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PROSPECTS FOR DEMOCRACY IN SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE:
COMPARATIVE AND THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

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For theorists of regime change and, more specifically, of transitions to democracy, the ongoing attempts at democratization in East Central and Southeastern Europe present a special interest: unlike previous transition experiences, all of which involved a move away from authoritarian regimes linked to market economies at various stages of development, the Eastern European transitions constitute the first empirical cases of an attempted change away from post-totalitarian regimes in which centrally-planned economies were a central feature. 1

Viewed from this perspective, the systematic study of the particular problems associated with this set of transitions can be said to produce valuable insights for theorists, policy makers, and East European area specialists alike and, in the process, significantly to enlarge our understanding of the broad process of democratization which is rapidly gathering momentum

1. For a theoretical discussion of authoritarian and post-totalitarian regimes, see Juan J. Linz, "An Authoritarian Regime: Spain," in Erik Allardt and Yrjö Littunen, eds., Cleavages, Ideologies, and Party Systems (Helsinki: Transactions of the Westermarck Society, 1964), 291-342 and idem, "Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes," in Fred I. Greenstein and Nelson W. Polsby, eds., Handbook of Political Science, vol. 3, (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1975), 264-330, which, on pp. 336-30, also contains an initial discussion of "post-totalitarianism," viewed as a sub-type of authoritarianism. For a more recent, more expanded, and more systematic treatment of this latter concept, see Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, "Democratic Transitions and Consolidation: Eastern Europe, Southern Europe and Latin America," unpublished ms, (1991), ch. 1.

around the world.²

Within the broader universe of these concerns, the ongoing transitions in Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary have, for a variety of reasons, already attracted the attention of a notable number of scholars. Increased familiarity with the histories, politics, and cultures of East Central Europe; the renewed political significance and weight these countries carry within the region and in Europe as a whole; and the longer road towards democracy which they have already traveled, partly account for the interest they have attracted.³

2. Spurred, in part, by the wave of democratizations around the world, the renewed scholarly interest in democracy has resulted in a number of important, comparative and/or theoretical contributions on the subject. Some of the more recent of these include Larry Diamond, Juan J. Linz, and Seymour Martin Lipset, eds., Democracy in Developing Countries, 4 vols., (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner, 1988-1991); Samuel P. Huntington, The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991); Adam Przeworski, Democracy and the Market. Political and Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Philippe C. Schmitter and Terry Lynn Karl, "What Democracy is...and Is Not," Journal of Democracy 2:2 (Summer 1991), 75-88; Robert A. Dahl, Democracy and Its Critics (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989); and the somewhat earlier but important contributions by Arend Lijphart, Democracies. Patterns of Majoritarian and Consensus Government in Twenty-One Countries (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984) and G. Bingham Powell, Jr., Contemporary Democracies. Participation, Stability, and Violence (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982).

3. The comparative study of East European transitions is still sparse but growing. Among the more recent works on the subject, see Adam Przeworski, Democracy and the Market; F. Stephen Larrabee, "Uncertain Democracies: Regime Change and Transitions," unpublished ms., 1991, which has the advantage that it deals equally with both

Conversely, the study of transitions in the countries of Southeastern Europe can be said to suffer from significant neglect--a state of affairs which this volume seeks partially to redress. This chapter has three aims: first, briefly to outline central features of democratic transitions, derived from the experiences of other countries; second, to focus on the specific problems which the countries of Southeastern Europe are encountering, as they attempt to negotiate their own transitions to democratic politics and to a market economy; and third, to provide a tentative assessment of the prospects for the consolidation of democracy as well as for the type of democratic politics likely to emerge in each case.

A basic distinction in the burgeoning literature on democratization concerns the difference between transition and consolidation. These constitute separate and qualitatively different phases of the democratization process and should, for that reason, be kept analytically distinct, even though, in practice, they often overlap and are not always easy to distinguish. The important

East Central and Southeast European transitions; the special issue of Daedalus 119:1 (Winter 1990); David Stark and Victor Nee, eds., Remaking the Economic Institutions of Socialism: China and Eastern Europe (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989); Timothy Garton Ash, The Magic Lantern: The Revolution of 89 Witnessed in Warsaw, Budapest, Berlin and Prague (New York: Random House, 1990), which deals with the early phase of the transitions; and the various papers presented at the conference on "Dilemmas of Transition from State Socialism in East Central Europe," Center for European Studies, Harvard University, 15-17 March 1991.

benefit deriving from this analytical distinction is that it renders more readily intelligible the extent to which the content, nature, and, more generally, dynamics of transition have a direct bearing on the way in which democratic politics becomes consolidated (or fails to do so). In so doing, it also highlights the fact that the nature of democratic consolidation influences profoundly the quality of democracy issuing from it.

Succinctly put, the transition is the earliest phase in the larger process of democratization. It follows immediately upon the end of the predecessor regime and constitutes the critical period during which (a) agreement concerning the fundamental rules of the democratic game is generated and (b) the rules, once formulated, are validated by means of free, popular elections which produce a government whose authority to conduct its business is not subject to an effective veto by other actors in the political system. It follows that the transition is characterized by a high degree of uncertainty and flux in which leadership and politics and, more generally, micro-level considerations assume center stage, while, conversely, longer-term social and economic factors recede in the background and become less constraining.⁴

4. The comparative literature on transitions is certainly rich by now. Among the more important contributions, see Guillermo O'Donnell, Philippe C. Schmitter, and Lawrence Whitehead, eds., Transitions from Authoritarian Rule. Prospects for Democracy (Baltimore:

A central feature of the transition is the emergence and/or reemergence of actors such as political parties, trade unions, and business associations and their direct and central involvement in the negotiations leading to the definition of the rules of the democratic game. The nature and style of these negotiations, the degree of contestation associated with them, the recourse to, or avoidance of, pacts in reaching agreement concerning these rules will be greatly affected by the degree to which these actors show themselves willing to forego a

Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986) and especially Parts III "Comparative Perspectives" and IV "Tentative Conclusions About Uncertain Democracies"; Geoffrey Fridham, ed., The New Mediterranean Democracies: Regime Transition in Spain, Greece and Portugal (London: Frank Cass, 1984); Scott Mainwaring, Transitions to Democracy and Democratic Consolidation: Theoretical and Comparative Issues, Kellogg Institute for International Studies, Working Paper 130, (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame, 1989); Juan J. Linz, "Transitions to Democracy," The Washington Quarterly 13 (Summer 1990), 143-64; Giuseppe Di Palma, To Craft Democracies: An Essay on Democratic Transitions (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990); and Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, "Democratic Transitions and Consolidations," unpublished ms. (1991), where "transition" is conceptualized in terms very similar to the ones used in this analysis. See also, Julian Santamaria, ed., Transición a la democracia en el Sur de Europa y América Latina (Madrid: Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas, 1982) and Enrique A. Baloyra, ed., Comparing New Democracies. Transitions and Consolidation in Mediterranean Europe and the Southern Cone (Boulder, Co.: Westview Press, 1987). On the role of leadership in transitions, see Juan J. Linz, "Innovative Leadership in the Transition to Democracy: The Case of Spain," paper presented at the Conference on Innovative Leadership and International Politics, Leonard Davis Institute for International Relations, Hebrew University, Jerusalem, 8-10 June 1987; and Gianfranco Pasquino, "Political Leadership in Southern Europe: Research Problems," West European Politics 13:4 (October 1990), 118-30.

zero-sum logic in their dealings and to privilege instead positive-sum approaches capable of generating a climate of consensus and trust and of laying firm foundations for the nascent democratic regime.

