demonstrate that the 1968 leadership had been informed of the extent of the danger posed by "anti-socialist forces" and through failing to oppose it, had been guilty of provoking invasion. Amongst the intellectuals, in particular, such manipulative policies aroused feelings of disappointment, disillusionment and feelings of having been deceived. 1968's enthusiasm, optimism and social participation, thus, gave way to passivity, apathy and a pervading sense of hopelessness.

Significantly, changes were more widespread in the Czech Lands, where large numbers of intellectuals had been crucially involved in the process of democratisation throughout the 1960s. In Slovakia, where many of Dubcek's supporters had been primarily concerned with national and other issues of autonomy with democratic aims less strongly and widely voiced, the population emerged from the 1968 invasion relatively unscathed. These divergences ensured that the historical differences between the Czechs and the Slovaks persisted, and that attempts to form a countrywide movement of opposition would prove difficult.

More significantly for the evolution of a second society, normalisation involved a significant change in the source of political legitimacy. The Husak leadership repudiated earlier attempts to foster legitimacy and create genuine popular support for the Communist regime via the ideological tenets of Marxism-Leninism and, instead, reverted to the strategy of gaining citizen compliance through a

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[92]Peter Ulc, 'The Normalisation of Post-Invasion Czechoslovakia,' Survey Vol 24 No.3, 1979, pp 201-14.

combination of material rewards and coercion.[93] This strategy proved to be successful in preventing all but a very few open manifestations of dissent in Czechoslovakia for almost a decade. The harsh repression of every manifestation of opposition was visible in numerous arrests and political trials.[94] What is notable, however, is that the public's response to the arrests was both minimal and subdued. In part, this was attributable to the lack of official media attention, however, it was also the fact that open opposition was widely recognised as a source of unemployment and the loss of opportunities throughout society.[95] At the mass level, improvements in the standard of living as well as increases in social welfare benefits and their extension to previously excluded sectors of the population, appeared to buy the acquiescence, if not the support, of the majority of the population, and were probably the greatest inducement to maintaining the status quo. In Slovakia, the impact of these policies was further supplemented by the benefits, symbolic and otherwise, the Slovaks received from the federalisation of the country, which came into effect on January 1st 1969 (a point to which I shall return), as well as by the perceived increase of Slovak influence in Prague after Gustav Husak's (Slovakian) elevation to the top position within the Communist Party.

One further factor requires attention here. As a consequence of the CCP's normalisation policies, an accepted code of behaviour for a large proportion of the population became "it is safer to be wrong with the Party than against it."[96] Thus, whilst between 1969-71, the Party had been faced with a decrease in membership, after that date, new members were admitted in large numbers. Between 1971-76, 334,000 new members joined the Communist ranks.[97] Although their commitment to either the Party or its ideals may have been questionable, it did ensure that greater numbers supported the status quo and the incumbent leadership's policies, lest their recently acquired positions and privileges be threatened.[98]

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[93] T Garton Ash, 'Czechoslovakia Under Ice,' in T.Garton Ash, The Uses of Adversity Essays on the Fate of Central Europe, 2nd Edition, 1991 London, Granta Books, p 56.

[94] 'Czechoslovakia Trials Without Show,' Notes of the Month, World Today, March 1972, pp 93-98

[95] T Garton Ash, 'Czechoslovakia Under Ice,' op cit, pp.56-7.

[96] H Renner, op cit, p 108.

[97] Ibid, p 110.

[98] J Pelikan, op cit, pp 21-5.

(5 2 2) Immediate Post-Invasion Opposition

In the immediate aftermath of the 1968 Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia, popular opposition manifested itself above all in defiance in the media and some organisations of the infrastructure, such as cultural and academic societies, trade unions, and the "mass" organisations, as well as in various statements and acts demonstrating disapproval of the course of events. For example, the trade unions adopted charters advocating the right to strike; and Jan Palach, a student, burned himself to death in January, carrying a note that condemned the Soviet invasion and called for an end to censorship. On the day after his death, students staged national strikes, and it is estimated that 800,000 people attended his funeral.[99] It is significant that such manifestations of discontent were acts of *defiance* not of *opposition* or demands for reform. It appeared that demands for reform, both from above and from the population had been sacrificed almost overnight for the sake of accommodation with the Husak regime. Furthermore, the opposition that did manifest itself came predominantly from the intellectual classes (writers, social science academics and students, a few Party activists and other officials). Although workers did express their support to such sctions as the three-day student strike in November 1968, there is no record of any organised workers' opposition to the initial policies of the post-invasion period.[100] This is indicative of the lack of cross-class unity as a whole.

During this period, then, the opposition could best be described as a negative one. Dissent took the form of resistance within the established order to the draconian programme of normalisation relentlessly pursued by Communist hard-liners. A certain amount of hope, however, did survive that, despite the necessity for obvious political retreats, some positions of influence and authority could be maintained by the reformist constituency and thereby safeguard the lasting ideals of the Prague Spring reform movement. In August 1969, the emergence of an unofficial document, originating among radical reformists, known as the "Ten Point Manifesto," provided evidence that some form of opposition to the Husak regime still existed.[101] The Manifesto amounted to a programme of survival under adverse circumstances, and the authors touched on several points which were to develop into permanent features of the opposition's activity over the coming years. Among them, the most significant were the presaging of the importance of human rights as the main contentious issue

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[99] W.Shawcross, op cit, pp 198-200

[100] J Pelikan, op cit, p 29

[101] For the full text of the document, see: ibid, pp.118-125

between government and opposition, and the suggestion that any struggle would be conducted on legal anti-political grounds.[102] However, the authors of the Manifesto stated that they had no intention of founding a new party or movement, but would work within the existing institutional framework, and with regard to the future development of the opposition as an alternative force in Czechoslovakia, the statement concluded:

> "We have no reason to adopt an anti-Soviet stance insofar as the affairs of the Soviet Union are concerned; we are merely against the gross interference in the sovereignty of other states. We wish success to the Soviet people."[103]

With this concluding declaration, the evolving opposition demonstrated that it was not about to challenge the autonomy of the Communist Party in Czechoslovakia or the prevailing system of rule. Moreover, it did not intend to formulate a real alternative to that rule, primarily condemning only Soviet interference in domestic Czechoslovak affairs. At a time when the population at large would have been the most receptive to an alternative that advocated democratic and nationalist-oriented reforms, the opposition opted to take one step backwards and effectively protest within the limits of the existing system. This undoubtedly had a long-term effect on the development of opposition to Communist rule. Furthermore, the harsh prison sentences imposed on the authors of the document effectively discouraged public sympathy or support. Almost simultaneously, a further collective attempt was made to draft a programme for opposition by the " Revolutionary Socialist Party" headed by Peter Uhl, however, it met with the same fate enjoyed by the proponents of the Ten Point Manifesto. Amongst a population still reeling from the effects of the Warsaw Pact invasion, Husak had successfully installed fear as the main obstacle to political opposition.

(5.2.3) September 1969 – Summer 1972

The second phase of political dissent lasted from September 1969 to the wide scale political trials of Summer 1972.[104] In October 1970, the largest community in the opposition ranks, the ex-reformers, produced a leaflet which became known as the "28th October Manifesto" (SAP).[105] To an extent, the publication of the Manifesto

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[102]For example, the Manifesto stated "Even when unfree politically, a mature nation can defend itself by asserting its lifestyle, its philosophy of life and its character by means of practical deeds of an unpolitical nature." See, ibid p 123.

[103]Ibid, p 124.

[104]For a survey of dissent documents in the early 1970s, see: J.F.Triska, 'Messages from Czechoslovakia,' Problems of Communism, Vol 24 No 6, November-December 1975, pp 26-42.

[105]For full text, see: J Pelikan, op cit, pp 125-134

marked the beginning of a dynamic phase in the activities of the Socialist opposition. The ex-reformers had already accepted the fact of their expulsion from the CCP, but appeared still to believe that an alternative organisation could be established to operate along reform-Communist lines. Like the 1969 "Ten Point Manifesto," however, the document amounted to little more than a restatement of the Prague Spring beliefs rather than a definite programme of opposition activity.[106] More significant, here, was the fact that the Manifesto was signed on behalf of a purported resistance movement, the 'Socialist Movement of Czechoslovak Citizens,' (SMCC).[107] In reality, however, the mainstream of Czechoslovak dissent failed to call to life a popular mass movement in support of its more democratically-oriented reform proposals, due, in large part, to the public's deep-seated sense of disillusion and hopelessness.

The SMCC's programme is also significant with respect to this study for two further reasons. Firstly, it recognised that the formulation of a coherent programme for action was essential to the success of the opposition. In addition, secondly, it acknowledged that the principle of co-operation among all opposition forces - that is, cross-societal action - was crucial, as was the central role of the working classes.[108] Although such sentiments would, at first, appear to be encouraging to the evolution of opposition within the system, and, ultimately, of second society, it must also be noted that the SAP, as well as the October Manifesto, restated the SMCC's continued rejection of anti-Sovietism and stressed its socialist orientations. In that way, the SMCC failed to capitalise on the true situation in the country, throughout which anti-Soviet sentiments were widespread and the need for a real alternative to "socialism with a human face" following the Soviet-led defeat of 1968, was paramount to the success of any movement of opposition.[109] The SMCC, therefore, remained revisionist in the sense that it did not move beyond a critique of the socialist political system and, thus, its appeal to non-Communist dissidents was limited. This lack of popular appeal was highlighted in early 1972 when the arrest and subsequent trial of the SMCC's leaders, on the one hand, dealt the decisive blow to their more-or-less

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[106]See: 'The Short Action Programme,' issued at the beginning of 1971 in: ibid, pp 136-156

[107]For an in-depth history and analysis of the Socialist Movement, see: ibid, pp 45-60

[108]'The Short Action Programme,' in. ibid. pp.141-145.

[109] 'A Change of Captain for Czechoslovakia,' Notes of the Month, World Today, May 1969, p 188

conventionally conducted oppositional activity, but, on the other, failed to arouse any significant level of support or disapproval amongst the population.[110]

The primary reason for failure was, having been taught a hard lesson in 1968 about the futility of reform and having paid a harsh price for belief in it, the public was unwilling to join forces with those who had managed (and apparently mismanaged) the entire Prague Spring reform efforts. Furthermore, the SMCC had failed to devise a programme that appealed to the population at large, and had failed to formulate an effective, realistic formula for opposition activity. In addition, the new Husak regime had established itself as the primary purveyor of material benefits in return for ideological and political acquiescence, which was to be one of the main obstacles to the evolution of an opposition movement throughout the 1970s. This last factor was decisive in the lack of public support. By 1972, the economic fruits of normalisation had begun to take effect. The drastic curtailment of investment programmes and a concentration on the production of food and consumer goods led to an improved situation in the market from mid-1971.[111] At the same time, the various shows of strength, such as the 1972 political trials, made the public aware that a confrontation would be futile and had scared people away from involvement in public affairs of any nature.

(5.2.4) Summer 1972 – August 1976

From the summer of 1972 to the autumn of 1976, the Husak regime continued to consolidate its hold on the country mainly through the provision of material benefits; legal codification of its enhanced power; and a return to orthodoxy combined with occasional purges. Despite the fact that a movement of opposition potentially existed, the population generally responded by continuing to retreat into private preoccupations, whilst demonstrating acquiescence in the light of the results of Husak's policy of consumerism. Throughout this period, the dissident movement remained unorganised, and appeared to undergo a "crisis of conscience." No organisation was even attempted, and no further programmes were devised.

The levels of repression used against the Czechoslovak citizenry by the Husak regime cannot be overlooked. As in Romania, the policy of recrimination was particularly nasty and damaging to the prospects for the emergence of second society.

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[110] See various articles in The Times, January 14th and February 14th 1972, Also, The Guardian, January 13th, 14th and 15th 1972.

[111] T.Garton Ash, 'Czechoslovakia Under Ice,' op cit, p.56.

Those who suffered expulsion from jobs numbered several hundred thousand. In addition, their children were barred from higher education; and their relatives, plus the relatives of the 150,000 new émigrés, experienced demotions, job transfers, and frozen career progress.[112] Certain sectors of the arts, culture, journalism and the social sciences were virtually brought to a standstill, deprived of talent and accumulated experience.[113] To this general atmosphere must be added the economic dimension, as discussed briefly above, in order for public and dissident attitudes in the early 1970s to be fully understood. The Czechoslovak economy proved itself robust enough to weather the return to a pre-1968, orthodox command-style of operation, bolstered by reduced commitments to Comecon and the Warsaw Pact budgets, and incorporating a marked, albeit temporary, shift in investment emphasis from heavy industry to the consumer sectors.[114] In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the precariousness and the in-built flaws of the Czechoslovak command economy were to become all too evident, yet in the crucial years of the early 1970s, the economy experienced a mini boom which helped pacify intellectual and political dissent.[115] Cowed into spiritual submission and deprived of alternative leaders and perspectives, the public largely chose withdrawal into private activities, and self-enrichment over resistance and dissent. Material well being and economic survival became an accepted mode of existence for the Czechoslovak public to the extent that, at the 14th Party Congress in 1971, Husak announced that the process of normalisation had been successfully completed.[116]

Critical attitudes did remain alive in Czechoslovakia, however, even during the years of non-organisation and aversion to political involvement. As on past occasions, it was principally the creative intelligentsia who made use of the modest samizdat channels and the foreign news media to formulate protest and criticism.[117]

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[112] P Payne, 'Four Years of Normalisation. The Academic Purge in Czechoslovakia,' Index on Censorship, Vol 2 1972, p 32.

[113] P Payne, 'Czechoslovakia Black List of Writers,' Index on Censorship, Vol.2 1972, pp 33-52.

[114] B Korda, 'A Decade of Economic Growth in Czechoslovakia,' Soviet Studies, Vol 28 No 4, October 1976, pp 499-523

[115] Between 1970-78, consumption rose by 36.5 per cent, with private ownership of such as cars and weekend/holiday homes increased substantially. See, G.Whightman and A H Brown, 'Changes in the Levels of Membership and Social Composition of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia 1973-5,' Soviet Studies, Vol 27 No 3, July 1975, pp 413-7.

[116] R W Dean, 'Czechoslovakia Consolidation and Beyond,' Survey, Vol 18 No 4, Summer 1971.

[117] Anon, 'The Czech Underground Press,' Index on Censorship, Vol.4, 1974, p 24.

Most of the petitions, open letters, and essays documented miscarriages of justice in the many political trials, suppression of human and civil rights, and cases of discrimination against those involved with the reform attempts of the late 1960s.[118] The quantity of samizdat publications and the number of foreign contacts began to increase. However, these attempts at independence by the opposition should be viewed as no more than one of its last attempts to resolve Czechoslovakia's "predicament" within the confines of a Soviet-style Socialism, rather than through the formulation of a popular alternative.[119] In general, the primary target of protest prior to 1976-7 was the complete dependence of the ruling Communist Party leadership and apparat on the Soviet Union, not on the Communist system itself. This, in turn, undeniably aided Husak and the regime's policy of legitimation via consumerism as a means to put the lid back on the dissident pot. Through the creation of a relatively prosperous society, Husak was able to effectively fend off any direct criticism of the regime per se, and keep the opposition's focus on the Soviet Union as the enemy instead.

In 1976, the Czechoslovak government ratified the two international covenants signed on behalf of the country in 1968, a point which should be viewed as a turning point in the history of Czechoslovak dissent.[120] Less than two months later, the opposition responded with the formulation and promulgation of Charter 77 in January 1977.[121] It should be noted that the initial stimulus for the formation of Charter 77 was the persecution of the rock group, "The Plastic People of the Universe."[122] Part of a growing musical underground - which although strongly critical of society and its established institutions did not claim to be a political movement despite the fact that it challenged the CCP's cultural monopoly[123] - the

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[118]Between 1968-77, Czechoslovak dissidents issued approximately 120 separate letters of protest against government policies. T.E.Heneghan, 'Human Rights Protests in Eastern Europe,' World Today, March 1977, pp 90-100.

[119] George Moldau, 'Letter from Prague,' in: Survey, Vol 29 No 2, Spring 1973, pp.245-9.

[120]These were the "International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights" and the "International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights "

[121]H Gordon Skilling, Charter 77 and Human Rights in Czechoslovakia 1981 London, Allen and Unwin

[122] Z Elias, RFE Research Background Report, Czechoslovakia/7, January 12th 1979, p 6, and Czechoslovakia/15, January 24th 1979, p 12

[123] T R Ryback, Rock Around the Bloc, A History of Rock Music in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, 1990 New York, Oxford University Press, pp 141-48.

group was accused of using obscenities in its songs and, consequently, disturbing the peace.[124] The charges, unfair trials and severe sentences imposed provoked angry protests from intellectual elites, succeeded in forging a degree of solidarity not seen since 1968 and convinced at least a part of the public that they must cease to expect change to come from above.[125] Instead, they should enact it themselves.[126] In short, a minimal common denominator had been found in the defence of elementary human rights, bridging obvious divisions within society.[127] Significantly for this study, however, the gap bridged was one between intellectual and musical elites only, and not between these groups and the workers. This was in contrast to the persecution of Polish workers in 1976 and the formation of KOR that did unite the opposition across traditional class divisions.

(5.2.4.1) Summary

After 1968, as result of the normalisation policies employed by the CCP, the Communists found themselves isolated from the people, with, at most, only 10 per cent of the population supportive of their policies.[128] However, between 1968-1975, pervasive fear and apathy along with the rising influence of materialistic policies introduced by the CCP prevented the emergence of a society-wide opposition movement and kept the population acquiescent. Widespread lethargy, social and political apathy, and a state devoid of any alternative was all pervasive. The CCP chose to interpret this national mood of passivity as a political and ideological victory, maintaining that the population steadfastly supported the new Socialist order. Opposition that did manifest itself (the SMCC, for example) generally remained unorganised, fragmented, hampered by police surveillance and powerless to attract widespread support. Undoubtedly, then, the CCP was obsolete and stultified, but as a result of the general sense of apathy and passivity of the population, no alternative to the Husak regime emerged, and it, therefore, continued to rule unchallenged.

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[124] Interview with Vladimir Merta by P Wright, 'In Search Of An Enemy Symposium,' Cheltenham Festival of Literature, October 7th 1995

[125] V Havel, Disturbing the Peace A Conversation with Karel Hvizdala, (Translated by Paul Wilson), 1990 New York, Alfred A Knopf, p.128.

[126] H Gordon Skilling, Charter 77 and Human Rights in Czechoslovakia, op cit, p.7, 9-11.

[127] V.Havel, 'The Trial,' Letter of October 11th 1976, in: Vaclav Havel, Open Letters, op cit, pp 102-108.

[128] Jan F.Triska, op cit, p.30.

Notably, Czechoslovak opposition after 1974 was characterised by two further factors. Firstly, a move away from the formulation of specific action programmes. Unofficial opposition documents continued to contain advice and basic statements of principles, especially the declarations of the SMCC, but comprehensive platforms were no longer deemed as either necessary or worthwhile given their relative failures in the past to rouse any degree of lasting support amongst the population. And, secondly, Czechoslovak dissent was characterised by a growing internationalisation: Western media were increasingly used as channels of communication, and a growing number of "open letters" were despatched to the West, which prevented leading opposition activists from addressing the pressing issues domestically.

(5.2.5) The Impact of Charter 77

There have been many texts written on the Charter itself.[129] I do not intend to provide a further chronological study here. Rather, the focus of this section is on those factors related to Charter 77 that had an impact on the development of opposition and of second society in Czechoslovakia in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

Charter 77 was conceived as a "civic initiative," a movement that expressed certain desiderata in the sphere of human rights, but one that (notably for second society) refrained from calling to life a formal organisation or from formulating a concrete alternative programme.[130] Charter 77 claimed that it was not a political organisation and deliberately refrained from offering alternative political and societal arrangements to the prevailing ones.[131] It claimed no ideology and no leadership structure, and demanded no formal acts of membership from the signatories to the Charter. Charter leaders claimed simply to be seeking a dialogue with the Communist leadership to discuss, for example, how the government would institute practical changes that would enable it to comply with the Helsinki Final Act.[132]

Two characteristics of Charter signatories deserve mention here. Firstly, the overwhelming majority of supporters were located in Prague. By June 1980, this figure totalled 600 out of 1,065 signatories. Criticisms of the Charter were thus made

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[129] See: H Gordon Skilling, Charter 77 and Human Rights in Czechoslovakia, op cit. For further discussion of the origins of the Charter, see an interview with Charter spokesmen published in Labour Focus on Eastern Europe, Vol 2 No 6, January-February 1979, pp 5-7.

[130] The Founding Charter, H.Gordon Skilling, ibid p 211.

[131] Ibid, p 221.

[132] Ibid, pp 219-221.

concerning the lack of real opportunity for such groups as the peasantry to sign. It is also noteworthy that the proportion of workers among signatories increased from 8 per cent in the original list to 52 per cent by June 1977, reflecting the burst of societal support and approval for the Charter initiative in 1977.[133] The Charter did increasingly attract ordinary, young, working men and women, some of whom had been debarred from higher education because of political discrimination. The Charter, as a movement, however, consistently failed to address their specific class grievances and, therefore, precluded the development of a mass following in society. By December 1977, however, it must be noted that the number of worker-members had fallen to 35 per cent, demonstrating Charter 77's failure to capitalise on the situation it had helped to create in society; and its complete lack of direct appeal to the majority class within the population.[134] Notably also, few university students signed the Charter (only 17 signatories amounting to 1.7 per cent in January 1977) most harbouring a strong aversion to the regime and its ideology, but also to politics more generally.[135]

Thus, the attempt of this group of intellectuals to break out of their apparent isolation and to begin a social dialogue generally succeeded only in bringing a number of scattered individuals into a loosely defined group.[136] For a time, this appeared to be sufficient, and it gave Charter 77 enough energy and force to function. By the spring of 1977, however, it had become obvious to its leaders that the initiative had failed to accomplish any significant relaxation of regime repression, and that interest in it, both at home and abroad, had waned. Although there was a continuing consensus on the Charter's aims, from the summer of 1977, there began a period of almost uninterrupted discussion over how its goals could best be reached, and whether its legal and moral approach should be supplemented or replaced by a political one.[137] Each successive compromise was followed by renewed debate which, for the purposes of this study, is significant for the effect it had on the inability of the

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[133]Ibid, p 41.

[134]Minister of the Interior, J Obzina, estimated that perhaps 2 million could be classified as potential signatories English summary in Bulletin, Palach Press No 7, July 1977, pp 1-3.

[135]H Gordon Skilling, Charter 77 and Human Rights in Czechoslovakia, op cit, p42

[136] T.Garton Ash, 'Czechoslovakia Under Ice,' op cit, p 57.

[137]L Hejdanek, 'Letter to a Friend,' No 20, August 18th 1977, in: H Gordon Skilling, Charter 77 and Human Rights in Czechoslovakia, op cit, p 229-233

movement to focus on more "constructive" objectives and mobilising activities for the population at large.

By 1978, the Charter had scored notable successes in stimulating actions by a small number of citizens, but had not been able to win the support of the population as a whole or sway the authorities towards a more lenient course.[138] Some signatories began to feel alienated and out of touch as Charter 77 acted increasingly through its spokesmen and a limited number of the more militant activists only. There was also some fear that the movement was in danger of becoming a "ghetto," completely isolated from the mass of the population, which was increasingly unaware of Charter activity, in a society in which members of the opposition had very few potential channels of communication, or knowledge of the repressive measures meted out against its proponents.[139] Charter materials, themselves, were available only to a limited circle and did not reach many areas outside of Prague.[140] Many who did have access to documents, believed them to be too abstract with a concentration on theory instead of concrete actions.[141]

The question of establishing "parallel institutions," already considered during 1977, was fully discussed in 1978. Benda, for example, argued on the basis of observations of the "second culture" and the "parallel economy," that the way forward was in the creation of "parallel structures capable at least in a limited measure of substituting for generally beneficial and necessary institutions which were lacking." This would, in turn, effectively mobilise "people power" as the only way to undermine the totalitarian system [142] Significantly, also, Jan Tesar argued that, given the state of lawlessness in Communist society, appeals to the authorities for laws to be observed were pointless, and that, most significantly, the only way to effectively

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[138]J Hajek, 'The Human Rights Movement and Social Progress,' in· V Havel (ed), The Power of the Powerless· Citizens Against the State in Central-Eastern Europe, 1985 London, Hutchinson and Co Ltd, p 137.

[139]See, P.Uhl, 'The alternative community as revolutionary avant-garde,' in V Havel (ed), The Power of the Powerless Citizens against the state in Central-Eastern Europe, 1985 London, Hutchinson and Co. Ltd, pp 193-4

[140] H Gordon Skilling, 'Independent Currents in Czechoslovakia,' Problems of Communism, Vol 34 No 1, January-February 1985, pp 32-49.

[141]H.Gordon Skilling, Charter 77 and Human Rights in Czechoslovakia, op cit, p 53.

[142]Published in· Vaclav Benda, 'Parallel Polis, or an Independent Society in Central and Eastern Europe An Inquiry,' in Social Research, Vol.55 Nos.1-2, Spring/Summer 1988, pp 214-222." See also: Bulletin, No.11, August 1979, pp 24-5, 31-4

undermine the totalitarian state was via *the creation of a civil society,* that would positively broaden its activities within the legal sphere, and actively exert pressure for legislative amendments.[143] This concept of parallel structures was widely recommended in the June 1978 draft statement issued by eighteen prominent Chartists, and members of all the groupings within Charter 77.[144] The document suggested the formation of free trade unions, and the announcement of working groups on discrimination in employment and education, on the model of the recently formed Committee for the Defence of the Unjustly Persecuted (VONS). Ladislav Hejdanek, Charter spokesman, however, although agreeing with the need for "a whole series of civic initiatives with limited but very concrete and practical aims," maintained his belief that the text of the Charter did not permit political opposition. Undoubtedly, a more politically oriented opposition would be a necessity at some point in the future, but Czechoslovakia was not yet ready for that advance in aims or tactics. In the Charter document No.21, issued on October 19th 1978, which set forth the compromise reached over the summer, the only specific recommendation to be endorsed was that regarding the need for a rethinking of the basic aims of Charter documents. The idea of forming a political opposition with its own programme was rejected and the term "parallel structures" was not used.[145]

Two aspects of the Charter require further examination here: firstly, its rejection of political involvement; and, secondly, the articulation of a moral foundation. Both had a direct impact on the particular evolution of opposition within Czechoslovak society.

(5 2 5 1) Charter 77's Anti-political Stance

A dominant theme in Charter 77's original declaration and repeated in later statements, was its denial that it intended to offer a basis for political opposition or that it would formulate alternative social arrangements.[146] In place of "narrow, traditional political opposition" Charter 77 suggested a constructive dialogue with the

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[143]J Tesar, 'Totalitarian Dictatorships as a Phenomenon of the 20th Century and the Possibility of Overcoming Them,' in. H.Skilling and V.Precan (eds), 'Parallel Politics,' International Journal of Politics, Vol.11 No 1, Spring 1981, pp 85-100

[144]H.Gordon Skilling, Charter 77 and Human Rights in Czechoslovakia, op cit, p.76.

[145]For full text see ibid, Part 2 pp 261-264.

[146]See, for example, J Patocka, 'What Charter 77 is and What It Is Not,' in· H Gordon Skilling, Charter 77 and Human Rights in Czechoslovakia, op cit, Part II, pp 217-219.

state, and offered to cooperate in the preparation of relevant documentation and solutions.[147] To quote Vaclav Havel:

> "Most signatories of Charter 77...do not espouse any specific ideology, political programme or confessional group...even if this were not so and every last signatory were highly political, it would change nothing in the purely civic, non-ideological and non-political base on which the Charter stands and on which its signatories stand united."[148]

This is significant if only because it clearly demonstrated the Charter's desire to work with the authorities *within the existing legal and political framework,* and with regard to second society, is significant because it adds to an explanation of why the Charter as a movement failed to attract any degree of significant popular support amongst a population which had abandoned any hope of a "Socialism with a human face." By 1977, the public had already demonstrated its unwillingness to support a movement of intra-systemic reform through its failure to rally behind the doomed SMCC, even though the SAP had advocated a relaxation of the totalitarian rules binding society, and such as freer, more independent trade unions. The SMCC's failure to attract support despite a seemingly attractive programme should have been a clear indication to the Charter that it's plans for society and for the political system ultimately needed to be more radical and far-reaching.

Admittedly, the Charter did go beyond the SAP formulated by the Socialist opposition in 1971, as it explicitly refused to draw a distinction between Communists (ex- or otherwise) and non-Communists, stating that human and civil rights were the responsibility of *all* citizens. It presented a programme only in the restricted sense of the word, however, namely in proclaiming the signatories' intention to stand up for lawful and moral relations between the state and the population.[149] It said nothing about desirable structural change and, by not advocating systemic reform, the Charter simply recognised that conditions were not favourable for such transformations, and that a minimum programme, based on the observance of existing laws and accepted moral standards, was the first step in the right direction.[150] By doing so, however, the Charter essentially sealed its own fate, because, by not standing firm against the

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[147]Founding Declaration, in Ibid, p 212

[148] V Havel, 'Two Notes on Charter 77,' in V Havel, Open Letters, op cit, p 324

[149]J Patocka, 'What Can We Expect of Charter 77 ?' ibid, pp 220-223

[150] V.Havel, 'Two Notes on Charter 77,' in V Havel, Open Letters, op cit, p 326.

regime and by not advocating fundamental systemic reform, it failed to attract a mass base of support.

(5.2.5.2) Charter 77's Moral Foundations

The Charter movement had a strong moral charge, with its emphasis on "the human face" of socialism. The initial declaration laid considerable stress on "the responsibility for the maintenance of civil rights" which rested with every citizen, and described this shared responsibility as a "civic commitment."[151] In short, the Charter represented an open commitment to social and moral values as a means of rescuing the nation from moral crisis.[152] Rather than rely on the enlightenment of the authorities, or wait for various changes in its apparatus, Vaclav Havel recommended that each individual should "follow and support [the] changes in society's consciousness, in the spiritual and moral structure of society, which [aimed] to achieve a freer and more dignified self-realisation."[153]

A further point of significance for the development of a society-wide opposition movement or second society needs to be made here. That is, whilst discussions continued throughout the summer of 1977 over the political versus moral stance, the Charter, as a movement, failed to capitalise on the public support and sympathy it had received in January. In addition, as long as the discussion concerning the Charter's future remained private and confidential and, therefore, isolated from the critical and more realistic viewpoint of the ordinary citizen, it could not hope to attract a wider base of support throughout society. Consequently, by the summer of 1977, the moment of "potential mobilisation" had passed, and Charter 77 had allowed Husak's regime to gain the upper hand. In contrast, in Poland by 1981, it had become clear that the parallel polity was neither elitist nor isolated from the wider society. In the absence of an official political structure that could make it possible for them to participate effectively, the Charter members were forced to turn "inwards" in marked contrast to Poland where, as a result of the growing crisis of the system, the parallel polity became almost as much of a political reality as the official one.[154]

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[151]Founding Declaration, H Gordon Skilling, Charter 77 and Human Rights in Czechoslovakia, op cit, p.211.

[152]See: J Patocka, 'What the Charter Is and What It Is Not,' op cit, p 218.