Though usually short, a transition may take a long time to reach completion. The four-month long Greek transition in 1974 constitutes a good example of the former type, while the 16-year long (1974-1990) Brazilian transition is surely the longest on record, to date. The length of a transition is not necessarily a major factor affecting consolidation or the quality of democracy to issue from the latter. To the extent, however, that the content and scope of any transition does profoundly affect both consolidation and the democracy issuing from it, an excessively brief or excessively protracted transition may well leave its mark on what follows.

Thus, to pursue further the Greek and Brazilian examples, the brevity of the former--due, in large part, to the need to move quickly to defuse the enormous pressures generated by the Cyprus crisis and the threat of armed conflict with Turkey, and to the desire of the forces leading the transition to minimize the time available to new (PASOK) or resurfacing (Communist parties) forces to organize--effectively meant that the Greek transition was bereft of the type of transaction that was so salient a feature of the Spanish one and which could have served to impart a more consensual quality to the democracy which

eventually emerged from it. Conversely, the very length of the Brazilian transition constituted telling evidence of the many obstacles (i.e., above all, the ability of the military effectively to control the pace of events) which stood in the way of completion and which substantively contributed to the fragility which characterizes current attempts to consolidate democracy in that country.⁵

The relative weight of elite and collective actors in a given transition as well as the relation between them is an additional dimension of transitions worth noting. Consistent with the conceptualization of

5. On the Brazilian transition, see, among others, Alfred Stepan, ed., Democratizing Brazil: Problems of Transition and Consolidation (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989); *idem*, Rethinking Military Politics: Brazil and the Southern Cone (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988); Thomas Bruneau, "Brazil's Political Transition," in John Higley and Richard Gunther, eds., Elites and Democratic Consolidation in Latin America and Southern Europe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 257-81; and Luciano Martins, "The 'Liberalization' of Authoritarian Rule in Brazil," in O'Donnell, Schmitter, and Whitehead, eds., Transitions from Authoritarianism, part II, 72-94.

On the Greek transition, which, so far, has not been adequately studied, see Harry J. Psomiades, "Greece: From the Colonels Rule to Democracy," in John H. Herz, ed., From Dictatorship to Democracy: Coping with the Legacies of Authoritarianism and Totalitarianism (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1982), 251-73; Constantine Arvanitopoulos, "The Political Economy of Regime Transition: The Case of Greece," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, The American University, 1989; and P. Nikiforos Diamandouros, "Regime Change and the Prospects for Democracy in Greece: 1974-1983," in O'Donnell, Schmitter, and Whitehead, eds., Transitions from Authoritarianism, part I, 138-64.

transition as a phase in the broader democratization process which privileges leadership in politics, the literature on the subject has tended to pay disproportionately greater attention to elites (parties, trade unions, business associations, etc.) than to collective actors. One of the major reasons for that has been that, with few exceptions (e.g., Portugal), the empirical universe on which scholars have, to date, based their theoretical conceptualizations concerning transitions has consisted of cases in which elites did, in fact, play the central role in shaping the course of events.

In this regard, it is worth noting the powerful influence which the Spanish experience has exercised upon students of transitions. The peaceful, reform-oriented, and transacted nature of that transition (aptly captured by the terms "ruptura pactada" and "reforma pactada"); and the intensive inter-elite negotiations and carefully constructed pacts which became its distinguishing feature and helped produce a settlement capable of generating and of sustaining broad social and political consensus concerning the way to exit from the authoritarian regime and to build its democratic successor are some of the major reasons accounting for the fact that it is widely regarded as the most elegant and compelling transition model, to date.⁶

6. Though it focuses on democratic consolidation rather

The critical role played by elite actors in the Spanish transition has tended to obscure the extent to which collective actors, though certainly not dominant, do constitute an important element in the transition process. In a recent paper, Sidney Tarrow has argued that collective actors should be thought of as setting the "structure of opportunity" within which elites can operate in guiding the transition towards a hoped-for successful completion. The importance of such a concept is that it underscores the need to bear in mind that, despite their admittedly critical role, elite actors do

than transition, the edited volume by John Higley and Richard Gunther, Elites and Democratic Consolidation in Southern Europe and Latin America, contains a good discussion concerning the importance of elites in democratization. See, especially, Michael Burton, Richard Gunther, and John Higley, "Introduction: Elite Transformations and Democratic Regimes," 1-37. Specifically with regard to the role of elites in transitions, see John Higley and Michael Burton, "The Elite Variable in Democratic Transitions and Breakdowns," American Sociological Review 54 (1989), 17-32. For a critical view of the elite approach, see Paul Cammack, "A Critical Assessment of the New Elite Paradigm," American Sociological Review 55 (1990), 415-20.

The literature on the Spanish transition is extensive. Notable analyses of this case include Jose Maria Maravall and Julian Santamaria, "Political Change in Spain and the Prospects for Democracy," in O'Donnell, Schmitter, and Whitehead, eds., Transitions from Authoritarianism, part I, 71-108; Jose Maria Maravall, The Transition to Democracy in Spain (London: Croom Helm, 1982); Paul Preston, The Triumph of Democracy in Spain (London: Methuen, 1986); Donald Share, The Making of Spanish Democracy (New York: Praeger, 1986); Robert Fishman, Working-Class Organizations and the Return to Democracy in Spain (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990); and Richard Gunther, Giacomo Sani, and Goldie Shabad, Spain After Franco: The Making of the Competitive Party System (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986).

not operate in vacuo during transitions and that, in a variety of ways, collective actors can act to enlarge or alternatively restrict the political space available for elite action--in the process substantively affecting not only the nature and scope of the transition but also subsequent phases of the democratization process.⁷

By contrast to transitions, consolidations involve the legitimation and institutionalization of the democratic rules of the game at both the elite and mass levels and the elimination of nondemocratic solutions as viable alternatives to the existing regime. By its very nature, consolidation is a longer-term process involving, among others, the reassertion of social, economic and other macrostructures which had lain relatively quiescent during the transition period. The length of the consolidation phase varies, depending on the criteria used to determine its completion. Thus, while some scholars consider a concrete event, such as change (at least once or, according to others, twice) in governmental incumbency, as tangible evidence of the completion of consolidation, others prefer more complex, qualitative criteria stressing changes in attitudes, behavior, structures, or, more generally, political culture. In the latter, more extreme case, consolidation

7. On the role of collective actors in providing the "opportunity structure" in transitions, see Sidney Tarrow, "Transitions to Democracy as Waves of Mobilization With Applications to Southern Europe," paper presented to the SSRC conference on "Democratization in Southern Europe," Delphi, Greece, 4-7 July 1991.

may well take from a decade to as much as a generation to complete.⁸

Since the countries of Southeastern Europe, which constitute the central focus of this chapter, are still far from the consolidation stage of their democratization process, the analysis which follows will concern itself primarily with the dynamics and morphology of transitions and will only deal with consolidation to the extent that the treatment of a particular transition requires it. This will be especially the case in the concluding section of the chapter which attempts to extrapolate from the transition trajectories traveled, so far, by individual countries in the region to assess the prospects for consolidation and for democratic politics in them.