[153]V Havel, 'Breaking the Ice Barrier,' Index on Censorship, Vol 10 No 6, November-December 1981, p 9

[154] Antonin J.Liehm, 'The New Social Contract and the Parallel Polity,' in: J.L Curry (ed), Dissent in Eastern Europe, 1983 New York, Praegar Publishers, pp 173-5

(5 2.6) Independent Civic Action

Apart from its own defined responsibilities, the greatest achievement of the Charter was to serve as a catalyst in the development of what Vaclav Benda termed "parallel structures," functioning independently in many areas of life and constituting, at least potentially, a veritable "parallel community [polis] within the totalitarian framework."[155]

(5.2.6.1) A Second Culture

Samizdat essays revealed the depth and direction of dissident intellectual thinking.[156] Texts began to speak of a "parallel polity," of a "second" or "alternative" culture.[157] The purpose of this parallel activity was to influence moral and ethical values; to restore popular awareness of rights and laws, and of the need for them; to strengthen individual and social consciousness; and to create some elementary structures that could be ready for use in case the "new post-1968 social contract" should be dissolved, either as a result of action from above or below.[158] Significantly, it is also clear from the various texts that, rather than attempting to force the hand of history by illegal, underground, conspiratorial or terrorist activities, the representatives of Charter 77 were chiefly preoccupied with the problem of preserving and expanding their parallel polity until history would turn to them.[159] It was not concerned with creating the "situation" itself. Therefore, although one of the most significant effects of the Charter with respect to second society had been to stimulate individuals and groups to act independently, independent action was peaceful and non-violent in character, and primarily cultural in orientation.[160]

Although antedating Charter 77, independent culture was, therefore, given a substantial boost by the issuing of the Charter. Czechoslovak unofficial culture

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[155]V Benda et al, 'Parallel Politics or an Independent Society in Central and Eastern Europe: An Enquiry,' Social Research, Vol 55 No s 1-2, Spring/Summer 1988, pp 211-246 See, also, J Vladislav, 'A Parallel World,' Index on Censorship, Vol.10 No 6, November-December 1981, pp.14-16

[156]RFE Background Report, Czechoslovakia/115, June 7th 1978, p 16.

[157]H Gordon Skilling, 'A Czech Awakening. Unofficial Publishing and Other Independent Activities,' Index on Censorship, Vol 10 No.5, October 1981, pp 24-25

[158]H Gordon Skilling, Charter 77 and Human Rights in Czechoslovakia, op cit, pp 76-7..

[159]V Havel, 'Six Asides About Culture,' in: V.Havel, Open Letters, op cit, pp.283-284

[160] G Moldau, 'Patocka University,' Index on Censorship, Vol.8 No 3, May-June 1979, pp.54-6.

attempted to "spread," especially to the youth, and experienced a "branching-out," beginning with literary works (Padlock Publications) and the arts (exhibitions in private homes, for example), music, and theatre.[161] The underground circulation of typewritten materials, for example, was not new, having been widespread throughout the 1960s prior to the Prague Spring, and again in the 1970s during the period of normalisation.[162] What was distinctive about the material published after 1977 was not only its quantity, but also its content and high intellectual level, which ultimately contributed to the formation of "a parallel information system."[163] After 1977, the idea of an "independent education programme" for those excluded from higher education because of their independent actions emerged, for example.[164] Although achievements were relatively modest, when compared to the comprehensiveness of the 'Flying University' in Poland, the Czechoslovak counterpart was called the "anti-university" because of what it represented in an effectively totalitarian system.[165] Subsequently, during 1978, independent culture expanded into many additional fields, including drama, music and the arts.[166] In effect, Charter 77 encouraged individuals to think for themselves, to "create culture" according to their own convictions, rather than to expect change or improvements to be introduced "from above." Charter 77 and the activities it specifically promoted, however, were only the tip of the iceberg of the parallel culture which gradually came into existence below the surface of ordinary life, as countless individuals and groups sought to live their lives in freedom.[167]

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[161]M Kundera, 'Comedy is Everywhere,' Index on Censorship, Vol 6 No 6, November-December 1977. Also, V Havel, 'Reflection on the Theatre,' Index on Censorship, Vol 12 No 2, April 1983, pp.31-33.

[162]Z Tomin, 'The Typewriters Hold the Fort,' Index on Censorship, Vol.12 No 2, April 1983, pp 28-31. Also, J.Vlasislav, 'All You Need is a Typewriter,' Index on Censorship, Vol 12 No 2, pp 33-36.

[163]V Precan, Book of the Charter, 1977 Cologne, pp 10-13. For an excellent overview of the range of samizdat material published in Communist Czechoslovakia, see: H.Gordon Skilling, Charter 77 Human Rights in Czechoslovakia, op cit, pp 99-114. Also, H Gordon Skilling, Samizdat and an Independent Society in Central and Eastern Europe, 1989 Basingstoke, Macmillan Press, Part II, pp 43-156,.

[164] K Wilkes, 'Unofficial Education in Czechoslovakia,' Government and Opposition, Vol 16 No 2, Spring 1981, pp.167-184

[165]L Hejdanek, 'Offering a Variety of Views,' Index on Censorship, Vol 15 No 3, March 1986, pp 25-27 reports on the work of the "anti-university" See, also G Moldau, 'Patocka University,' Index on Censorship, Vol 8 No.3, May-June 1979, pp 54-6

[166] K Kyncl, 'A Censored Life,' Index on Censorship, Vol 14 No 1, February 1985, pp 137-142.

[167] H Gordon Skilling, 'A Czech Awakening. Unofficial Publishing and Other Independent Cultural Activities,' Index on Censorship, Vol 10 No 5, October 1981, pp.24-5.

In Czechoslovakia, then, the extent and depth of the second or parallel culture that came in to existence cannot be underestimated, as countless individuals sought to live their lives in freedom and truth. Independent cultural activity, furthermore, was not limited only to writers and other intellectual elites, but thousands of "ordinary" people were also involved.[168] In particular, for the Czechoslovak youth, for example, the realm of culture was "the only authentic existential space in which to live," and independent poetry and rock music attracted huge followings.[169] The "Jazz Section," founded in 1971 as a branch of the official Union of Musicians, attracted four thousand members, to promote jazz, rock and later independent publishing.[170]

(5.2.6.2) Committee for the Defence of the Unjustly Persecuted (VONS)

In an overtly political role, a parallel organisation that could have taken on enormous significance was VONS. Established in 1978 along the lines of Poland's KOR, its main aim was to follow the cases of those subjected to criminal prosecution or imprisonment, and to keep records of all incidents of police brutality and harassment.[171] More significantly, VONS also represented an effort by the Charter to broaden its direct contact with the entire population.[172] In order to encourage people to turn directly to VONS, in May 1978, the committee began to issue its own communiqués, each dealing with individual cases of official persecution, and the measures, charges and verdicts against victims. VONS was, therefore, important for the effect it had on the availability of information to the public as a whole. The communiqués thus offered a line of defence previously unknown.[173] VONS was not responsible, however, for distributing financial aid and other forms of assistance to prisoners or their families and, in that sense, was not as "constructive" as, say, its Polish KOR counterpart. It was responsible for documenting cases of abuse and violation, and ensuring that no case of unjust persecution went unnoticed, but could offer no "way out" or forward for the victims. Consequently, Vons, unlike KOR in

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[168] V Havel, 'Six Asides About Culture,' op cit, 274-279.

[169] H Gordon Skilling, Charter 77 and Human Rights in Czechoslovakia, op cit, p 116.

[170] For a detailed analysis of the Jazz Section, see· J Skvorecky, 'Hipness at Dusk,' Cross Currents, No 6 1987, pp.53-62.

[171] Founding charter of VONS in Labour Focus on Eastern Europe, Vol 2 No 4, September-October 1978, p 8

[172] For the thinking that lay behind the creation of VONS, see. V Havel, 'Article 202' and 'Article 203' in: V.Havel, Open Letters, op cit, pp.109-116 and 117-124.

[173] See Labour Focus on Eastern Europe, Vol.2 No 5, November-December 1978, pp.3-5

Poland, was more of a halfway house, unable to offer the population an alternative or protection from the Communist regime. The initiative, like Charter 77, was therefore unable to encourage or to nurture the same degree of second society activity witnessed in Poland.

(5 2.7) Regime Repression

The limited appeal and impact of the Charter can be attributed, in part, to the tactics deliberately employed by the regime to curtail and minimise any response to it. There were no immediate comments from Party leaders once the Charter had been circulated, but throughout January 1977, harsh attacks in the official press set the campaign against the Charter, which proceeded on two levels. The first was a verbal campaign in the press, on radio and television and at mass meetings. The media campaign could have had a knock-on effect by awakening curiosity and public attention, however, in reality, it no doubt discouraged many people from expressing their sympathy for Charter 77, or openly supporting it. Workers in particular were dissuaded from openly supporting the Charter.[174] This onslaught in the media was co-ordinated with a drive to mobilise opinion against it in the factories, cultural organisations and other official institutions. Hundreds of meetings were held to endorse resolutions condemning the Charter, during which members of the public were encouraged to sign an "anti-Charter," which was later published in the press.[175] This latter document was intended to demonstrate the overwhelming support enjoyed by the regime, particularly in the cultural world, and to bring Charter 77 into ridicule. The campaign against the Charter was also accompanied by a vendetta against individual Chartists, especially the official spokesmen, and against other personalities who had been prominent in 1968.

In early April 1977, however, the media attacks halted and the Charter's supporters were officially ignored. The media did not report on later documents issued by the Charter, and resisted overt assaults on either the movement or its leaders. Consequently, Charter 77 dropped out of the public eye, and many people at home were hardly aware of its continued existence or activities. Unable, due principally to the technical difficulties involved, to establish an effective, alternative communications network to allow the widespread distribution of samizdat writings,

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[174] T Garton Ash, 'Czechoslovakia Under Ice,' op cit, p 58.

[175] M Simecka, 'Hostages; or How I Was Asked to Repudiate Charter 77,' Index on Censorship, Vol. 3, 1977, p.22.

Charter 77 was unable to effectively carry its message to the people.[176] This had an undoubted effect upon the development of second society: without a means of communicating with the population, Charter 77 and other dissidents had no real hope of inducing a society-wide movement of dissent.

This programme of repression was well orchestrated and, although it employed familiar methods, went far beyond them in both scope and intensity. As was the case in Romania, the police, in particular, made a sustained effort to isolate the initiators and supporters of the Charter from the general public; to deter others from joining them; and to destroy any links of solidarity amongst Chartists, via a combination of interrogations, house searches, and "preventive detention" for 48-hours or longer.[177] In addition, other forms of penalising citizens were employed. Dismissal from work, for example, was the most severe; the termination of sickness benefits, invalid pensions, and the denial of educational opportunities and the employment of the relatives of Chartists were also tactics adopted.[178] Other forms of persecution included eviction from places of residence, and forced accommodation in remote suburbs in order to isolate individual activists; the cutting off of telephones, the confiscation of driving licenses, passports and identity cards, all of which served to isolate dissidents and prevent their contact with the wider public. Intimidation was widely resorted to, as was the encouragement of emigration.

The repressive policies, on the one hand, demonstrated the apparent fear with which the regime regarded any occurrence akin to that of 1968. On the other, they were designed to create an atmosphere of fear as an effective obstacle to the spread of the Charter's ideas. During the autumn of 1977, the campaign continued with a major trial of prominent personalities in October, beginning a period of successive trials of lesser-known Charter signatories that lasted two years. In October 1979, a further large-scale trial of leading Chartists took place.[179] The trials, themselves, were also

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[176] H.Gordon Skilling, 'Independent Currents in Czechoslovakia,' ibid pp.32-36. Also, C.M.Sadowksi, 'Autonomous Groups as Agents of Democratic Change in Communist and Post-Communist Europe,' in· L Diamond (ed.), Political Culture and Democracy in Developing Countries, 1993 London, Lynne Rienner Publishers Inc , p 169.

[177]For example, during Leonid Brezhnev's visit to Prague in May 1978, the Charter's most active supporters were temporarily interned The New York Times, May 30th 1978.

[178] Richard F Starr (ed), International Yearbook on Communist Affairs 1979, 1979 Stanford, Hoover University Press, p.18.

[179]For a translation of Havel's 22-3rd October 1979 'Defence Speech,' see: H.Gordon Skilling, Charter 77 and Human Rights in Czechoslovakia, op cit, pp 299-306.

significant because they effectively illustrated the lack of solidarity for the persecuted amongst the bulk of the population, as they failed to arouse any widespread degree of sympathy or supportive action. The relatively limited popular response to Charter 77, and the eventual decline of domestic and international interest, suggested that the termination of the media campaign and the use of selective police repression had been successful in reducing the impact and danger of the Charter.

In summary, in contrast to the draconian measures meted out in the 1950s or against dissidents in the early 1970s, the regime employed a milder form of repression that avoided outright force. However, because punishments in the late 1970s were so arbitrary, they had the effect of discouraging widespread public support. Furthermore, the sudden crackdown on Charter 77 in the middle of 1979 effectively solved the "action-inaction question" for many and represented the regime's decision to resolve the dilemma it then found itself in by drastic action, striking directly at the centre of the movement, and at some of its leading figures. In addition, the policies adopted throughout 1978-9 - which attempted to restrict cultural life and regularise relations with the Catholic Church - were expanded post-1980 and the events surrounding Solidarity in Poland. Against the Polish background, CCP leaders appeared to realise the risks involved for the regime in allowing working class discontent to be articulated through unofficial trade unions. In February 1981, a joint communiqué issued by the government and the Presidium of the Central Trade Union Council pledged to increase the opportunities for workers to participate in industrial decision-making; whilst the regime sought, with greater resolve than previously, to broaden the basis of public consensus and, thus, its legitimacy. In that respect, the June 1981 elections were fought on the basis of the correctness of current policies in the light of the relatively high standards of living enjoyed by Czechoslovak citizens.[180] Coupled with the policies that illustrated a determination to eradicate dissidence altogether, the regime was successful in dealing a crippling blow to the second society's visible symbols. In the absence of an extensive samizdat network, the opposition was unable to effectively counteract official propaganda and strategies, or to protect the opposition structures that existed.

(5.2.8) Slovakia

Significantly, in Slovakia, Charter 77 had a limited response and impact. The original list of signatories did include some Slovak citizens resident in Prague, and a

[180]R F Starr (ed), 1982 Yearbook on International Communist Affairs, 1982 Stanford, Hoover Institution Press, pp 393-4.

few more did sign later.[181] Overall however, support for the initiative was negligible. Slovakian political passivity shared many of the same roots as the phenomenon in the Czech lands.[182] People were concerned primarily with the potential loss of material benefits, which produced a noticeable political acquiescence. There were, however, distinctive reasons for Slovak non-participation in the opposition movement, which reflected specific national traditions and experiences. In the first instance, a predominant concern for nationalism reflected in the federal state established in 1969, produced a feeling of political satisfaction among Slovaks.[183] Although the significance of federation was later reduced by Constitutional changes which expanded central powers at the expense of local autonomy, the national organs of the Slovak Republic remained as symbols of national equality, and continued to enjoy some degree of administrative autonomy. This gave Slovaks an illusion of power and influence and, significantly, opened up many career opportunities in Prague and Bratislava for the Slovak youth. This answered some of their specific demands and gave them no pressing reason to oppose the Communist regime.[184] Within Slovakia also, Husak enjoyed a degree of personal popularity as the first Slovak President in history, as well as being the overseer of federalisation.

After 1968, normalisation was applied equally to Slovakia, but in a notably less severe manner. Intellectuals did not undergo anything like the drastic purges of the Czechs and, therefore, were not driven together by persecution to defend their interests. For example, although some writers were banned, many were permitted to publish so that the very existence of a Slovak culture did not appear to be threatened. The purge of the 1968 revisionists, moreover, was neither as ruthless nor all-encompassing as in the Czech lands.[185] Consequently, many Slovaks had more to lose than their Czech colleagues and were less ready to risk their careers or livelihoods by open opposition.[186] Later manifestations of opposition were more harshly treated however. Constant surveillance, intimidation, persecution and harassment, all took

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[181] Miroslav Kusy, 'Nationalism, Totalitarianism and Democracy An Interview with Miroslav Kusy,' in: T.D.Whipple (ed), After the Velvet Revolution, 1991 New York, Freedom House, p 247.

[182] H.Gordon Skilling, Charter 77 and Human Rights in Czechoslovakia, op cit, pp 54-58.

[183] Miroslav Holub, Interview, Cheltenham 1995, op cit

[184] S L Wolchik, 'Regional Inequalities in Czechoslovakia,' in: D Nelson (ed), Communism and the Politics of Inequalities, 1983 Lexington, Lexington Books, pp 249-70.

[185] Ibid, pp.250-258.

[186] V Kusin, From Dubcek to Charter 77, A Study of Normalisation in Czechoslovakia, 1968-1978, 1978 New York, St Martin's Press, p 310.

their toll. Thus, when a small group was formed in Bratislava to discuss issues of common concern in early 1981, participants were arrested, interrogated and repeatedly harassed.[187]

These policies were not accidental. By satisfying Slovak national aspirations by means of federalisation in 1968, the CCP succeeded in perpetuating Czech and Slovak historical divisions, and preventing the evolution of a cross-country opposition movement in support of a common grievance.[188] With a greater sense of unity in favour of nationalist goals, and with federalisation marking a step forward for Slovakia, there was also less of a feeling of total despair at the defeat of the democratic reform movement. Those who did remain loyal to the ideals of 1968, and were later supportive of Charter 77, were isolated, both within their own community and, because of strict police measures, from their counterparts in the Czech lands.

(5.2.9) Summary

In Autumn 1980, against the background of the dramatic events in neighbouring Poland and fearful that unrest could spread to Czechoslovakia, Party spokesmen admitted that protests against unsatisfactory working conditions and occasional wildcat strikes had occurred in some industrial regions.[189] At the end of 1980, Husak travelled to Ostrava to hold talks with workers and union officials regarding grievances resulting from the harsh demands of the current economic plan.[190] Independent religious affiliation resulted in the CCP's stepping-up of its anti-religious drive;[191] and Hungarian minorities in Slovakia continued to demand cultural and educational sovereignty. New factors, such as environmental and peace concerns did provoke a degree of independent action at the grassroots level. Furthermore, by the early 1980s, crisis in the economy was evident, with the country experiencing serious problems in many vital sectors of production and supply, which did not auger well for the future stability of the regime. However, in January 1982, sharp price

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[187]Jan Mlynarik, 'Tatarka: Silenced in Slovakia,' Index on Censorship Vol.2, 1984, p 28.

[188] Ivan Klima, 'Czechoslovakia: A Premature Obituary,' in I Klima, The Spirit of Prague and Other Essays, 1993 London, Granta Books, pp.123-5.

[189]Richard F Starr (ed), Yearbook on International Communist Affairs 1982, 1982 Stanford, Hoover Institution Press, p 392.

[190]RFE Czechoslovak Situation Report No.28, November 28th 1980, p 2.

[191]R F Starr (ed), 1982, op cit, pp 394-5.

increases were introduced for all major consumer items.[192] What is significant is, that unlike in Poland where food and consumer goods price increases automatically provoked a backlash from society, in Czechoslovakia, no such reaction was evident. The reasons for this are important and lie, predominantly, in the failure of Charter 77 to encourage widespread independent support.

Undoubtedly, Charter 77 did accomplish some of its initial goals. Its community of over one thousand signatories did succeed in living a "life of truth" in defiance of the CCP.[193] The Charter did promote the publication of various samizdat titles, via independent publishing houses;[194] whilst the activities of such as the semi-official Jazz Section highlighted the areas in which the opposition began to flourish. Independent religious affiliation became more overt also.[195] VONS also played a significant role, issuing communications and cataloguing cases of injustice and persecution in Czechoslovakia. Consequently in 1980, the Czechoslovak dissident scene offered a variety of loosely associated activities, with an accent on five issues: the monitoring of abuses of human rights; literary independence; economic and historical science; underground music; and independent religious belief.

The limitations of the five are immediately noticeable, however. None of them individually, or even all together, threatened to promote or sustain a mass movement of active dissent. Only underground music and religious dissent attracted support from relatively large segments of the population. The former, however, could not lead to the creation of a programme for political change. Religion could have represented a strong moral element in the dissident community, particularly in Slovakia. Nevertheless, it is probably an exaggeration to claim that the Church was either ready or willing to be involved in political activity along the lines of the Polish example.[196] By 1980, for example, a degree of regularisation had been achieved with the Catholic Church, in particular, and there had been a noticeable improvement in formal

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[192]R Wesson (ed), 1983 Yearbook on International Communist Affairs, 1983 Stanford, Hoover Institution Press, p 263

[193] H Gordon Skilling, Samizdat and An Independent Society in Central and Eastern Europe, op cit, p.70.

[194]Anon , 'The Czech Underground Press,' Index on Censorship, Vol 4, 1974,p 11 Between 1979-81, 400 Czech writers who had been officially banned, resorted to samizdat or to smuggling their manuscripts to the West

[195]Jiri Otava, 'Religious Freedom in Czechoslovakia,' Index on Censorship Vol 1, 1977, pp 13-17.

[196] P Ramet, Cross and Commissar: The Politics of Religion in Eastern Europe and the USSR, 1987 Bloomington, Indiana University Press, p 80

relations between it and the state. Regime-initiated policies during this period effectively ensured that the Church would not act as a shelter for opposition activity as was the case in Poland. Even in Slovakia, where religious practice remained stronger than in the Czech Lands, the Church was unable to provide the sort of succour to an opposition that the Catholic Church in Poland provided to Solidarity. Consequently, in 1980, dissent in Czechoslovakia, appeared too strong to be wiped out, but not strong enough to mushroom into large-scale, active opposition. The methods that dissidents were able to adopt were extremely limited, both by the lack of public support, and by the adverse conditions under which they were forced to operate.

One of the Charter's principal failings, however, was its inability to overcome the fear the Husak regime generated amongst the vast majority of the population. In Czechoslovakia, the "new social contract," established between the Husak regime and society after 1968, proved a relatively viable framework for political stability.[197] Given the level of material advantage bestowed on an acquiescent population, active opposition was far too costly for most people to contemplate. Such failings are adequately portrayed by the fact that, at the end of the 1970s, in proportion to the population, the CCP was the largest Communist Party in the world, with almost 10 per cent of the Czechoslovak population being members.[198] Most significantly, 62 per cent of newly-admitted Party card holders were workers, a fact which lends credence to the argument that the Charter was too elitist and cloaked in theory to appeal to broad sections of the population. Furthermore, 90 per cent of all new applicants were under 35 years of age, demonstrating the failure of the principal opposition groups in society to adequately reflect the genuine aspirations of the public.[199] Estimates that placed the number of sympathisers and potential signatories at two million in 1983 illustrates the inability of the Charter to mobilise a movement *in potentia*.[200]

The difference between Poland and Czechoslovakia is immediately evident. The 1970s, as a decade of turmoil and unrest led to the formation of a cross-class coalition of opposition in Poland. In Czechoslovakia, the 1970s were characterised by

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[197]A.J Liehm, 'The New Social Contract and the Parallel Polity,' in J L Curry (ed), op cit, pp 173-181.

[198]Richard F Starr (ed), Yearbook in International Communist Affairs 1979, 1979 Stanford, Hoover University Press, p 19

[199]R F.Starr (ed.), Yearbook on International Communist Affairs 1982, op cit, p.392.

[200]RFE Czechoslovak Situation Report, January 22 1983,pp 11-12

political stabilisation, relative economic growth and the satisfaction of an unprecedented level of consumer demands. Subsequently, passivity and conformism were predominant characteristics amongst the population. Within the CCP, also, reformist tendencies had been purged in the early 1970s leaving no official openings which the independent opposition could take advantage of. In Poland, following the 1976 formation of KOR and the formulation of theories concerning the building of a second society, the number of people willing to commit themselves to opposition activity grew steadily. To the detriment of second society in Czechoslovakia, the Chartists, in contrast to their Polish counterparts, did not adequately reflect the mood of the population and, therefore, the active dissident community in Czechoslovakia remained far smaller. Furthermore, whilst the Polish opposition included the working classes, Czechoslovak dissent was confined primarily to intellectuals, with Charter signatories seeing greater importance in aiming their constructive actions at calls for a dialogue with the Communist authorities and in extending a hand to moderate elements within the CCP, than to building a bridge between the Charter intellectuals and the workers or society as a whole[201] Such factors, when combined with the draconian levels of repression employed by the regime in the aftermath of 1968, all contribute to an explanation of the *under development* of a distinct second society, or even of a mass-oriented social movement along the lines of the Polish Solidarity trade union, in Czechoslovakia in the 1970s and 80s.

Consequently, although the Charter was significant as it represented a symbol of hope and a focus for dissident activity and thought, it failed to pose a real threat to political stability in Czechoslovakia until the late 1980s. As long as activities were confined primarily to the intellectual and cultural realms, and exerted little influence over the masses, second society could not constitute a political force capable of either exerting pressure on the authorities or even of safeguarding its own existence. Charter 77's failure to formulate a clear alternative to the Communist regime ensured that it could play only a peripheral role within society. The persistent risk of reprisals for participation limited the number of people who were willing to support its activities openly.

[201]Some of the Charter 77 documents during its first two years did, admittedly, demonstrate an awareness of the need to comment on, and criticise, wider social issues than those affecting the community of Charter signatories. The documents failed, however, to develop concrete action programmes or alternative policies

(5.3) Second Society and the Breakdown of Communism in 1989

The impact of Mikhail Gorbachev's policies within the Soviet Union and of the sudden collapse of the hard-line Honecker regime in East Germany undoubtedly played a critical role in hastening the end of Communist rule in Czechoslovakia. However, as crucial as these developments outside the country were, the collapse of Communism within Czechoslovakia also reflected the serious and underlying problems the system created within the country and, more significantly with regard to this study, the impact of the various and growing acts of opposition that were especially evident throughout 1988 and 1989. The political system did remain very tightly controlled until the end of Communist rule. Throughout the mid to late 1980s, the leadership continued to resist Gorbachev and the increasingly dramatic reforms of Poland and Hungary. General Secretary Milos Jakes did make certain conciliatory gestures, including promises of liberalising reforms aimed at easing foreign travel restrictions, and permitting cultural freedom, but continued to resist fundamental political and economic reform. However, the impact of Gorbachev's policies, and the presence of Party members who were less committed to maintaining the policy of normalisation, led to the formation of new dissident groups and broader public participation in second society activities.

In response to Moscow's reforms, Charter activists publicly supported Gorbachev's policies and called on CCP officials to emulate them. They also issued statements that evaluated conditions in the country as ripe for increased activity on the part of the Charter in 1987. Scattered incidents, such as the relatively lenient sentences imposed on the leaders of the unofficial Jazz Section for their independent activities, appeared to indicate a lessening of tension between the official and the dissident realms.[202] However, as later reprisals against religious believers illustrated, the regime was unwilling, even at that late stage, to permit any real discussion of political reform. Clearly afraid of a repetition of the events of the late 1960s, when economic reforms spilled over into the political realm, or of the crisis between regime and society in Poland, the Husak leadership continued to set strict limits on political debate.

In the economic sphere, however, recognition of the necessity of reform at the January 1987 meeting of the CC, led to the recommendation of substantial changes in the organisation and management of the economy, similar in many respects to those

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[202] V Havel, 'Farce, Reformability and the Future of the World,' in· V Havel, Open Letters, op cit, pp.359-361.

formulated by Prague Spring economists in the 1960s.[203] Although the similarity between the economic reforms proposed in 1967 and 1987 were acknowledged only indirectly, the fact that "reform" was once more a permitted term, and that proposals were akin to those of 1968, undoubtedly had a significant impact on the average citizen.

Although there was no Czechoslovak parallel to the political developments that took place within Poland, the late 1980s did witness a number of important changes. The events of 1989 reflected the underlying crises and widespread dissatisfaction of the Czechoslovaks with the Communist system. They were also conditioned by important changes at both the mass and elite level between 1987 and 1989, which were significant in light of the political stagnation of much of the post-1968 period. The first, and in many ways, most important of these changes was evident in a renewed willingness of the population to challenge the regime by organising independent groups and participating in unauthorised protests and demonstrations. In the first area, the late 1980s saw the emergence of nearly a dozen new independent groups that, although relatively small when compared to those in Poland, did represent a significant increase in unofficial associations in Czechoslovakia. Although several focused primarily on human rights issues, and built on the work of Charter 77 and VONS, others, notably, including the Movement for Civil Liberties (1988) and the Democratic Initiative (1987) were more directly political and formulated coherent programmes that called for political pluralism, intellectual and religious freedom, and democracy.[204] In addition, several independent groups emerged in 1988-9 among young people, members of such bodies as Czech Children (May 1988) playing a key role in organising mass demonstrations to mark important anniversaries in 1988-9.[205] Long-standing groups also adopted a more overtly challenging stance. The Jazz Section, for example, under the leadership of Karel Srp, became much more political and boldly began to engage large numbers of young people in quasi-opposition activities beyond the realm of music, which the regime found threatening precisely because it recognised the potential for widespread opposition.

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[203] For an overview of economic stagnation in the early 1980s, see V.V Kusin, 'Husak's Czechoslovakia and Economic Stagnation,' Problems of Communism, Vol.31 No 3, pp.24-37.

[204] H.Gordon Skilling and P.Wilson (eds) Civic Freedom in Central Europe, op cit, p 135.

[205] Jiri Pehe, 'Independent Movements in Eastern Europe,' RFE Research Background Report No 228, November 17th 1988, p.16.

In the 1980s, in contrast to earlier periods when the regime increased its pressure on the Church, a resurgence of religious faith was identifiable.[206] For example, the Czech Cardinal Frantsiek Tomasek took his lead from Rome and began to speak out against the totalitarianism of the Communist regime, inviting John Paul II to Czechoslovakia to celebrate the coming of Christianity to Slovakia,[207] and individual priests joined the semi-official peace movement "Pacem in Terris."[208] In the spring of 1987, no doubt encouraged by talk of economic reform in society, the Church announced a "Decade of Spiritual Renewal." That year, more than 100,000 people participated in the annual pilgrimage to Velehrad.[209] Late in 1987, a group of Moravian Catholics began circulating a thirty-one-point petition calling for the formal separation of the Church and state, and for freedom of religion more generally, which was supported by a number of earlier Charter 77 documents condemning religious persecution.[210] Such overt demonstrations of support for independence on the part of the Church marked a significant departure from earlier attitudes that were, arguably, crucial to the subsequent evolution of popular opposition to the CCP. In a country where 95 pert cent of the population identified themselves as religious, the evident sympathy of the Church for the activities of Charter 77 undoubtedly had a significant impact on the growth of public opposition in the late 1980s. When Cardinal Tomasek made a public appeal in support of the petition saying "cowardice and fear are unworthy of a true Christian," 600,000 people throughout Czechoslovakia signed within six months.[211] Two further points are significant here. Firstly, that opposition was spread throughout both the Czech Lands and Slovakia. Within the latter,

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[206]See· P Ramet, 'Religious Ferment in Eastern Europe,' Survey, Vol 28 No 4, Winter 1984, pp.93-7; and A Tomsky, 'Modus Moriendi of the Catholic Church in Czechoslovakia,' Religion in Communist Lands, Vol 10 No.1, Spring 1982, pp 23-54 For increases in the numbers of religious "believers," see: RFE Czechoslovakia Situation Report/4, March 10 1986, p.10.

[207] 'Religion: Repression Behind the Rhetoric,' RFE Czechoslovakia Situation Report/7, June 12 1987, p.11.

[208] Anon., 'The Church at the Crossroads,' Religion in Communist Lands, Vol 13 No 3, Winter 1985, pp 250-260.

[209]For reports of various religious celebrations, see RFE Research, Situation Report Czechoslovakia/7, May 2 1986, p.19; RFE Research, Situation Report Czechoslovakia/9, June 18 1986, p.14, RFE Research, Situation Report Czechoslovakia/15, October 14 1987, p.13; and RFE Research, Situation Report Czechoslovakia/19, December 30 1987, p 15. For details of the Velehrad pilgrimage, see: 'Religion· Persecution and Resistance,' RFE Research, Situation Report Czechoslovakia/9, June 18 1986, p.11

[210] A.Ward, 'New Wave of Religious Persecution in Czechoslovakia,' Eastern European Reporter, Vol 1 No 4, Winter 1986, pp 41-2.

[211]RFE Research Situation Report, Czechoslovakia/1, January 21 1988, pp 45-8

throughout the early 1980s, a number of protests against discriminatory policies were reported,[212] and instances of religious dissent increased.[213] This unintended consequence of Catholic activism represented one of the few instances of a broad second society developing among the Czechs and the Slovaks. Secondly, it is significant that, largely as a consequence of the revival of religious activism, it became evident in the late 1980s that Czechoslovak dissent had begun to move out of its "intellectual ghetto." Admittedly, a large proportion of active dissidents were intellectuals and students, however, the growing numbers of workers willing to participate in mass demonstrations indicated that the traditional gap between them and the intellectual elite had narrowed.