A final issue of theoretical import concerns the meaning of "democracy." The pertinent literature as well as the more specialized work on democratization points to the existence of two major schools of thought on this

8. The literature on democratic consolidation, though still small, is beginning to grow. See, especially, Geoffrey Priddham, ed., Securing Democracy. Political Parties and Democratic Consolidation in Southern Europe (London: Routledge, 1990); and John Higley and Richard Gunther, eds., Elites and Democratic Consolidation in Latin America and Southern Europe, already cited. For the position that consolidation may require as much as a generation to complete, see Geoffrey Priddham, "The International Context of Democratic Consolidation: Italy, Spain, Greece and Portugal in Comparative Perspective," in P. Nikiforos Diamandouros, Richard Gunther, and Hans Jürgen Puhle, eds., The Politics of Democratic Consolidation in Southern Europe, forthcoming.

subject: the substantive or maximalist conception of democracy preferred by some seeks to expand the principle of equality beyond the realm of the politics to that of the society and the economy. It follows that such a view of democracy accords little legitimacy to the alternative, minimalist conception which considers equality at the political realm (or what is often referred to as "procedural democracy") as an end worth pursuing in and of itself. According to exponents of the maximalist definition, political democracy can serve as a front behind which profound social and economic inequalities can survive, thrive, and even become partially legitimated. At best, it can be thought of as a stage in the evolution of democracy towards a more meaningful or substantive content.

What I refer to as the minimalist definition has, during the past decade, acquired increasing support even among scholars, especially in Latin America, who had earlier been inclined to privilege its rival in their analyses of the prospects for democracy in that region. Central to the minimalist definition of democracy is an emphasis on procedural criteria guaranteeing equality at the political realm by means of periodic, regularly-held, free, and competitive popular consultations, in which restrictions to participation are held low and civil liberties are carefully protected. It is this more restricted definition which has gained salience in works

concerning democratization and which also informs the analysis which follows.⁹

What type of factors are likely to affect a given transition? Put more broadly, what are the structures or forces which serve as wider parameters of the transition and which domestic actors involved in that transition have to take into account in formulating their strategies? In this context, I would like to distinguish three broad large clusters: (a) the country's long-term heritage; (b) the legacy of the preceding regime; and (c) the international context within which the transition occurs. The specific way in which these three interact and the particular weight which conjunctural circumstances may assign to one or all of these will directly affect the dynamics of the transition and will inevitably leave its imprint on the patterns of the ensuing democratic consolidation. Much like collective actors, these factors can also be thought of as serving to set Tarrow's opportunity structure that can alternatively enhance or restrict the freedom of movement enjoyed by elites as they seek to guide the transition to a successful conclusion.¹⁰

9. For a similar analysis, see Michael Burton, Richard Gunther, and John Higley, "Introduction: Elite Transformations and Democratic Regimes," in Higley and Gunther, Elites and Democratic Consolidation in Latin America and Southern Europe, 1-38. A minimalist conception of democracy is also a salient feature of Di Palma's To Craft Democracies.

10. In this sense, Tarrow's notion of the "opportunity

By "long-term heritage," I mean the cumulative political, cultural, social, and economic capital which each society brings into the moment of transition. Put somewhat differently, this heritage is intimately related to the history and particular configuration of state-society relations in a given country. The relative strength or weakness of civil society or, more generally, the relative development or underdevelopment in it of Montesquieu's corps intermediaires and the legacy of a mediated or unmediated exercise of power that these have given rise to will profoundly affect the dynamics of the transition and its eventual trajectory. So, too, will the capacity of elites to generate agreement concerning the fundamental rules that are critical not only for the success of the transition but also vitally affect the nature of consolidation and of the quality of the democratic regime to issue from these.¹¹

A particularly important subset of these long-term factors concerns (a) the culture of conflict resolution that is brought to bear upon the transition and (b) the number of salient and divisive structural issues or

structure" seems, in certain ways, to parallel the concept of "antecedent conditions" which Kirchheimer distinguished from "confining conditions," in his influential article concerning regime change. On this, see Otto Kirchheimer, "Confining Conditions and Revolutionary Breakthroughs," American Political Science Review 59:4 (December 1965), 964-74.

11. For Montesquieu's discussion concerning structures of intermediation, see Baron de Montesquieu, The Spirit of the Laws (New York: Hafner, 1962), 66-70 and 120-25.

problems which remain unresolved at the moment of transition. With respect to the former, the prevalence or relative marginality of zero-sum, as opposed to positive-sum, conceptions of conflict resolution may have a direct bearing on the degree to which the transition will follow a path reminiscent of the Spanish "reforma pactada" model, in which the negotiation of a series of critical agreements between and among important elite actors will help generate a climate of consensus and trust that will be likely to have commensurately benign effects on the consolidation and subsequent democratic politics in that country.

The number of unresolved and potentially divisive long-term problems which are brought forward into the transition can greatly complicate its successful completion and may even contribute to its failure. This is especially the case, if the culture of conflict resolution prevailing in the society tends to privilege zero-sum over positive-sum approaches and thus to impede consensus building. Good examples of such issues are the lack of settled and uncontested state boundaries; continuing uncertainty concerning national identity; or the survival or resuscitation of primordial sentiments which serve as particularly divisive cultural cleavages capable of undermining the course of the transition.¹²

12. The unsettled or contested nature of state boundaries constitutes a major factor complicating the transitions in the Southeast European states. Its

How do the foregoing considerations apply to the transitions now in progress in the countries of Southeastern Europe? A central feature of these transitions is that they are occurring in what I call post-Ottoman societies burdened by a pronounced, though varied, sultanistic heritage. As used originally by Weber and elaborated, more recently, by Linz, "sultanism" is an ideal type describing regimes distinguished, above all, by the highly personal and arbitrary nature of rule; by the absence of the rule of law; the unmediated and despotic exercise of power; low institutionalization; the absence of intermediary structures; and, hence, the

significance is accorded particular attention by both Linz and Stepan, "Democratic Transitions and Consolidations," unpublished ms. (1991) and Claus Offe, "Capitalism by Democratic Design? Democratic Theory Facing the Triple Transition in East Central Europe," Social Research 58:4 (Winter 1991), 865-92.