The increase in the number of dissident groups was paralleled by an increase in the number and size of independently organised mass demonstrations and protests. In this respect, a further vital factor in creating the conditions for revolution in Czechoslovakia was the media in its broadest sense. In addition to a "domino effect" of the demonstrations in Poland and Hungary, and the breaching of the Berlin Wall, the continued persistence of foreign radio stations like the BBC and Radio Free Europe in transmitting uncensored accounts eroded the credibility of the Communist government. In December 1988, when the CCP government ceased jamming RFE much broader and more effective dissemination of the growing popular movements became possible. When these changes in the approach adopted by the media were coupled with a recognisable increase in samizdat and other publishing activities, the result was a greater boldness on the part of Charter 77 and other opposition groups.

This development in Czechoslovakia in the late 1980s effectively engaged much larger numbers more actively against the regime. By 1989, pilgrimages in Slovakia and Moravia that began in the mid 1980s, came to include and estimated 700,000 participants.[214] The 20th anniversary of the Warsaw Pact invasion drew an estimated 100,000 people; as did the commemoration ceremony of the founding of the First Republic held in October 1988. Western governments and private human rights organisations played an important role in encouraging and supporting these signs of dissidence. In particular, American support of the stipulations of the Helsinki Final Act was critical. By 1988, several of the USA's NATO partners began to follow

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[212] RFE Research, Situation Report/11, No 32, August 8th 1986, Part 2

[213] H Gordon Skilling, Samizdat and an Independent Society in Central and Eastern Europe, op cit, p 90.

[214] S Wolchik, Czechoslovakia In Transition, Politics, Economics and Society, op cit, p 44

the American lead and encouraged visiting senior government officials to meet dissidents in Prague. The effect of Western support was to strengthen the sense of purpose and respectability among the Czechoslovak dissidents.

Significantly, 1988 also saw the re-emergence of demonstrations focused on openly political issues. In October, a group calling itself the "Movement for Civil Liberties" announced its first manifesto, the opening sentence of which read, "The time has come to get involved in politics."[215] Praising the anti-political work of Charter 77, the signatories claimed that the time had come for concrete work to create "Democracy for Everyone." In 1988, also, Czech activists had been "putting their cards on the table," as Havel phrased it, moving from the advocacy of human rights into political activism, even though they were aware this would mean confrontation with the government.[216] The concept of political activism was rarely expanded upon explicitly in opposition programmes (many newly established groups were still in the early formative stages when the Communist system collapsed in November 1989). However, manifestos and documents called for the kind of freedoms and civil liberties guaranteed by Western liberal democracies and, therefore, represented an alternative *in potentia* for a general public long disaffected with the Communist regime.

A final change in the nature of 1989 dissent was the spread of non-conformity to the official world itself. By early to mid 1989, for example, when many loyal intellectuals were amongst the 30,000 individuals who signed the political manifesto 'Several Sentences,' calling for political freedom and an end to censorship, it had become evident that many of the country's leading figures were willing to take a public stand in defence of opposition activities. Particularly after 1987, officials began to challenge accepted doctrines in many areas and to voice their criticisms of official policies more openly.[217] Leaders of the official Writers' Union, for example, announced, in 1988, a process aimed at rehabilitating many of the writers banned in 1968, and attempts to close the gap between official and samizdat publications. Similar trends were also evident in the film world and in music, and in Slovakia,

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[215]H Gordon Skilling and P.Wilson, op cit, p 135.

[216]G Stokes, The Walls Came Tumbling Down: The Collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe, 1993 Oxford, Oxford University Press, p.153.

[217]M Myant, The Czechoslovak Economy, 1948-1988, op cit, Ch 10.

where open disagreement with the regime's policies was more widespread than at any time since 1945.[218]

(5.3.1) Events of 1989

The collapse of the Czechoslovak Communist system was both rapid and peaceful. However, inspite of the public support for Havel following his arrest at the beginning of 1989 and of growing evidence of an increased willingness on the part of the public to speak out against the injustices of the Communist system,[219] in early 1989, the authorities remained under the impression that Charter 77 and Havel held no real moral or political significance, and that Communism would prevail.[220] Certainly, as the year progressed, it did appear that such assumptions did hold some weight. The effort to commemorate the Warsaw Pact invasion on August 21st attracted less support than spontaneous demonstrations the previous year. Other attempts at public shows of independence were swiftly suppressed with the arrest of leading activists. Incidents received little publicity and demonstrators were kept in detention wherever possible. However, in a document issued on June 29th ("A Few Remarks") Havel and his colleagues presented Charter 77's most radical demands for change to-date, calling for democratic liberties including freedom of assembly, a free media, and open discussions.[221] Within two months, evidently encouraged by the increased ferment within Czechoslovakia and throughout the Communist bloc, 20,000 people had signed it, the first time such a document had obtained widespread support outside the narrow circle of dissidents.

The question of whether opposition activity in 1989 was an indication of the growing strength of second society or merely of a more relaxed atmosphere does have to be considered, however. Even in August 1989, for example, the Charter's leadership was struggling with the dilemma of whether to mount demonstrations that might provoke further crackdowns and violence or to continue with acts of passive resistance. In short, in mid-1989, Charter 77, as the principal representative of the

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[218] H Gordon Skilling, Samizdat and an Independent Society in Central and Eastern Europe, op cit, pp.89-92.

[219] The demonstration on the 20th anniversary of the Warsaw Pact invasion the previous year had been similarly spontaneous, attracting perhaps 10,000 people. It was leaderless because the activists had been placed in preventive detention See· V Havel, 'A Statement to the Court,' New York Review of Books, April 27 1989, p 41.

[220] T Garton Ash, The Uses of Adversity Essays on the Fate of Central Europe, 2nd Edition, 1991 London, Granta Books, pp 238-241.

[221] The document can be found in Uncaptive Minds 2/4, August-September 1989, p.35.

opposition continued to offer no effective leadership or direction to society. This suggests that evidence of opposition such as the mass signing of the "Few Remarks" document was the consequence of a relatively relaxed atmosphere throughout the country as a whole, rather than of the growing strength of the opposition movement and of second society.

After months of demonstrations and demands, on Friday 17th November, the official Socialist Youth Union, in co-operation with a newly formed independent student organisation, organised a ceremony in Prague to commemorate the 50th anniversary of a murder of a Czech student by the Nazis.[222] The meeting provoked real and genuine interest amongst students because, for the first time, representatives of both the official student organisation and its newly formed independent rival were to be permitted to speak. When the rally first formed, the speakers began to call for reforms that included demands for the removal of Jakes' regime, and for the implementation of democratic reforms.[223] Rather than adhere to original plans to light individual candles, several thousand of the estimated 30,000 students spontaneously set out for the traditional focal point of Prague demonstrations, Wenceslas Square. However, their progress was blocked by the Prague police and resulted in several beatings inflicted on the demonstrators. News of the clashes spread quickly through Prague, with the suspicion that one student had even died because of police brutality. In fact, later investigations showed that no one had been killed, but this rumour, soon broadcast throughout Czechoslovakia via Radio Free Europe, gave the evolving opposition an occasion for further protests.[224]

The two main political movements that were shortly to take power formed themselves within little more than 48-hours of the November 17th events, that is, *after* mass demonstrations. As was the case in Romania, they had not been responsible for the orchestration of the public uprising against the regime. On November 19th, a group of Slovak writers, artists and intellectuals formed Public Against Violence (VPN); whilst the previous evening in Prague, Havel had convened a meeting of the opposition groups to create Civic Forum (OF) "as a spokesman on

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[222]For a detailed account of this event and those that followed, see: B.Wheaton and Z.Kavan, The Velvet Revolution Czechoslovakia 1980-1991, 1992 Boulder CO, Westview Press.

[223] The Observer, op.cit, pp.101-2.

[224] P.Grilli di Cortona, 'From Communism to Democracy: Rethinking Regime Change in Hungary and Czechoslovakia,' International Social Science Journal, 128, May 1991, p 320.

behalf of that part of the Czechoslovak public which is increasingly critical of the existing Czechoslovak leadership."[225]

If second society had been slow in forming in Czechoslovakia in comparison to Poland, it flourished in the ten days following November 17th. For example, on November 18th, actors voted to go on strike and empty theatres provided convenient meeting places, as well as vital communications equipment to local VPN and OF groups.[226] Similarly, Prague students responded immediately and on November 20th, students throughout the country went on strike and created a computer network to aid communications. More significantly, small groups of students began to visit factory work places and rural villages in an attempt to forge a society-wide, cross-class response to their actions. The presence of well-known theatre personalities amongst the groups of students appeared to provide the necessary evidence to ordinary citizens that something unusual was happening. Effectively, for the first time since 1968, there were attempts to form a cross-class opposition coalition. By November 20th, and less than seventy-two hours after the initial demonstrations, the Czechoslovak regime had begun to fall.

Whilst the government responded with attempts to replace the top Communist leadership and form a new government, thousands of protesters demanded the end of Communism on a daily basis. [227] At the same time, the newly formed Civic Forum proceeded to formulate a distinctly political programme that was not only consistent with Charter 77's notion of ethical pluralism but also with the practical notions of electoral democracy and the free market.[228] It is significant that the organisation now perceived the necessity of a coherent and overtly political programme as a viable alternative to Communism in order to maintain the support of the public.

The enormous success of a general strike called for November 27th succeeded in convincing even the most doubtful that the Communist system could not survive. Two days later the Federal Assembly overwhelmingly voted to revoke the constitutional articles guaranteeing the CCP's leading role, which had been one of the

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[225]T Garton Ash, Prague: Inside the Magic Lantern, op cit, p 82.

[226]Since mid-1987, in fact, Czechoslovak actors had been more vocal and overt in their opposition to the Husak regime. See, for example 'Actor Urges the Regime to Resign,' RFE Research, Situation Report Czechoslovakia/7, June 12 1987, pp.17-21.

[227] The Observer, op cit, pp 113-4

[228]See: T.Garton Ash, Prague, Inside the Magic Lantern, op cit, pp 78-130

primary demands of the student strikers. When a week later the new prime minister, Ladislav Adamec, put forward a so-called coalition government containing almost no oppositionists, Civic Forum had gained such a position of strength and support, that it was able to force its rejection. On December 9th, Husak finally resigned from his by now symbolic post of President, and the following day - only three weeks after the initial student march - a coalition government dominated by non-Communists took power. After brief negotiations, Alexander Dubcek was co-opted as Chairman of the National Assembly, which thereupon unanimously elected Vaclav Havel the new President of Czechoslovakia, providing an end-point to Eastern Europe's "velvet revolution."

(5.3.2) Mode of Breakdown: Distinguishing Factors

The breakdown of the Communist regime in Czechoslovakia demonstrates characteristics associated with both the *collapse* and *negotiation* models of breakdown. In the first instance, the events of autumn 1989 that Communist rule in Czechoslovakia were unplanned and unexpected by all the parties involved. The students demonstrating on November 17th were purely following a pattern established by the 1988 demonstrations that the larger the numbers on the streets of Prague, the louder the anti-Communist vote. Similarly, the various opposition groups brought together under the leadership of Vaclav Havel did not orchestrate the November 17th demonstrations. The founding of Civic Forum and Public Against Violence was an improvised response - that is, *reaction* rather than *proaction* - to an opportunity that was presented to dissidents. At no time prior to these events had opposition groups openly called for the overthrow of the government. Thus, the breakdown of Czechoslovak Communism can be seen as an example of regime *collapse*. It was a consequence of the failure of the CCP to reform itself, and its ultimate reluctance to use force to safeguard its rule. The Party did not respond more forcefully to the mounting demonstrations after November 20th because of Soviet opposition and the prospect of too much bloodshed. Unable to use military force in the face of overwhelming mass demonstrations, the CCP effectively became powerless to safeguard Communism in Czechoslovakia.

However, certain factors are more characteristic of a *negotiated* breakdown. For example, the model outlined in Chapter II argues that examples of regime collapse are characterised by minimal public involvement. Although second society organisations played little part in engineering the possibility of change in Czechoslovakia in 1989, it cannot be denied that regime breakdown was preceded by mass mobilisation and growing support for opposition activities. The existence of

certain organised groups (Civic Forum and Public Against Violence) ensured that, when the CCP recognised the inevitability of its demise, an alternative was able to assume leadership of the growing popular demonstrations. As the only groups in society with some organisational ability and moral authority, they were in a position to negotiate with the CCP and subsequently fill the vacuum left by the disintegration of the Party. Furthermore, the existence of second society groups ensured that, although relatively swift, the breakdown of the regime was not accompanied by widespread violence as was the case in Romania. It is important to recognise that the mode of breakdown experienced by the CCP demonstrates characteristics typical of an *elite-led negotiated* regime breakdown. Although second society developed rapidly in late 1989, it has been noted that the Czechoslovak opposition *reacted* to events that it did not control. The incumbent Communist elite played the key role in the transition process. In summary, accompanied by mass mobilisation, non-violence and a degree of negotiation, the breakdown of the Czechoslovak regime falls in between the *collapse* and *elite-led negotiation* models.

(5.3.3) Conclusion

The emergence of second society and of Charter 77 and other opposition groups in Czechoslovakia and the particular forms of evolution they took, can only be understood against the background of historical factors and the experience of both Czechs and Slovaks during the late 1960s, particularly the Warsaw Pact invasion of 1968, and the subsequent decade of "normalisation." The levels of genuine popular support for the CCP during the immediate post-war years, the historical cleavage between Czechs and Slovaks, the failure of the Communist regime to introduce any degree of de-Stalinisation post-1956, and the absence of an alternative authority within society, for example, cannot be overlooked in any account of the evolution of second society in Czechoslovakia. The legacy of 1968, however, is particularly significant for two principal reasons. On the one hand, it represented a year of high hopes and widespread enthusiasm and support for a fundamental transformation of the Communist system "from above." And, on the other hand, it represented a year of profound disillusionment and frustrations resulting not only from the fact of outside intervention, but also from the capitulation of genuinely supported Communist leaders and the willing acceptance of the policies of normalisation. Not only did this succeed in casting doubt on the entire reform strategy pursued during the previous eight months in particular, but it also provoked feelings of disillusionment as to future prospects for reform more generally.

During the immediate post-Prague Spring years, there were sporadic and open outbursts of independent protest. Although certainly brave in light of the level of repression meted against independent thought and action, such protests failed to attract or inspire any level of widespread sympathy, appearing to the general public to be merely repetitions of outbursts from the "same old firm."[229] The large-scale political trials of the early 1970s aroused neither general concern nor feelings of solidarity with the victims. What had become evident in Czechoslovakia was the widespread feeling of bitterness after 1968. This convinced many that the tactics of the past were inadequate and pointless. It was clear that genuine anti-Russian sentiments were widespread, and, in the early 1970s, nationalism could have played a significant role as a motivating force and as a guiding principle amongst reformist elements. Such sentiments were, however, countered by a widely shared belief that no reform would be tolerated by the Soviet Union, therefore precluding the development of, or reactivation of Czechoslovakia's reform movement on a society-wide basis.

Against this backdrop, Charter 77 represented a challenge to the Czechoslovak population, calling on it to defend its rights as citizens and confronting the pervasive apathy and silence deep-rooted in society since 1968. In this sense, the Charter has been described as " a collective public protest."[230] Certainly, it cannot be denied that the Charter struck at the very foundations of real socialism. As an attempt "to live in the truth," the original declaration brought into being a "community" which won the open support of more than one thousand signatories, and probably the silent sympathy of many more. In spite of differences of opinion over both aims and directions, the Charter was able to maintain its unity for over a decade. In addition, it did succeed in providing the stimulus for many other civic initiatives and the emergence of parallel institutions, especially in the cultural and intellectual spheres.

Most Chartists, whatever their ideological and political orientation, perceived the Charter's principal initial significance to lie in its *moral approach*, expressed in the willingness of the individual to stand up for his individual rights. For example, Vaclav Cerny saw the Charter's purpose as being "to shake not the laws, but the conscience" and believed it had scored a moral victory in this sense.[231] The achievements of the Charter in this respect cannot be questioned, yet, therein lies also

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[229]H.Gordon Skilling, Charter 77 and Human Rights in Czechoslovakia, op cit, p 177.

[230]M Kusy, 'The Charter and Real Socialism," op cit, p 18

[231]V Cerny, 'On the Question of Chartism,' op cit, pp.5-8.

its greatest weakness in practical terms. Even if the number of signatories *and* the number of reported sympathisers are taken into account, the Charter was able to appeal to only a very small section of the population. Too many others though sympathising with the aims of the Charter, were not willing to take the risks of acting on moral principles alone. This lack of widespread general commitment was a serious obstacle to the ability of Charter 77 to effect policy change.

However, in one sense, Charter 77 did assume a political dimension. By encouraging the formation of independent groups, and discussion amongst them as to the future of the Communist system in the late 1980s, it contributed to what Havel referred to as a "sort of second political life...outside the official structure."[232] Significantly in this study, however, this "parallel political life" did not concern itself with "an alternative political model," until late 1989.[233] Certainly, one of the principal topics of discussion throughout the 1970s was whether the Charter should become a more genuinely political force, or even a formal opposition. Miroslav Kusy, for example, recognised that as a primarily moral "society of the just," calling for a rebirth of socialism in the true spirit of its claimed principles, Charter 77 could appeal only to the individual and not to the masses, and, therefore, would remain at best a movement of passive resistance. He strongly favoured a more political movement, which would formulate its own alternative ideological conception and its own Socialist programme as an alternative to "real Socialism."[234] Like others who pressed for a more political approach, however, Kusy failed to elaborate such an alternative programme, or indicate in general terms what it may have embodied.[235]

Significantly for this study, it must also be noted that the activities of the opposition generally and the Charter specifically, did not win the large-scale endorsement of the population. Focusing particularly on the Charter itself, it was claimed that the document had been written in such a manner that, if it had been widely published and distributed, perhaps 90 per cent of the population would neither

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[232]V Havel, The Power of the Powerless, op cit, pp 20-22

[233]V Havel, ibid. pp 24-5, 48.

[234]M Kusy, "The Charter and Real Socialism," op cit, pp 22-3, 25-8.

[235]It was never, in fact, entirely clear who among the Chartists wished to make the Charter a political organisation with its own programme, or what form such a programme would take. Sabata perhaps came closest to advocating this on the basis of the idea of "self-management" but did not elaborate this in detail Neither did Peter Uhl, who pressed for a more "radical" course. Battek, for the independent Socialists, gave a brief outline of their principles, but did not propose a platform for Charter 77 as a whole

have been able to understand the language and terminology employed, nor grasp its true meaning or potential.[236] Certainly, the one thousand who signed the Charter demonstrated great courage, but were far outnumbered by the millions who were not willing to be associated with it. This widespread indifference of the population was undoubtedly an invaluable asset to the Communist regime. When combined with the almost complete lack of overt opposition in Slovakia, an explanation for the under-development of a second society becomes partly evident.

Furthermore, the negligible level of support for Charter 77 in Slovakia undermined potential for a united movement of opposition. Certainly, there were reports of widespread approval, particularly amongst the Slovak youth; and the content of the declaration and knowledge of its subsequent activities were well known in leading centres such as Bratislava and throughout certain rural regions.[237] In the absence of formal expressions of support, however, it became very difficult to judge the extent of sympathy for the opposition in Slovakia.

Two further factors are central to explanations of the relative lack of public support for second society activities during the 1970s and 1980s. Firstly, the fact that Czechoslovakia's standard of living remained high and that the economy was not beset by the crises faced particularly in Poland. Consequently, in exchange for political acquiescence, in return for public accommodation, the regime guaranteed not only material existence, but also a private life relatively free from interference.[238] This "new social contract" helps explain the relative lack of political activity in post-1968 Czechoslovakia.[239] Secondly, a factor which helps explain the average citizen's adaptation to the normalisation of the Czechoslovak regime was "fear." In his open letter to Husak in April 1975, Havel suggested that people were "driven" to behave as they were doing so "by fear" of unemployment, of no access to education, and of financial reversals.[240] This system was further underpinned by the "ubiquitous omnipotent state police," whose acts of harassment against all dissidents, but

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[236] See Bulletin, No 7, July 1977, London, Palach Press, pp 1-3.

[237] This was due, in the main, to easy access to Viennese radio and television broadcasts

[238] B Korda, 'A decade of economic growth in Czechoslovakia,' Soviet Studies, Vol.28 No 4, October 1976, pp 499-523.

[239] Vladimir Kusin, 'Typology of Opposition,' Soviet Studies, Vol 25 No 2, July 1973, pp 227-30, 238-44.

[240] For the full text of the letter, see Survey, Vol 21 No 3, Summer 1975, pp.167-190.

especially those sympathising with Charter 77, served indirectly to make everyone aware of the consequences of non-conformity, or even simply of contact with a recognised political activist.[241]

In Czechoslovakia, then, during the post-1968 period of normalisation, a system of loosely co-ordinated opposition initiatives emerged that, at least in embryo, represented a second society, albeit at a lower level of development than that in Poland. In Czechoslovakia, independent groups, principally Charter 77 and VONS, did succeed in establishing a limited sphere of freedom. Admittedly, the late 1980s did witness an increase in second society activities in response to reforms introduced by the CCP. Significantly, however, second society did not develop to the extent that it either united all social classes against Communism or offered an alternative model for the future. In contrast to Romania, however, in late 1989, the formation of Civic Forum and Public Against Violence to lead the growing spontaneous public demonstrations, and the subsequent formulation of an alternative political programme, presented the Communist regime with an organised and popular opposition *prior* to its ultimate capitulation. The establishment of the two groups ensured that, when the CCP relinquished power, the revolutionary momentum was not lost or hijacked by former Communist support structures. In contrast to Romania, where the RCP security forces attempted to crush public demonstrations, the second society that existed in Czechoslovakia in December 1989 was sufficiently organised to present a force that the Communist regime could no longer repress.

[241] See also. Anon , 'Getting Along in Czechoslovakia,' New York Review, November 9 1978, pp 10-14. And, Milan Simecka, 'The community of fear,' in H Gordon Skilling and V Precan (eds.), Parallel Politics, op cit, April 1979, pp 27-30.

CHAPTER VI: CONCLUSION

THE IMPACT OF SECOND SOCIETY ON THE MODE OF BREAKDOWN?

The review of existing regime breakdown and transitions literature revealed a number of areas which appeared to warrant further investigation, in addition to limitations in certain studies of the 1989 East European transitions. Furthermore, it identified a number of key questions regarding the concept of civil society and attempts to classify the former Communist countries according to the form of regime breakdown experienced in 1989. Chapter One posed a number of questions: what is the constitutive role of civil society in the initial stages of transition; and does the level of development of this independent sphere affect the course of regime change, for example ? It was argued that the concept of civil society was one that would permit an investigation of these and related questions, and an additional line of analysis of the process of regime breakdown and transition to supplement existing theories. Furthermore, it was suggested that an important question which remained to be addressed related to why the European Communist regimes experienced widely differing *modes* of breakdown in 1989, and to the specific relationship between civil society and independent opposition groups to the form of change which occurred in individual countries. The question was posed as to whether civil society was a determining or peripheral factor in this respect, or one that could be used to explain the revolutionary divergences of 1989.

The central purpose of this thesis, therefore, was to understand the effect of a domestic variable upon the mode of transition experienced in Eastern Europe at the end of the 1980s. Having explored the second society concept within the East European context, in comparing Poland, Czechoslovakia and Romania, analysis has focused on the extent to which a second society and opposition to Communism developed pre-1989, and the nature of that opposition to the status quo. By employing criteria outlined in Chapter Two, the case-study chapters identified the spheres in which a second society developed, and the orientation of its activities therewithin, and the context (the nature of the Communist regime) in which opposition emerged.

My original hypothesis can be summarised as follows. The varying levels and maturity of the second societies in the case-study countries and their varying relationships with the state structure, had a direct impact on the mode of Communist regime breakdown.[1] The hypothesis is supported by the empirical evidence discussed

[1]Maturity being compared on the basis of the existence, or otherwise, of cross-class unity in society, and the formulation of a political alternative to Communist rule.

in the case-study chapters, which clearly demonstrate that a connection between the two exists. For example, it has been suggested that the negotiated and protracted breakdown of Communism in Poland was, in part, directly related to the depth of second society development, and to the extent and nature of its opposition activities subsumed under the umbrella of the Solidarity trade union. More significantly, the fact that Solidarity was able to attract cross-class support, and to formulate a concrete and viable alternative policy programme to that of the PZPR, was central to the Party's decision to admit the banned union to roundtable negotiations in early 1989.

In sharp contrast, a combination of factors in Romania (the nature of the Ceaucescu regime and the methods of repression it willingly employed, combined with the traditional absence of manifestations of opposition to oligarchic rule) created a situation in which no mark of a developed second society was evident in the late 1980s. With no organised opposition able to spearhead a movement for reform, and with no coherent programme to galvanise the opposition, manifestations of dissent were of an individual and ad-hoc nature, with no evidence of the existence of cross-class national unity. The Romanian Communist regime had pursued policies that deeply antagonised every sector of the population, isolating itself from them, and therefore was dependent upon relatively high levels of repression to maintain its authority over society. However, a number of inherent weaknesses of the Romanian system were identified throughout the case-study chapter. In 1989, the regime was, therefore, vulnerable to the cumulative snowballing of the anti-Communist movement throughout Eastern Europe. Breakdown was, subsequently, swift and violent, with the only coherent group in society possessing the necessary ability and credentials to take over the reins of the transition process, the former Communist Party itself, re-formed under the banner of the National Salvation Front. It would be a mistake, however, to interpret the breakdown of the regime as being the consequence of second society activity. The demise of the Communist regime should be seen as following from the weakness of the state as opposed to the strength of second society forces.

Czechoslovakia witnessed only a limited development of second society phenomena. At times, independent activity was intense, particularly within the sphere of independent culture, where opposition to Communist strictures was extensive and pervasive, giving rise to the Charter 77 declaration. Although its signatories persistently denied any political role or objectives, Charter 77 supporters were united into a kind of informal moral community, representing a degree of independence

within the Czechoslovak Communist system. Generally, however, opposition to Communism remained isolated from a wider public, demoralised and apathetic following the Warsaw Pact defeat of the Prague Spring reform movement. It cannot be denied that the forms of autonomous activity the Charter and associated initiatives encouraged did effectively lay some foundations for the proliferation of independent second society organisations in late 1989, but, significantly, only after the Husak regime recognised the necessity for reform of the system. Regime breakdown was both sudden and unexpected, but unlike in Romania, was not accompanied by violence or serious confrontation. Furthermore, second society actors did assume a degree of prominence once transition was underway. The Czechoslovak revolution, therefore, represents an example located between the two extremes of the Polish and Romanian cases.

The key research findings are presented in this concluding chapter. The following case-study comparisons are divided into sections. The first compares the historical factors that had a specific impact on the nature of the developed Communist regimes concerned and, in turn, on the evolution of a second society. The second section focuses specifically on certain aspects crucial to the full development, or otherwise, of a second society in the three case-study countries. For example, its breadth of development, the existence of a recognisable leadership, the formation of cross-class ties and the formulation of a coherent policy programme will be considered. All these factors contributed to the mode of transition experienced in 1989. The characteristics of the developed Communist systems, such as the degree of liberalisation from an orthodox Marxist-Leninist line, the reaction of the regime to mounting opposition, and the impact or role of other actors such as the Roman Catholic Church, will be considered before an overview of the particular modes of breakdown experienced by the three countries in 1989.

(6.1) Overview of Case-Study Chapters

(6.1.1) Historical Factors

The nature of the systems that evolved during the forty-five years of Communist rule in Eastern Europe, and of the domestic oppositions in the three case-study countries, were conditioned by certain historical factors that cannot be ignored in any explanation of the impact of second society on the mode of regime breakdown at the end of the 1980s. In Poland, for example, a strong tradition of anti-Russianism dating back to the 16th century existed and was galvanised by the effective imposition of the Communist system in Poland between 1945-8. Combined with a religious homogeneity particularly evident after 1945 (something that established the Catholic

Church as a distinct and alternative authority within society), these two factors figure prominently in any analysis of the illegitimacy of the Communist regime in Poland, and also of the development of a second society there. The Church, in particular, cannot be omitted from any discussion of the achievements of the Polish opposition, especially following the election of John Paul II as Pope in 1978. The fact that the Catholic Church supported the principal aims of the Solidarity movement and provided effective shelter for its activities during the Martial Law years, is significant in understanding how the trade union was able to maintain itself as a viable alternative to the PZPR.

In Romania, also, traditionally strong nationalistic sentiments manifested themselves after 1945 in feelings of bitterness and hatred towards Soviet occupation. What could have served as a springboard for the growth of a popular opposition movement was, however, skillfully exploited by Communist leaders, principally Ceaucescu. Consequently, there were no Soviet troops within Romania's borders, and the pursuit of an apparently independent foreign policy line portrayed a degree of sovereignty from Moscow. Such distinctly anti-Soviet nationalist policies had the effect of binding the state and the people in such a way that the RCP could use such sentiments to effectively stifle internal dissent. In the religious sphere, the presence of the Romanian Orthodox Church should have represented the existence of a strong, unified moral force at odds with Communism. In fact, throughout its history, the Church had never served as a focus for political action, and following the establishment of Communist rule in Romania, was easily subverted by the official regime and quickly brought under full control. Ultimately, the Orthodox Church adopted many of the same nationalist positions as the RCP and became thoroughly integrated into the Party-state organisation. At no time did it act as a saviour of independence or as a shelter for independent dissident activity, as did the Catholic Church in Poland.

A tradition of deference to authority and of acceptance of foreign intervention and rule also played a role in quelling discontent and preventing the development of a second society within Romania. A strong belief in fatalism and in the futility of independent thought or action contribute to an explanation of why the Romanian public appeared so acquiescent in the face of extreme adversity under Ceaucescu's rule, and why it took until December 1989 for the population to speak out against it. In comparison, Poland's strong tradition of conspiring against foreign rule was more conducive to the self-organisation of society against an imposed system of power than was the case in both Romania and Czechoslovakia. The country's history of

opposition to foreign occupation offered ready-made patterns for conspiratorial and anti-government activity, and helped secure widespread social support for dissent.

In Czechoslovakia, in contrast to both Poland and Romania, no traditions of anti-Russian or Soviet sentiment existed. The Communist system originally had a sizeable number of genuine supporters and was legitimately voted into government in 1946 rather than imposed by the Soviet Red Army. Therefore, the CCP could draw on attitudes that were favourable towards the Soviet Union and that were supportive of socialism. This virtual absence of opposition to foreign occupation was not bolstered by any significant degree of widespread nationalist sentiment or by the presence of a significantly independent Church Independent religious affiliation did represent a strong moral element in the dissident community, however, it would be an exaggeration to claim that it was either ready or willing to be involved in political activity along the lines of the Polish example. In addition, the long-standing divisions and inequalities between the Czech Lands and Slovakia effectively ensured that a national, united opposition would be virtually impossible to achieve.

An historical factor that cannot be over-looked with regard to the particular evolution of a second society in Czechoslovakia is the relatively prosperous state of the economy compared to both Poland and Romania, particularly in the opposition's potentially most crucial years post-1968. The Czechoslovak economy emerged from World War Two the least damaged in Eastern Europe, and its ability to weather the impact of Stalinist economic policies, the reform era of the Prague Spring, and the policies of normalisation in the 1970s, ensured that economic fruits were exchanged for public accommodation in the political sphere. By contrast in Poland, successive economic crises provoked widespread working class outbursts throughout the course of Communist rule. The poor state of the economy was a constant against which the opposition could rally, and an effective foundation on which the intellectuals were able to base their theoretical work. Czechoslovak intellectuals, conversely, failed to recognise that formal organisation of the workers via independent trade unions represented the key to success. This is understandable, however, in a country where the state of the economy was not a focus for the opposition and, hence, it is hardly surprising that economic - and, therefore, workers' - demands were not at the forefront of opposition concerns.

In Romania, like Poland, the dire state of the economy (a legacy of the backward state of the overwhelmingly agrarian economy in 1945) especially during the 1970s-80s, did spawn a number of working class protests and an attempt to

establish an independent trade union. Both were empirical signs of discontent and a restive society. In contrast to Poland, however, where a growing wave of protest attracted the support of the intellectuals and led to the formation of Solidarity, as a consequence of the specific tactics employed by the Romanian Communist regime against any manifestation of opposition, and an inherent ability to get by in the face of adversity, the economic and political demands frequently made by Poland's workers were not uttered in Romania. A long-standing tradition of solving problems on an individual or familial basis, not collectively, made it more difficult to mobilise large numbers to achieve long-term social goals. Consequently, the average Romanian's success in getting by prevented them from turning such as a meat shortage into a social movement.