On the concept of "primordial sentiments", that is, (...the...attachment[s] ...stem[ing] from ...the assumed 'givens' of social existence....[The] congruities of blood, speech, custom, and so on [which] are seen to have an ineffable, and, at times overpowering, coerciveness in and of themselves...." and on their impact on state-building and, especially, nation-building processes, see Clifford Geertz, "The Integrative Revolution: Primordial Sentiments and Civil Politics in the New States," in idem, ed., Old Societies and New States (New York: The Free Press, 1963), 105-58. See also, Edward Shils, "Political Development in the New States," Comparative Studies in Society and History 2 (1960), 265-92 and 379-411 as well as idem, "Primordial, Personal, Sacred and Civil Ties," British Journal of Sociology (June 1957). Finally, it is worth recalling the emphasis which Locke placed on the significance of "trust," as a requisite of smooth state-society relations. On this, see, especially, Peter Laslett's comments in his introduction of John Locke's, Two Treatises of Government, (New York: Mentor, 1965), 126-30.

weakness of civil society. By implication, the term also points to the debility of democratic heritage in such a regime, a characteristic that is especially pertinent in any attempt to assess the nature of transitions in Southeastern Europe, to place them in comparative perspective, to consider the prospects for their successful completion, and to speculate about the type of regime likely to emerge from them.¹³

The legacy of the predecessor regime as distinct from the country's long-term heritage is a second, more circumscribed, parameter certain to affect a transition. The specific structures--political, cultural, economic, or social--which a preceding regime bequeaths to its successor constitute a reality which the transition has to confront or, at least, cope with. The degree of extrication from that legacy which is eventually attained by a transition will greatly affect its capacity to contribute to a more successful consolidation and to the quality of the democratic regime likely to emerge from these.¹⁴

13. On the concept of "sultanistic regimes," see Max Weber, Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology, ed. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 231 and 232; Juan J. Linz, "Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes," in Greenstein and Polsby, eds., Handbook of Political Science, vol. 3, 259-63 for an earlier discussion of the concept; and Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, "Democratic Transitions and Consolidation," unpublished ms. (1991), ch. 1, for a greatly revised and expanded treatment.

14. The problem of how a successor regime (and, especially, a democratic one) deals with the legacy of

In this context, the Southeast European transitions add an important theoretical dimension to the treatment of this subject. For, along with the transitions in the rest of East Central Europe and in certain of the successor states of the Soviet Union, they allow us to focus on the problems of democratization peculiar to post-totalitarian, as opposed to authoritarian, regimes. Put otherwise, prior to the advent of the East European transitions, the universe of empirical cases on which the study of this subject was based concerned authoritarian regimes in which limited, though not responsible, political pluralism, often with roots in the antecedent regime, frequently coexisted with a significant degree of social and economic pluralism. By contrast, one of the central problems complicating and burdening the transitions to democracy in Eastern and Southeastern Europe stems from a structural feature typical of most post-totalitarian regimes: the absence of a meaningful degree of pluralism in the economic realm and with the lack of substantive familiarity with the nature and

its nondemocratic predecessor is a central theoretical as well as policy concern for students and practitioners of democratic politics. It constitutes the main focus of John H. Herz, ed., From Dictatorship to Democracy, already cited and, especially, *idem*, "Introduction: Method and Boundaries," in the same volume, 3-12. See also Di Palma's treatment of this topic in the context of his discussion of the transfer of loyalties to democratic regimes in his To Craft Democracies, 27-43. On the somewhat different topic of how the legacy of the predecessor regime affects democratic transition and consolidation, see Leonardo Morlino, "Democratic Establishments: A Dimensional Analysis," in Enrique A. Baloyra, ed., Comparing New Democracies, 53-78.

workings of the economic market.¹⁵

More generally, the nature and extent of social, economic, or political pluralism in a nondemocratic regime constitute factors which vitally affect the ensuing transition. The relative strength or weakness of structures capable, because of prior learning made possible in the context of limited pluralism, of negotiating with the state in producing the agreements necessary for democratization will decisively influence the trajectory traveled by a particular transition and will, in many ways, spell the difference between its eventual success, stagnation, or outright failure. In

15. The degree to which the Hungarian involvement in "controlled market experiments" contributed to the development of economic pluralist structures and, as such, greatly facilitated this country's capacity to cope with the stresses and strains of the economic transition underscores the significance of the problem arising from the absence of such pluralism in most of the region.

On the nature of authoritarian regimes and on the extent to which they allow for significant social and economic pluralism, see, (beyond the already cited works of Juan J. Linz "An Authoritarian Regime: Spain," "Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes," and [with Alfred Stepan] "Democratic Transitions and Consolidations"), Guillermo A. O'Donnell, Modernization and Bureaucratic-Authoritarianism: Studies in South American Politics (Berkeley: Institute of International Studies, University of California, 1979); David Collier, ed., The New Authoritarianism in Latin America (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979); James M. Malloy, Authoritarianism and Corporatism in Latin America (Pittsburgh, Penn.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1977); and Hans Binnendijk, "Introduction: Prospects for Success in Transitions from Authoritarianism," in idem, ed., Authoritarian Regimes in Transition (Washington, DC: Foreign Service Institute, United States Department of State, 1987), ix-xxvi.

the case of the Southeast European states the lesser degree of pluralism typical of post-totalitarian regimes has combined with a sultanistic heritage to produce formidable confining conditions which powerfully affect the transitions now in progress and, more generally, the democratization process as a whole.

The international context within which a transition takes place is a third factor to be considered. Here, as well, it is important to note that the experience of the countries in this broader region has significantly diverged from that in both Latin America and Southern Europe, where, with the partial exception of Portugal and Greece, the international factor did not directly and prominently affect the transitions.¹⁶

There are at least three levels in which the

16. The emphasis which pertinent analyses have accorded to domestic factors influencing transitions has tended to obscure the extent to which the international environment constitutes an important dimension of the overall context within which transitions occur. And as such, it has an impact on transitions which, naturally, varies from case to case. The salience of the international factor in the East European transitions is correctly underscored by F. Stephen Larrabee in his "Uncertain Democracies: Regime Change and Transitions," 11-14 and 49-53. To date, the most influential work on this topic has been by Lawrence Whitehead and, more recently, Geoffrey Fridham. For the former, see Lawrence Whitehead, "International Aspects of Democratization," in O'Donnell, Schmitter, and Whitehead, eds., Transitions from Authoritarianism, part III, 3-46 and "Democracy by Convergence and Southern Europe: A Comparative Politics Perspective," in Geoffrey Fridham, ed., Encouraging Democracy: The International Context of Regime Transition in Southern Europe (Leicester, England: Leicester University Press, 1991), 45-61. For Fridham, see his "International Influences and Democratic Transition: Problems of Theory and Practice in Linkage Politics," in idem, ed., Encouraging Democracy, 1-28.

international impact on the East Central and, more particularly, the Southeast European transitions has to be understood. The first concerns the circumstances under which the transitions were triggered. The withdrawal of the regional hegemon which had, for over four decades, effectively and repeatedly blocked any attempt at liberalization (Prague Spring), let alone democratization was the one, critical event which helped launch the transitions in the entire region. The vital significance of the role of the hegemon for the launching of the transitions is underscored by two additional observations: first, that in the late 1980s, the Soviet Union and, especially, Gorbachev, had indeed attempted to promote what previous Soviet regimes had steadfastly refused to allow: a liberalization of the East European regimes, which would have been in line with the unfolding of perestroika on the domestic Soviet scene and would have produced what were hoped to be more viable and durable regimes. This policy was clearly articulated in many of Gorbachev's utterings beginning in late 1987, which stressed that members of the Soviet bloc were free to pursue their own road to the fuller development of socialism. In addition, throughout the two-year period which began with the open encouragement of liberalization in late 1987 and ended with the collapse of the East European communist regimes in late 1989, Gorbachev, on a number of occasions, acted in ways that helped accelerate

the pace of change in Eastern Europe.¹⁷

Second, the event which effectively launched the transitions in the entire region was the Soviet refusal to come to the defense of the Honecker regime in early October 1989. Once, as a result of this development, the abandonment of the Brezhnev doctrine had been convincingly demonstrated, the old regimes began to fall and the countries in the whole region entered the uncertain and turbulent waters of transition.