One further factor does deserve mention here. Whilst the Polish population was united, firstly, in religious terms and, secondly, by nationalist anti-Russian sentiments; and the Romanian people also (although not with the same effect) by a strong sense of Romanian nationalism, in Czechoslovakia, the fact that the population was divided between Czechs and Slovaks undoubtedly had a restraining effect on the development of second society there. With divergent histories, and political and cultural traditions, the lack of unity between the two nations was evident prior to World War Two and increasingly noticeable after 1945. Significantly, crucial differences could be identified in the differing objectives of indigenous opposition. In the Czech Lands, for example, dissent was based on moral principles and dissidents campaigned for human and civil rights within a freer cultural atmosphere. In Slovakia, the principal aim was the attainment of a greater degree of autonomy within the federal structure, an objective that predated the Communist period. This became particularly significant post-1968 when, having had their nationalist aspirations to an extent fulfilled by the reform of the federal structure effective on January 1st 1969, most Slovaks appeared to have made their peace with the Communist regime and were relatively content to enjoy the material rewards offered in return for political acquiescence.

(6.1.2) The Second Society - Level of Development

It has been evident in the preceding case-study chapters that the level of development of second society varied considerably from one country to another, and from one period in time to the next. A "fully developed" second society had the potential to include a predominantly illegal second economy; a public adherence to Marxism-Leninism countered by a tendency towards the development of a second social consciousness; an alternative political culture, and the re-emergence of

horizontal social networks and communities; and the existence of a dominant independent Church. Chapter II outlined specific criteria with which to measure the extent of development of second society within the case study countries, including factors such as the level of samizdat publishing, the emergence of independent education networks and the existence of independent groups and their particular orientations.

Poland, although always constituting a special case within Eastern Europe due, principally, to the status and strength of the Roman Catholic Church, fostered the almost complete development of a second society, to the extent that it operated *alongside*, as opposed to *within*, the official Communist regime. In the 1980s, independent activity could be witnessed in the economic, cultural, educational and political spheres. Polish ideas of the "social self-organisation" of society in opposition to the official regime mushroomed as a result of the formation of KOR in 1976. This effectively set in motion a process of organised collective opposition that although hampered by the imposition of Martial Law in December 1981, manifested itself most visibly in a wide variety of independent groups and organisations in society.

In addition, independent publishing in samizdat journals was widespread. Leaflets, banners, flags and badges, libraries of forbidden books and independent publications were printed throughout the period of Solidarity's existence, all of which contributed to the creation of an all-encompassing alternative culture. In the belief that new independent groups would form around samizdat publications, the expansion of independent publishing was actively encouraged, and succeeded in breaking the Communist monopoly of information. Independent education, synonymous with TKN also proved so popular that it acquired a degree of regulation and formalisation, and ultimately developed to the extent that an independent "National Education Council" was able to publish its own textbooks. In addition, the Polish opposition was a nursery for developing new social elites that, without doubt, influenced events in Poland. In particular, the fact that Lech Walesa was recognised as Solidarity's and second society's leader ensured that, during negotiations in early 1989, an opposition leadership experienced in negotiation tactics and processes, was not only readily identifiable, but was also one experienced in independent self-organisation and political confrontation.

In Czechoslovakia, also, second society was relatively well-articulated, but, significantly, only in the cultural sphere. The formation of Charter 77, and the

subsequent creation of VONS, did act as a stimulus to independent thought and action outside official structures. The emergence of samizdat publications, for example, is notable for its scope; attempts to promulgate a form of independent scholarship did attract a notable number of adherents; and the activities of such groups as the semi-official Jazz Section did succeed in creating a kind of independent social community. In striking contrast to the Polish scene, however, in spite of efforts to broaden the number and the scope of such independent initiatives, no organised political groupings or parties were formed. Although Charter 77 served as a distinct rallying-point, the perpetuation of its moral stance as opposed to one founded on political or systemic change, ultimately limited the development of second society. It would, therefore, be accurate to cite the existence of an extensive cultural underground, incorporating a system of parallel information, culture, scholarship and legal aid, however, the extent to which a second *society* existed must be called into question. This point is supported by Vaclav Havel who referred to the use of the term "independent *society*" with regard to the Czechoslovak opposition as inappropriate. It is significant also that other Czech theorists coined the term *polis - community* - to delineate the parameters of opposition development in Czechoslovakia [2]

It would also be true to state that in every sphere of opposition activity, the successes of the Czechoslovak dissidents were of a less concrete nature than those of their Polish counterparts. In Poland, in the sphere of samizdat publications, for example, the entire exercise of independent publishing had become so entrenched in the life of society by the early to mid-1980s, that samizdat was sold openly on the streets; printing methods were technically advanced and the survival of independent journals, even under the restrictions of Martial Law, began to have a direct impact on the quality and content of official newspapers. In Czechoslovakia, although the sphere of culture was the one in which second society was the most articulate, the combination of an inability to overcome technical printing and distribution difficulties, and an apparent ignorance of the issues with which the majority of the people were predominantly concerned, persistently hampered any attempts to effectively establish samizdat publications as a permanent aspect of Czechoslovak life. Whilst the Communist authorities in Poland necessarily had to accept this sphere of independence, in Czechoslovakia, the regime was able to effectively thwart the attempts of oppositionists to build a second society based upon the wide circulation of samizdat material.

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[2]V.Havel, 'The Power of the Powerless,' in· V.Havel et al, The Power of the Powerless, 1985 London, Palach Press, p.79

The Romania case study highlighted the limited nature of second society phenomena. Admittedly, the literary world did produce some examples of independent writings and in the sphere of religion expressions of dissent did emanate from *individual* clergymen. Inspired by the formation of Charter 77 in Czechoslovakia, the prominent dissident writer Paul Goma attempted to form Romania's first human rights committee and, notably, a free trade union (SLOMR) was founded in 1979 with a distinctly political programme twelve months prior to similar events in Poland. In the economic sphere, activities of an informal or unofficial nature could be identified on a relatively wide scale however, they failed to develop any degree of regularity or formalisation.

Overall, the second society that existed in Romania in 1989 lacked any organisational basis, with long term collective action both minimal and scarce. Any open manifestations of dissent were sporadic and occurred on an individual, pragmatic basis. No attempt was made to launch any form of independent scholarship; very little independent writing was circulated in the form of samizdat; and, it is significant that, in the 1980s, emigration became the most common form of opposition. It is also significant that society-wide organisations and social movements were established only after Ceaucescu had been toppled from power, with the NSF, having secured the support of the armed forces, dominated by the only coherent and united group in society, the Communists.

(6.1.3) Recognisable and Coherent Leadership

A further factor that distinguishes both Poland and Czechoslovakia from Romania is that in the former two countries the opposition of a second society was spearheaded by a particular and identifiable movement. In Poland, the Solidarity trade union that, at its height, claimed a membership of over ten million symbolised society's attempts to oppose the Communist system and formed the basis for action throughout the 1980s. In early 1989, it was Solidarity (along with the Catholic Church) that was invited by the regime to enter roundtable negotiations. In Czechoslovakia, Charter 77 spokesmen and signatories became the figurehead for the Czechoslovak population's efforts "to live in truth," and were fundamental to the formation of Civic Forum in late November 1989, responsible for the formulation of a new democratic programme for Czechoslovakia in the wake of mass public demonstrations and the CCP's effective withdrawal from political power.

In both countries, also, an individual or group leadership was clearly identifiable. In Poland, Lech Walesa was synonymous with twenty years of working class opposition to the Communist regime, and photographs of him signing the Gdansk Agreement in August 1980 gave hope to underground dissidents during the years of his house arrest and Martial Law. In Czechoslovakia, although never formally appointed or elected as leader of Charter 77, Vaclav Havel was considered by the Charter's sympathisers to be the country's spiritual leader and, certainly, his many arrests, detentions and trials became symbolic rallying-points for the Czechoslovak opposition in the early 1980s. However, in Romania, by contrast, the harsh rule of the Ceaucescu regime meant that independent activity was limited to small groups of perhaps five to ten like-minded individuals, and to private declarations of opposition. The second society that existed in Romania lacked any form of organisation and no single person or group could be identified as leading Romanian opposition. Even if Ceaucescu's regime had seen negotiation as the only means of survival in December 1989, there would have been no formal opposition with which to negotiate.

The nature of the particular movement in each country also deserves mention here. For example, in 1980-81, Solidarity had a relatively well organised and delineated organisational structure, an identifiable leader and a coherent programme. Even during the underground years of the Martial Law period, many of Solidarity's established structures continued to function, albeit haphazardly. By contrast, Charter 77 generally operated, not as an organisation per se, but rather with up to a thousand sympathetic signatories to a common set of ideals. Whereas the Charter had no organisational structure, no statutes, membership regulations or fees, members of the Solidarity Union applied for membership and paid annual dues. One could conclude, therefore, that the latter's commitment to the opposition cause was more formal, committed and regulated, than was membership of Charter 77. The latter demanded only a signature accepting the Charter's pronounced moral principles and a decision "to live within the truth." This is not to underplay the level of commitment or the risks taken by the Charter's signatories, which were undoubtedly immense. Rather, it is to say that support for the more emotional entity represented by Charter 77 lessened the credibility of the opposition as both a viable alternative to Communist rule and a potential negotiating partner, and its ability to mobilise support for dissident activity in an effective and coherent manner. In addition, as a predominantly working class movement, Solidarity's "damage potential," in a workers' state was far higher than the strivings for a few hundred middle class intellectuals "to live a life in truth" in Czechoslovakia.

(6 1 4) Cross-Class Appeal and Directional Programme

In Chapter II, I posed the question of whether the key to oppositional success within the political sphere was the formulation of a coherent political programme that presented a viable alternative to Communist rule, once intellectual dissidents had recognised the necessity of cross-class coalitions in order to unite their efforts with those of the wider society. The first point, here, is the recognition of the necessity of any opposition movement to appeal to all sectors of society. Opposition from an isolated class was easily dealt with by the Communist regimes. Workers had persistently expressed their opposition and discontent throughout Eastern Europe (in Poland in 1956, 1970 and 1976, for example) yet, on the whole, their efforts were inarticulate, unorganised and lacked a coherent set of goals. They were, therefore, swiftly suppressed by the incumbent regimes. More significantly, workers' actions had generally presented no appeal or opening to the intellectuals. Similarly, in 1968, waves of student and intellectual unrest across Eastern Europe demanded freer political and cultural environments, but had nothing in common with the predominantly economic concerns of the workers.

In Poland in 1976, however, the formation of KOR raised the possibility of a significant change in the accepted pattern of repression-opposition-reform-repression to-date. The creation of this bridge between the workers and intellectuals reflected the theoretical reassessment of the paths to, and the potential for, political change in Poland by leading opposition theorists, such as Adam Michnik and Jacek Kuron. Despite the fact that KOR remained an organisation of intellectuals who had united to defend the interests of workers, the intellectuals had recognised the significance of joint action, and society as a whole could, then, effectively work towards the presentation of a united front of opposition to the Communist regime. The appeal of Solidarity to all sections of society is demonstrated by the subsequent formation of Rural Solidarity, the establishment of a Student Solidarity Committee, the continuing work of the TKN, and the proliferation of women's and environmental groups spawned by the success of the trade union.

This Polish situation was unique in Eastern Europe at the time, both with regard to the level of dissenting opinion within society, and to the degree to which it provided evidence of cross-class unity. In Czechoslovakia, by contrast, Charter 77 failed to develop its appeal beyond the intellectual and cultural realms, and exerted little or no influence over the mass of the population. The reason for this was that the Charter lacked (and failed to develop) an issue broad enough to galvanise other

groups. On the one hand, this was a reflection of the Charter's primarily moral principles. The call for individuals to create a just society via a "life in truth," could only appeal to an *individual's* sense of injustice and not to the people en masse. On the other, it reflected the fact that, although like KOR and Solidarity in Poland, Charter 77 did succeed in stimulating independent initiatives which went far beyond the achievements of Romania, the mainstream of Czechoslovak dissent was not reinforced by a strong independent movement of protest among either the workers, the peasants or the students. Furthermore, support for Charter 77 and related initiatives was not supplemented by powerful religious or nationalist-inspired movements, with its principal weakness with regard to any attempt to forge a national unity being the almost complete absence of support in Slovakia. From early 1978 onward, the Chartists themselves were aware of their relative isolation from the public. Where the intellectual-led human rights movement in Poland was able to contribute to a favourable atmosphere for the demands of workers to be heard and acted upon, the relative weakness of Charter 77 was strikingly revealed by the general acquiescence of the population, and the complete absence of cross-class solidarity in society.

In Romania, there were manifestations of both intellectual and worker opposition but, significantly, in characteristically differing and isolated forms. In Romania, virtually no historical precedent existed for co-operation between the two classes. When combined with the particular methods employed by Ceaucescu and the Communist regime to intimidate and isolate protest, the chances that repressive policies would generate a mass reaction, or that intellectual dissidents would organise effectively to press for an amnesty for persecuted workers were slim. In Czechoslovakia, intellectuals had theoretically recognised the centrality of societal unity for the success of the opposition but had failed to act upon it; in Poland, action had followed rhetoric. Only in Romania, was there a total absence of a cross-class coalition in both theory and reality. Nationalistic sentiments which could have formed the basis of an opposition movement across society were directed primarily against the Hungarian minorities within Romania and manipulated to serve the ends of the regime itself. The complete subservience of the Romanian Orthodox Church further reduced the possibility of success for any opposition.

A further important function fulfilled by the Polish opposition was its formulation of a viable alternative programme, something that represented an effective challenge to the political power monopoly of the PZPR. In this study, I have argued that the second society in the case-study countries assumed greater

significance once dissident intellectuals were able to put forward a critical theory that, in turn, offered a programme and direction to working class movements. In August 1980, striking Polish workers, with the aid of the intellectual-based Committee of Experts, broadened their demands from economic issues, to place a more significant emphasis on the need to alter political relations within the Communist system. With the signing of the Gdansk Agreement, the Polish working class combined with the politically-activated intellectuals were responsible for the articulation of distinct political and economic *alternatives*. Confronted by a formidable and consolidated social movement, in particular, and a re-emerging second society more generally, the PZPR was compelled to respond and to recognise the existence of a body that would operate in the public sphere outside the direct control of the Party and state.

In 1980, the independence of the opposition had been acknowledged, but, significantly, *within* the *existing* system of power relations. At that time, this was accepted as a sufficient victory by the Solidarity-led opposition. Subsequent to its first National Congress in 1981, however, and in reaction to the imposition of Martial Law in Poland, the opposition graduated to demands and policy programmes premised on the replacement of the prevailing system with a democratically-oriented one. By the end of 1982, Solidarity had formulated a coherent and comprehensive policy programme that challenged the Communist regime with a viable alternative and a specific strategy aimed at combating the constraints of Martial Law. In so doing, the opposition not only gained a degree of credibility and therefore support from the general public, but it was also able, even after seven years of underground activity, to present itself to the Communist authorities as a "force to be reckoned with" as the economy took a further down-turn, and General Jaruzelski recognised the need for a degree of compromise in early 1988.

From the outset, by contrast, the opposition in Czechoslovakia lacked a coherent programme. A dominant theme in Charter 77's founding declaration was its denial that it intended to offer a basis for political opposition. The Charter's subsequent pursuit of a constructive dialogue with the state is significant for its clear demonstration of the Chartists apparent willingness to operate within the existing legal and political framework rather than a reformed alternative. This contributes to an explanation of why the Charter as a potential mass movement failed to encourage the extent or breadth of development of a second society that was achieved by Solidarity in Poland. Although later discussions focused on the need to broaden activity and appeal principally within the political sphere, action remained at the level of theory only, and the Charter failed to propose a viable programme that would have

attracted a mass following. Admittedly, Charter 77 did promote and encourage the establishment of parallel structures challenging the claims of the system to control every sphere of existence. What such civic initiatives did not represent, however, was a definite attempt to formulate and establish an alternative to the Communist system of rule and, therefore, an attempt to change the system from below, driven by the forces of a second society.