The failed putsch of 19 August 1991 in the Soviet Union should, finally, be considered as an additional international factor positively affecting the transitions in Eastern Europe. More specifically, the collapse of hardline opposition to perestroika in the Soviet Union eliminated even the slimmest possibility of a desperate Soviet attempt negatively to influence the course of events in Eastern Europe by lending its support to hardliners in these countries. More importantly, events in the Soviet Union acted as a spur to further acceleration of the democratization process, ridding leaders of the transitions of the concern over the residual capacity of hardline elements in their countries

17. On the importance of the regional hegemon for triggering the transitions in Eastern Europe, see, among others, F. Stephen Larrabee, "Uncertain Democracies," 11-14; Rene Nevers, "The Soviet Union and Eastern Europe: The End of an Era," Adelphi Papers, No. 249 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1990); and Charles Gati, The Bloc that Failed: Soviet-East European Relations in Transition (London: I.B.Tauris, 1990).

to derail the democratization process.

The second level at which the international factor made itself felt in the East Central and Southeast European transitions concerns the role of the European Community and of the United States in these events. In this regard, it is important to distinguish between the broader crisis which the collapse of the Soviet bloc and the end of the old order brought about at the regional and international level in Eastern Europe and the narrower and more domestic process of the transition to democracy in the individual countries within that region.

As far as the first is concerned, there can be little doubt that the United States was, from the outset, more inclined to consider the crisis a European affair that should properly be left to the Europeans and, more specifically, to the European Community to handle. And it is also true that, despite the enormous problems that this entailed, the Community, with Germany at its helm, eagerly sought to play a central role in the management of the crisis.

The same observation cannot be made with regard to the transitions stricto sensu, where the role of the Community has tended to be much less prominent. This is especially the case with regard to Southeastern Europe, where, admittedly, the Yugoslav crisis has tended to absorb most, if not all, of the Community's energies and attention, to the inevitable detriment of the

requirements of the transitions in the broader region. While individual member states, especially Germany, have shown greater interest in this process, it is the United States which has been most visible in this regard, in both East Central and Southeastern Europe.

While the full role of the United States in these events is still difficult to assess, it is worth noting that it has taken multiple forms and has not been confined at the formal, governmental level. Indeed, a good deal of the American input in the transition has been the result of activities by semi-official or private organizations which have invested considerable resources, both material and human, in advising leading transition actors about alternative courses of action open to them and in providing them with sorely-needed infrastructure. Illustrative examples of many such private initiatives include the Soros Foundation, the Charter-77 Foundation-New York, the German Marshall Fund, and the American Bar Association. While the motivation behind this impressive mobilization of resources varies from organization to organization, it is safe to assume that it represents a mixture of domestic American constituencies with overlapping commitments to economic and political liberalism, democratic principles, and anticommunism and led by an equally varied set of actors in which East European expatriates, businessmen, policy specialists,

and academics figure prominently.¹⁸

The international environment has affected the ongoing transitions in Eastern Europe in yet another significant way: it has served as a market place of ideas, or, more specifically, models for political and economic reconstruction which the transition leaders in each country in the region can import and adapt to the needs of their societies. And while "democracy" and the "market" appear to be the undisputed choices of all the emerging regimes in the region, the particular type of democracy or market that is likely to prevail in each country remains less clear.¹⁹

18. The story of the greater European Community involvement in the management of the East European crisis and of the more prominent American presence in the politics of the transitions has yet to be systematically studied. For an interesting policy-oriented document addressing some of these issues, see The Community and the Emerging European Democracies: A Joint Policy Report (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1991). I wish to thank Ambassador Eythymios Stoforopoulos, director of the Greek Institute for International and Strategic Studies for bringing to my attention this publication, which is the joint product of six European institutes of international affairs. For a glimpse of the role played by nongovernmental organizations, see Herman Schwartz, "Constitutional Developments in East Central Europe," Journal of International Affairs (Summer 1991), 71-89 and TransAtlantic Perspectives, No. 24 (Autumn 1991), 10-12, for an account indicating the strong interest which the German Marshall Fund of the United States has taken in this matter.

19. The demonstration effect concerning democracy as the dominant model of political organization at present is extensively discussed in Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, "Democratic Transitions and Consolidations," ch. 2 as well as in, among others, Di Palma, To Craft Democracies, 163-99.

At the danger of overschematization, I would argue that, so far as the transitions in question are concerned, there exist two major variants of each model: on the level of politics (democracy), the choice is between (a) traditional parliamentarism of the Continental variety ensuring the ascendancy of the legislature over the executive, and (b) some form of semi-presidentialism, influenced by the experience of the Fifth French Republic but, in a number of cases, also drawing upon distinct indigenous traditions, and equipped with a strong executive which is popularly elected and, thus, invested with direct popular legitimacy capable of effectively competing with that of the legislature. In this connection, it is also worth recalling Linz's observation that the order in which founding elections occur (i.e., legislative before presidential or vice versa) may have a significant impact not only on the dynamics of the transition but on democratic consolidation and on the quality of the ensuing democracy as well.²⁰

20. Juan Linz has written extensively on presidentialism and parliamentarism in the context of transitions to democracy and has pointed out the drawbacks associated with privileging the former over the latter. See his "Democracy: Presidential or Parliamentary. Does It Make a Difference?", unpublished ms. (1984) also published as "Democracia: Presidencialismo/Parlamentarismo. Hace alguna diferencia?" in Oscar Godoy Arcaya, ed., Hacia una democracia moderna: La opción parlamentaria (Santiago, Chile: Universidad Católica de Chile, 1990), 41-108; "Perils of Presidentialism," Journal of Democracy 1 (Winter 1990), 51-69; and "The Virtues of Parliamentarism," Journal of Democracy 1 (Fall 1990), 84-

In the countries of Southeastern Europe, the search for the appropriate political and constitutional arrangements is still in its early stages and its outcome quite uncertain. Bulgaria, with two legislative and one presidential election on record to date, is certainly farther along on its transition trajectory than either Romania or Albania. It remains to be seen whether (a) President Zhelyu Zhelev's popular election in early 1992 (which, incidentally, occurred after the parliamentary elections) will produce a more forceful and interventionist head of state in the manner that this has already occurred in Poland; and (b) what the implications of such an eventuality will be.

A second, though less salient, dimension of this competition between alternative modes of political organization concerns the choice between a centralized (unitary model) as opposed to a decentralized (federal model) form of state--this latter being seen as better able to resist, if not to prevent, the kind of concentration of power which in the predecessor regimes was one of the root causes for enormous abuses. All of these issues will form part of the larger package concerning the choice of suitable institutional arrangements to be dealt with in the constitutional documents eventually to emerge from the transition

92. See also the concurring remarks by Di Palma, To Craft Democracies, 216n13 and Przeworski, Democracy and the Market, 34n44.

process in each country.²¹

On the level of economics, finally, some variant of a mixed economy model seems to compete with a conception of the free market which appears to be closer to theoretical discussions of unbridled, 19th century capitalism than to any actual form of "extant capitalism."

The debates concerning the adoption of the one or other of these alternative models and, especially, the often unrealistic assumptions which inform them should be understood at two levels: the first concerns the strong desire, shared by elites and masses in these countries alike, to adopt models of political and economic organization that are as far removed from the culture and practices of the predecessor communist regimes and the centrally-planned economies intimately associated with them. It is in broader context which best explains the strong attraction which American (or, to be more precise, what are, often naively, presumed to be American) market and political arrangements exercise upon leaders and followers in these countries. For, in however simplistic but, nevertheless, powerfully symbolic sense, these arrangements represent a cultural and ideological commitment to the concept of freedom which, at the

21. The merits and demerits of federalist and unitary states was one of the central themes in the international conference on the prospects for democracy in Bulgaria organized by the Center for the Study of Democracy, 17-20 December 1990.

moment, is extraordinarily appealing to the vast majority of East Central and Southeastern Europeans in need of exorcising a painful past and of building a promising future.

Second, the search for exogenously-derived models of political and economic reconstruction serve as poignant reminders of the weakness, if not absence, of indigenous democratic and capitalist traditions in most of these countries. Indeed, with the exception of the Czechoslovak democratic experience of the interwar period and the much more recent Hungarian engagement in "controlled market experiments," the remainder of the countries in the region face the formidable challenges of the dual transition confronting them with hardly any significant indigenous cultural capital concerning the meaning and workings of democratic politics and the market mechanism. This is, once again, especially the case in Southeastern Europe where the sultanistic and post-totalitarian heritages combine to confront the transitions in the region with an even more acute democratic and capitalist "deficit."²²

22. On the historical background which explains the weakness of the democratic and market structures in the Balkans, see, among others, Leften S. Stavrianos, The Balkans Since 1453 (New York: Holt, Rinehart, Winston, 1958); Ivan Berend and Gyorgy Ranki, The European Periphery and Industrialization 1780-1914 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982); John R. Lampe and Marvin R. Jackson, Balkan Economic History, 1550-1950. From Imperial Borderlands to Developing Nations (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1982); Charles and Barbara Jelavich, The Establishment of Balkan

To sum up: the profound influence of the international environment upon the East European transitions constitutes a distinguishing feature of the democratization process peculiar to this region, which sets it apart from both the Southern European and the Latin American experiences. Put somewhat differently, one of the most significant, long-term consequences of totalitarian and post-totalitarian regimes in this region has been the great debility of civil society and of the domestic structures associated with it. In turn, this development has commensurately augmented the role which the international factor has played in the tortuous road to the dual transition to political democracy and the market economy in East Central and, especially, Southeast European societies and states.

What are the specific problems confronting the Balkan states, as they negotiate their individual transition trajectories and as they attempt to establish political democracies for the first time in their histories? If the dual nature of the transition has already been pointed to as a major factor complicating

National States, 1804-1920 (Seattle, Wash.: University of Washington Press, 1977). For the more recent period, see Joseph Rothschild, East Central Europe Between the Two World Wars (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1974); idem, Return to Diversity: A Political History of East Central Europe Since World War II (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989); Robert Lee Wolff, The Balkans in Our Time (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1956); and Nicos P. Mouzelis, Politics in the Semi-Periphery. Early Parliamentarism and Late Industrialization in the Balkans and Latin America (London: Macmillan, 1986).

the broader democratization process in these countries, the simultaneity of the political and economic transition further exacerbates the constraints and burdens being placed upon the delicate democratization process in societies with little learning and few collective memories concerning either democratic politics or market principles.

The issue of "overburdening" acquires greater significance in light of a further difference clearly distinguishing the transitions in Southeastern Europe from those to its north: to wit, that they were initiated and, initially at least, controlled by elites identified with the predecessor, post-totalitarian regime. Indeed, if the capacity of the old regimes to play such a central role in the early stages of the transition underscores the weakness of civil society structures in all of the region, it also serves as a strong indication that, precisely because of this weakness, the transitions in Southeastern Europe are more than likely to be protracted, troublesome, and inconclusive.²³

23. F. Stephen Larrabee, in his "Uncertain Democracies," insists on the significance of the "dual nature" of the transitions, both as a complicating or "burdening" factor and as a distinguishing feature of the democratization process in Eastern Europe. See also Di Palma, To Craft Democracies, 76-108. In the article just cited (p. 19), Larrabee, also points to another distinctive characteristic of the Southeast European transitions: that they were all initially controlled by reform elements in the old regimes.

In this regard, the contrast with the transitions in East Central Europe is instructive: in the latter, civil society was sufficiently strong to have been able to organize in ways that precluded the pattern of regime-led transitions which has occurred in the Balkans.

Conversely, the incapacity of the Southeast European societies to produce the functional equivalents of the Civic Forum, let alone of Solidarity, has meant that societal mobilization has, for the most, been inchoate and inarticulate and, as a result, unable substantively to contribute to the deepening of the transition and to the commensurate enhancement of the democratization process.

It is, incidentally, this weakness of civil society (and its obverse: the centrality of the state), themselves the combined long-term heritage of sultanistic rule and totalitarian regimes in these former Ottoman lands, which renders the Spanish model of transition so inapplicable to the Southeast European cases, despite the superficial similarity which arises out of the fact that in both cases the new regime was the result of the slow, peaceful, and carefully controlled self-transformation of its predecessor. For it was precisely the presence of powerful and well developed structures of intermediation--Montesquieu's famous corps intermediaires--and the high degree of social and economic pluralism which they implied which made possible the peculiar--and, in that

sense, atypical rather than prototypical--trajectory of the Spanish transition. In short, because of its long-term heritage and the nature of the predecessor, nondemocratic regime, Spanish society possessed, at the critical moment of transition to democracy, the political, economic, social, and cultural capital that, for reasons just alluded too, is so sorely lacking in the countries of Southeastern Europe.

At the economic level, the dual nature of the transition is, as already stated, a central, generic problem complicating the democratization process in Eastern Europe. Here, too, the weakness of civil society in Southeastern Europe exacerbates the situation in this region and, once again, differentiates it in a rather substantive way from the countries to its north.