Briefly, then, in Poland we can talk of a second society representing a mature system of well-developed parallel structures and organisations that implicitly constituted a kind of alternative political system challenging the official power structure and which, by the early 1980s, was as much of a political reality as the official system. In Poland, by 1981, it had become clear that the second society was not isolated from the wider society, and it was increasingly apparent that it was this sector that expressed the real needs of society, addressing the genuine issues and seeking to formulate practical solutions. In Czechoslovakia, however, there existed a second society perhaps better described as a second *community*, in which dissidents adamantly refused and denied political involvement or objectives, and which fell far short of offering an alternative model for the future. Independent activities promulgated by Charter 77 were generally isolated from the population.

Romania, again, provides us with the complete exception. The second society that existed in Romania lacked any form of organisational basis, social movements forming distinct political opposition groups only after the events of December 1989. Manifestations of dissident opposition were, at all times, isolated from the mass of the population, and vice versa. One of the most important distinguishing factors of the 1989 Romanian events, therefore, is that, through its inability to formulate and develop a society-wide alternative, the Romanian opposition was unable to portray itself as either a force that the Communist regime could not ignore (as in Czechoslovakia) or "do without" (Poland). Furthermore, due to the absence of well-established and extensive second society institutions and practices, the Romanian opposition failed to develop a viable alternative programme and was unable to portray itself as a "government-in-waiting" to the CCP.

(6.1.5) Nature of the Developed Communist Regime - Reaction to Opposition

The impact of second society on the mode of regime breakdown experienced in 1989 cannot be fully understood without due consideration of the ways in which the Communist leaderships responded to any manifestation of opposition to the

system of rule in the three case-study countries. The nature of "developed socialism" in Poland, Czechoslovakia and Romania also needs to be taken into account.

In Romania, for example, Communist politics were dominated from 1965 to 1989 by Ceaucescu and his personal entourage, a state of affairs that was unique in Eastern Europe. The system was arguably the most orthodox of the East European Communist regimes. An early pretence at liberalisation had been replaced by an era of extreme Stalinist-inspired reforms in the political, cultural and economic spheres, underpinned by an active Securitate that swore allegiance to Ceaucescu personally, not the state.

In Czechoslovakia, also, the system experienced little in the way of de-Stalinisation in the late 1950s, which had a significant impact on the development of opposition to Communism. Starting from a higher level of economic development in 1945, for example, the impact of Stalinist economic policies had not been so severe as in Poland by the mid-1950s. In turn, this meant that economic discontent (one of the primary motivating factors behind the Polish workers' riots in 1956) was not as pervasive in Czechoslovakia. Thus, whilst benefiting from a relatively satisfied working class and a still loyal intelligentsia, the CCP saw no justification for the need to reform. Admittedly, during the Prague Spring era and in response to a marked slowdown of the economy, the Communist leadership did attempt to introduce a package of popularly-supported reforms that would have fundamentally altered the nature of the state-society relationship in all realms. During the normalisation era of Czechoslovak politics that followed, however, all liberalisation reforms were either halted or reversed (the only one to survive being that relating to federalism) to be replaced by a Communist system somewhat reminiscent of that under Stalin. Widespread political purges of the Party and society ensured that all traces of 1960s reformism were removed.

In contrast to both Romania and Czechoslovakia, although operating within the restrictions of Martial Law in the early 1980s, in Poland, the population lived in a relatively liberal Communist system. Although the reforms conceded following each manifestation of discontent were gradually rescinded over time, an economy in a state of near constant crisis combined with a citizenry increasingly willing (and able during the years of Solidarity's existence) to protest, forced the PZPR to admit that a degree of economic reform and cultural relaxation were essential for the survival of the Communist regime, particularly in the mid to late 1980s.

It is also significant that the manner in which the Polish authorities responded to, and dealt with dissent differed considerably from Czechoslovakia and Romania. In the latter two countries, a combination of tactics ensured that opposition failed to gain widespread sympathy or support. In Czechoslovakia, the levels of repression employed by the regime after 1968 served to convince a large part of the population that the potential cost of opposition was too high a price to pay, especially when normalisation also provided higher standards of living than had previously been experienced. Those that did speak out found themselves the victim of police harassment, arrest and imprisonment. In Romania, also, the manner in which Ceaucescu dealt with any dissent severely hampered the prospects for the development of a society-wide opposition movement. For example, a strategy of "removing" a dissenter from society (generally via encouraged emigration as in the case of dissident writer, Paul Goma or forcible psychiatric detentions) before his concerns could be made public, was employed frequently throughout the 1970s and 1980s. It is significant that, in Romania, during the Communist period there were no trials of opposition activists, which would only have served to broadcast the existence of opposition to Ceaucescu. Similarly, no reports of such events as the 1977 Jiu Valley strikes ever appeared in the country's media, so that very few Romanians were ever aware of the existence of opposition activity. It is perhaps indicative that, in both countries, the most common and widespread form of dissent during the 1970s-80s was mass emigration. Those who felt they could no longer tolerate the constraints of the prevailing systems felt more inclined to leave the country than to attempt to oppose the Communist Party.

In Poland, by contrast, the PZPR faced successive outbursts of discontent in a society inclined towards self-organisation even in the early stages of Communist rule. Concessions, particularly in the economic sphere, were granted without the resort to harsh repressive measures and wide scale arrests characteristic of Romania and Czechoslovakia. At first glance, it may appear that the imposition of Martial Law in December 1981 was the ultimate in repression, and a certain end to the independence of second society. Martial Law, however, imposed a state of war on *society*. By effectively declaring war on an entire population, the policy ensured that any response to it would be made by *society*. It therefore served to reinforce the unity of the Polish people and increased their determination to ensure that the recently legalised Solidarity would survive all attempts to crush it. The house arrest of Lech Walesa transformed him from the leader of a ten million strong union into a national martyr. Admittedly, the PZPR did resort to policies of intimidation and harassment of leading Solidarity activists. However, because of the numerical strength of the Union and the

increasing sophistication of its organisational structure and methods of opposition, even a declared state of war could not thwart public efforts to entrench independence more deeply in the life of society.

(6.1.6) Mode of Breakdown

In Chapter I, the question was posed as to whether there was a scale that could be employed to categorise second society activities, ranging from unorganised opposition to the creation of a developed alternative society that determined the mode of regime breakdown experienced. The case-study countries were selected as representing three differing modes of change along a single continuum. Utilising the axes outlined in Chapter II, the initial country selection and the subsequent conclusions of this thesis are portrayed in Figure 6.1.

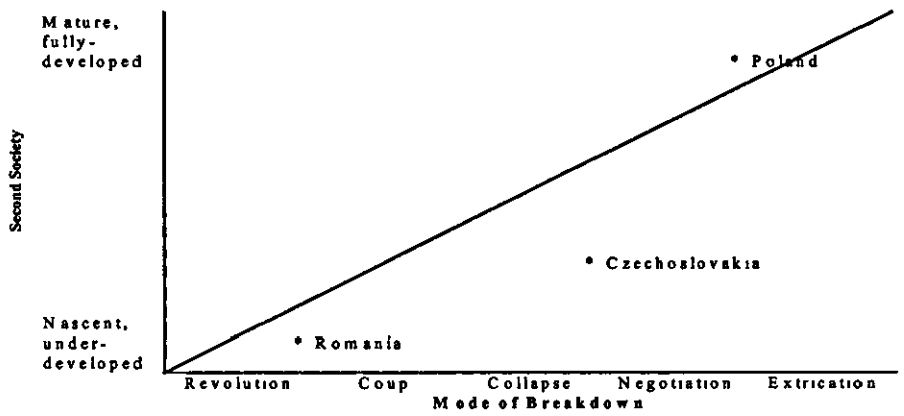

Figure 6.1 Second Society and Modes of Regime Breakdown in 1989

The Romanian case study chapter classified the mode of regime breakdown in 1989 as falling between the categories of *revolution* and *coup*. In December 1989, the Romanian people acted spontaneously to the authorities' attempts to deport a Hungarian pastor, buoyed up by the recent events in neighbouring Communist countries, yet without intellectual or independent leadership. In contrast to Poland and Czechoslovakia, the Romanian revolution was not led by an opposition movement with a coherent political platform. As a direct consequence of the under-development of second society and the absence of any viable alternative, the only coherent group capable of assuming leadership of the unplanned popular uprisings in late December, was the NSF. Composed of former Communists, it was the only group in society that knew how the political system operated and that was sufficiently organised to portray a sense of unity and purpose. In addition, the lack of restraint that would have been imposed by the moderating forces of a second society resulted in high levels of accompanying violence. With the assumption of power by the NSF it appeared that there had been a clear break with "Ceausescuism," but not necessarily from

Communism. The Romanian revolution, therefore, demonstrates characteristics of both the revolution and coup modes of breakdown. Significantly, second society actors were virtually absent until much later in the process of transition.

At the other extreme, the mode of breakdown experienced by the Communist regime in Poland displayed characteristics associated with the *opposition-led negotiation* and *extrication* models. The end of Communist rule in Poland represented a peaceful break with the past, with the PZPR effectively negotiating itself out of power. With Jaruzelski's recognition that the prevailing economic crisis required an accommodation with the banned Solidarity trade union and the latter's subsequent admission to a series of roundtable talks, the PZPR not only sealed its own fate, but, more significantly, formally recognised Solidarity as a prospective political partner. Thus, despite the relative fragmentation of second society forces during the 1980s, and the existence of a Communist government attempting to reform the economy and modify the political system, the opposition had maintained itself as a real actor in public life.

For the Communist system to have remained intact, the PZPR would have had to regain control of the public sphere and suppress all independent social ties. However, by 1989, the Party recognised that independence was too deeply entrenched within the Polish scene to be eradicated. Thus, the 1988-89 roundtable negotiations marked the end of a political cycle that began in August 1980. By 1989, second society, spearheaded by Solidarity, represented a popularly supported and, therefore, legitimate alternative to the Communist system of rule, with the necessary organisational infrastructure and political experience on which to build. The breakdown, itself, was therefore both gradual and peaceful, with second society actors co-opted at an early stage of structural change.

The Czechoslovak case study demonstrated that the mode of breakdown experienced by the CCP fell between the *collapse* and *elite-led negotiation* models. In Czechoslovakia, it is significant that, in November 1989, Charter 77, the Civic Forum and Public Against Violence *reacted* to mass demonstrations, and thereby took advantage of a situation for which they were not specifically responsible. It cannot be denied that, in late 1988, Charter policies had broadened into the political sphere to include demands for overtly democratic freedoms. Yet, in mid-1989, Charter 77 continued to demonstrate its lack of effective leadership of society, as spokesmen again disagreed over relevant tactics. The mass, student-led demonstrations that occurred in mid-November should be seen more as a reaction to the increasingly

obvious exhaustion of the Communist regime and a generally more relaxed atmosphere throughout the country and the Communist bloc as a whole, rather than an indication of the development and growing strength of second society. However, in contrast to Romania, where thousands of people on the streets failed to promote the establishment of an independent movement to lead the calls for reform, in Czechoslovakia, once it had become evident that the Communist Party had no effective means with which to combat this particular wave of public demonstrations, the formation of Civic Forum and its Slovak counterpart heralded a new stage in the evolution of the Czechoslovak opposition. This factor had a direct impact on the particular mode of breakdown experienced by the Communist regime.

For the first time, the expansion of second society in late 1989 to encompass all significant groups within society effectively forged a sense of cross-class unity against the system. Consequently, the end of Czechoslovak Communism was both peaceful and, to a degree, negotiated between the incumbent CCP and a strengthening second society. The distinguishing factor between the Polish and Czechoslovak revolutions, however, is that, in the former, where the existence of a well-developed second society could not be denied, Solidarity was admitted to the negotiations which controlled the pace and extent of change and was acknowledged by the PZPR as a political partner at the outset. In this respect, the Polish transition is characteristic of one variant of negotiated breakdowns, that is, *opposition-led negotiations*. By contrast, in Czechoslovakia, Civic Forum and Public Against Violence effectively reacted to mass demonstrations and the inability of the CCP to retain its power monopoly and achieved a degree of prominence in the period of transition only, once they had been co-opted by the incumbent elite and once actual breakdown was secure. Therefore, the breakdown of the Czechoslovak Communist regime resembles the second variant, that is, *elite-led negotiations*.

(6 2) Concluding Remarks

This thesis has analysed the relationship between the nature and extent of development of a second society in Poland, Czechoslovakia and Romania and the form of regime breakdown experienced in the three countries in 1989. It has examined variations in the levels of development, and in the orientations of second society actors, in addition to the differing reactions of the Communist regimes to societal independence. The three case-study chapters clearly illustrate that where the second society was effectively fully developed, as in Poland, breakdown was gradual and negotiated with second society actors playing a central role in the process. Where second society was virtually non-existent (Romania) the process, by contrast, was

swift and violent as independent groups played little or no role until *after* the breakdown of the Communist regime. Czechoslovakia represents an example that can be located between these two extremes. The case-study comparisons, therefore, point to the primacy of second society in determining the mode of regime breakdown in Communist Europe in 1989.

Although the analysis may be criticised for its concentration on one aspect of transition, the principal objective of this thesis was to evaluate the relationship between second society and the form of system change. It did not set out to provide an exhaustive account of regime transition or the process of democratisation. Moreover, the role of second society in determining the mode of regime breakdown clearly emerges from the analysis in this thesis and, therefore, justifies a focus on the concept. The findings of this study could also have wider significance for any analysis of the process of transition post-1989 within the former Communist bloc. The relative extent and degree of maturity of second society in 1989 is one of the central explanatory factors for an understanding of how the process of democratisation has proceeded, and for the prospects of consolidation and persistence of the new political systems in the late 1990s and beyond. Arguably, Poland's experiences of social self-organisation and of democratic procedures within independent groups have meant that the transition to democracy has been relatively smooth, and the transformation of the system virtually complete. In Romania, by contrast, where democratic processes and practices were not familiar to the population, due in part to the lack of independent activity throughout the period of Communist rule, the process of institution and civil society building simultaneous to the construction of a new political system, has undoubtedly hampered the transition to democracy. Although outside the limits of this thesis, the research conducted on second society and the form of Communist regime breakdown in 1989 does permit reflection on these and related questions.

More significantly, however, by focusing on, and comparing the link between, the extent of development of second society and the mode of Communism's breakdown in individual countries, the thesis contributes to the debate on transitions and provides an additional line of enquiry to supplement existing theory on regime breakdown. The thesis has addressed some of the limitations identified in the current academic literature. Having argued, for example, that "snapshot analysis"[3] is limited

[3] For examples of what I term "snapshot analysis," see: A Arato, 'Civil Society Against the State: Poland 1980-81,' Telos, Part 47, Spring 1981, pp 23-47; and P.Grilli di Cortona, 'From Communism to Democracy: Rethinking Regime Change in Hungary and Czechoslovakia,' International Social Science Journal, No.128, May 1991, pp 315-330

in its contribution to an understanding of the long-term impact of independent activity, via a systematic analysis of the continuity of second society as a concept, the thesis has demonstrated its explanatory relevance with regard to Eastern Europe. In so doing, it has focused on a factor that has been under-played to-date, and provides an analysis to supplement explanations based on economic, political leadership and military factors.[4] Comparative approaches have featured prominently in the general study of democratic transitions,[5] particularly as these have tended to involve more or less simultaneous transitions within certain regions. The aim in this thesis has been to bring a comparative perspective to bear in order to provide new insight into the dynamics of the disintegration of the Communist order, and to supplement existing comparative transitions literature via the formulation of an alternative theory of breakdown.

[4] For representative examples of these studies, see. S M Lipset et al, 'A Comparative Analysis of the Social Requisites of Democracy,' International Social Science Journal, No.136, 1993; J Linz, 'Transitions to Democracy,' Washington Quarterly, Summer 1990, pp 143-164; and P Schmitter, 'The International Context of Contemporary Democratisation,' Stanford Journal of International Affairs, Vol 2, 1993, pp.1-34.

[5] T Lynn Karl and P Schmitter, 'Modes of Transition in Latin America, Southern and Eastern Europe,' International Social Science Journal, No.128, 1991, p 269, and D Share, 'Transitions to Democracy and Transition Through Transaction,' Comparative Political Studies, Vol 19 No 4, January 1987, p 525.

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