The behavior of labor in the transition serves as a good illustrative example of the problem at hand. More specifically, experience derived from transitions from authoritarian regimes points to the frequent conclusion of explicit or implicit arrangements designed to ensure the economic restraint of labor actors during the critical phase of the transition in exchange for the political benefits derived, among others, from the acquisition of political freedom and the ability to exercise the freedom of organization. Such arrangements make it possible for the elites managing the transition to decouple political from economic demands, to

concentrate on the pressing political problems concerning democratization, and to postpone the handling of economic issues until a later, politically more propitious time. Quite clearly, such a strategy has the major advantage of avoiding the problems associated with "overburdening" of a transition and, hopefully, provides for its easier and more successful conclusion.²⁴

An obvious question which arises in the context of the East European transitions, in general, is whether, given the simultaneous nature of the dual transition towards political democracy and a market economy, the type of decoupling achieved in societies exiting from authoritarian rule is possible in our cases. For purposes of this discussion, I should like to focus on a subsidiary, but more directly pertinent, question: assuming that some degree of decoupling, however limited, is possible, is there a discernible difference of how it is likely to play itself out in the northern as opposed to the southern region of Eastern Europe?

Here, I believe the answer is decidedly affirmative. More specifically, the greater degree of labor organization and the tradition of relative economic pluralism which (a) are observable in East Central Europe (with Poland and Solidarity as the most prominent and

24. The point concerning the restraint of labor and the consequent capacity to decouple economic from political issues in transitions from authoritarian as opposed to post-totalitarian regimes is forcefully made by Di Palma in To Craft Democracies, 76-108, especially, pp. 97-101.

obvious examples) and (b) render potentially feasible some element of decoupling, through implicit or explicit arrangements resulting in labor restraint, contrast sharply with the virtual absence of such organization and tradition in the Balkans.

Two alternative paths with respect to Southeastern Europe derive from this difference. Both have significant implications for the long-term prospects of the democratization process in the region and are directly linked to the problems associated with sultanistic and post-totalitarian heritage : first, in the absence of traditions of organization and relative economic pluralism, there is an increased probability that economic actors will behave unpredictably or even anomically and, in so doing, (a) render decoupling arrangements all the more difficult to effect and (b) commensurately complicate, disrupt, and unduly burden the transition. Such a development might well take the form of wild cat actions or even of anomic outbursts by groups, such as the Romanian miners, who, though for different purposes, have, in the post-Ceausescu period, already been allowed to behave in ways that have been clearly erosive of the democratization project.

The second potential path stems from the same conditions of weakness in organization and tradition of relative economic pluralism but leads towards a different potential outcome. Thus, precisely because of these

weaknesses, it is possible to imagine that the pivotal role which both the sultanistic heritage and its totalitarian and post-totalitarian successors have accorded to the state in these countries might enable this latter to contain or repress outbursts of the type described above during the transition period, through recourse to a variety of means at its disposal, including, in extremis, violence. And while such an eventuality might, in the short run, act as the functional equivalent of decoupling and make it possible for transition leaders to devote their attention and resources to the political requirements of the transition, its medium- and longer-term cost will be highly damaging for both the transition and the democratization process as a whole. This is so because such an assertion of state power will severely undermine, at a particularly delicate moment in time, the multiple processes through which relations of trust critical to the positive articulation of state and society are slowly being (re)built; and also because it will tend to reproduce and perpetuate the type of state role and behavior which constitutes an integral part of the problematic legacy intimately associated with the sultanistic, totalitarian, and post-totalitarian regimes of the past.²⁵

25. It is in this context that the significance of collective actors in the Southeast European transitions has to be understood. More specifically, if one aspect of

At the cultural level, too, the countries of Southeastern Europe face formidable difficulties, as they negotiate their uncertain transitions in search of democracy. In this context, four major items deserve attention: the absence of a democratic tradition in these countries; anticommunism; the resurgence of nationalism; and the resurfacing of cleavages based on primordial sentiments.

As already noted, the absence of a democratic tradition is, with the notable exception of the Czechoslovak experience during the interwar period, a general characteristic of Eastern but, above all, Southeastern European societies. Burdened by a centuries-long period of sultanistic rule under the Ottoman empire and over four decades of totalitarian and post-totalitarian regimes, the countries in this latter region never developed sufficiently the learning,

the historical weakness of civil society--itself the result of the combined impact of sultanism and totalitarianism--is an incapacity to articulate substantive demands and alternatives to state initiatives, another is its ability to resist, thwart, undermine, and erode state-generated policies by means of noncompliance, evasion, or popular outburst. In this latter sense, collective actors, in the form of inchoate but tangible popular pressures have indeed been an integral part of the Southeast European transitions, serving, for the most though not exclusively, as spurs for further democratization and as obstacles to potentially retrogressive moves on the part of the old-regimes initially in control of the transitions. For a similar perspective derived from a different cultural, historical, and social setting, see James C. Scott, Weapons of the Weak. Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1985).

experience, behavioral patterns, and norms associated with political democracy in the sense defined earlier in this chapter.

To be sure a number of conjunctural factors seem to favor the establishment of democratic politics in this as in other areas of the world. These include (a) an international environment sensitive to the basic freedoms associated with democracy; (b) the absence of any viable alternative to democracy as a legitimate model for political organization, following the delegitimation of fascism after the Second World War and of communism, more recently; and (c) the presence, within the region, of significant social and political forces willing, if not eager, to engage in the democratic experiment. Still, the obstacles posed by the absence of prior democratic learning are such as to render the transition tenuous and its eventual outcome uncertain.

Somewhat inevitably, anticommunism is, for the moment, a potent force informing the politics and society of the former communist states in Eastern Europe. Viewed from the requisites for a successful transition to democracy, its problematic nature derives from two of its distinctive qualities: first, its essentially "negative" self-definition, as a system of thought hostile to communism is, as is well known, not ipso facto promotive of democracy. On the contrary, it often serves to provide legitimate ideological cover for

antiparliamentary and outright antidemocratic forces of the extreme Right, whose activities can seriously undermine the democratization process and debase the quality of a given democracy. Second, anticommunism can, in combination with other cultural forces such as nationalism or religion, serve as a highly flammable ingredient which can effectively impede, if not derail, the transition.

Both of these dangers but, especially, the second loom large in the Southeast European transitions. Faced with powerful forces associated with the old regime, the prodemocratic forces in Bulgaria, Romania, and, it would appear, Albania have exhibited an alarming proclivity to adopt extreme anticommunist positions in which nationalist, if not chauvinist as well as religious, images play a central role and osmotically affect the climate of the transition. Equally disconcerting is the fact that, in all these countries, the forces of the old regime have sought to shore up their declining fortunes and to slow down the pace of democratization by adopting increasingly nationalist positions--a development which can pose significant threats to the prospects for a successful conclusion of the transition.²⁶

26. This has been especially the case in Bulgaria, where the more advanced state of the transition and the open competition for both parliamentary and presidential elections has brought forward powerful images associated with pronounced cleavages based on nationalist, religious, and, more generally, primordial attachments.

Finally, the threats which the abuse of nationalism poses to the integrity of the transition can be greatly exacerbated, if combined with, or linked to, other powerful cultural and social cleavages such as those associated with ethnic or religious minorities, irredentist aspirations, territorial disputes, and, more generally, divisions based on what anthropologists define as "primordial sentiments." This is especially the case in the Balkans, where one of the most problematic legacies of Ottoman rule is the persistence of powerful and unresolved ethnic divisions and irredentist claims which, having survived the communist regimes of the past half century, have resurfaced with renewed vigor and are severely complicating the politics of the transitions in the entire region.

Illustrative examples of such cleavages include the Turkish ethnic minority in Bulgaria, whose representatives hold a pivotal number of seats in the country's parliament and whose alliance the Bulgarian Socialist Party (the former communists) has assiduously cultivated in both the parliamentary and the more recent presidential elections; the Hungarian minority in the Timisoara area of Romania, where the initial disturbances which brought down the Ceausescu regime erupted; the huge Albanian ethnic minority in the Kosovo region of what remains of Yugoslavia, which figures prominently in the powerful irredentist aspirations unleashed by the

collapse of the communist regime in Albania; and the Greek ethnic minority in the latter country, which, like the ethnic Turks in Bulgaria, has already organized itself into a separate political formation that received five seats in the parliament which issued from the March 1991 elections and is currently fighting a move by the dominant political parties in Albania to bar it from the election scheduled for March 1992 on grounds that it represents Greek irredentist forces.

The dangers which cultural cleavages such as these, based, as they are, on highly volatile and explosive primordial sentiments, pose for the transition process arise primarily from their potential superimposition on other salient cleavages in a manner which, instead of attenuating them, will rather tend to reinforce them. The outcome of such an eventuality would almost certainly be the addition of further turbulence, instability, and conflict to what already are delicate and tenuous transitions in Southeastern Europe--a development which would more than likely severely disrupt the transition process and quite adversely affect the chances for democratic consolidation.

As the foregoing analysis has sought to establish, the prospects for democracy in Southeastern Europe, are, at present, uncertain. The central role played by forces directly associated with the old regimes in launching the transitions in Bulgaria, Romania, and, more recently

Albania and their successful, initial efforts to contain the pace of change and to minimize losses has substantively contributed to the generation of this uncertainty and has subsequently enabled it to survive if not to increase.

As of early 1992, the degree and quality of change in the region remains unclear, at best. In Romania, the National Salvation Front, the reform communist coalition headed by Ion Iliescu, continues to be in control, despite sporadic outbursts and disorganized challenges to its authority. In Albania, the last country in Southeastern Europe to enter the uncharted waters of the transition, the ruling Albanian Party of Labor has managed (a) to hold on to the presidency; (b) comfortably to win the March 1991 elections; (c) to survive the wave of disturbances which shook the country in late Spring of that year; and (d) to retain control of key posts (premiership and ministries of foreign affairs and of public order) in the coalition government formed with the opposition in June 1991.²⁷

27. For recent developments in the Balkans, see the special issue of Herodote, 63 (Oct-Dec 1991), entitled "Balkans et Balkanisation." On Romania, see the review article by István Deák, "Survivors," The New York Review of Books, 5 March 1992, 43-51. On Albania, see Eliza Biberaj, "Albania at the Crossroads," Problems of Communism, 50:5 (September-October 1991), 1-16 and, more generally, idem, Albania: A Socialist Maverick (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1990). For the information concerning the barring of the party representing the Greek ethnic minority from participating in the upcoming elections, see He Kathimerine [The Daily], 5 February 1992, p.2.

To be sure, in Bulgaria, the transition has certainly moved farther along than in the other two countries. The October 1991 parliamentary elections, which produced a peaceful change in governmental incumbency and brought the heterogeneous coalition of the United Democratic Forces (UDF) to power, as well as the January 1992 presidential vote, which, through Zhelyu Zhelev's election, confirmed the UDF's ascendancy in Bulgarian political affairs, constitute concrete evidence of significant progress in that country's democratic transition. Still, the strong showing of the Bulgarian Socialist Party (former communists) in both the parliamentary and the presidential elections, Zhelev's failure to get elected in the first round of the voting for president, as well as his narrow victory in the second round (52% of the votes) point to the continuing power of forces associated with the old regime, underscore the uncertainties surrounding the transition, and caution against hasty and overly optimistic conclusions concerning its presumed outcome.

Particularly worrisome, in this context, are two recent developments relating to the emerging patterns of electoral competition in this country and threatening to inject a strongly polarizing climate into the politics of the transition: the first concerns the fact that the Socialist Party's strategy of establishing its proper nationalist credentials by exploiting the tensions,

primordial sentiments, and cleavages associated with the presence of a large (10%) minority of ethnic Turks in the country has caused the UDF to adopt the role of champion of the victims of communism in Bulgaria, to espouse increasingly nationalist, anticommunist, and extremist positions, and to enter into a parliamentary alliance with the party representing the ethnic Turks. The second, points to the resurgence of long-quiescent political cleavages between far left and right dating back to the turbulent interwar and Second World War years and to their superimposition on the type of divisive, contemporary cleavages just described.²⁸ While the potential implications of all these developments for the transition and, more generally, for the longer-term prospects for democracy in the region remain unclear, they, nevertheless, serve as a pointed reminder of the formidable obstacles standing in the way of political democracy in each country and, more generally, of the fragility of the democratization process in the Balkans as a whole.

More specifically, the prospects for democracy in Southeastern Europe would seem to hinge on three major and closely interrelated factors: first, the capacity of the prodemocratic forces to organize themselves sufficiently so as to gain firm control of the transition

28. I wish to thank my colleague Ilias Nicolacopoulos, a keen analyst of the electoral scene in the Balkans, for these observations.

process and to steer it through the critical phases during which the rules of the democratic game (constitutions, guarantees concerning civil and human rights, etc.) will become defined, agreed upon, and validated by means of free and competitive elections; second, the ability of these forces to maintain their unity and stay clear of the type of divisions which are likely to undermine efforts to generate the consensual arrangements necessary for bringing the transition to a successful conclusion and, especially, for ensuring the prospects for democratic consolidation; and third, the effective marginalization of forces semi-loyal or hostile to the establishment of full and unencumbered political democracy.

Success in realizing these goals will constitute tangible evidence that these societies are successfully handling the negative aspects of their sultanistic and totalitarian heritages and will greatly enhance the chances that, following a series of protracted transitions, democracy will emerge as the dominant mode of political organization for the first time in the region's history. Conversely, failure to do so can effectively complicate, stall, and potentially derail the transition, with commensurately negative results for the democratic project. Put otherwise, if nationalism, primordial sentiments, territorial disputes, and zero-sum approaches to conflict resolution become ascendant, once

more, in the politics, culture, and society of the Southeast European societies and, in the process, bring about the fragmentation of the prodemocratic forces in these countries and the resurgence of long-quiescent conflicts dating back to the interwar years and of the 1940s, the prospects for democracy in the former communist states will dramatically decline. In that eventuality, we may well become unhappy witnesses to protracted and inconclusive transitions issuing in alternating cycles of Southeast European variants of democraduras and dictablandas that will linger on in the margins of broad democratic regions and will serve as painful reminders of the confining conditions that will need to be overcome before democratic regimes can prevail in these societies as well.²⁹

Postscript

The resounding defeat of the former communists in Albania in the March 1992 elections and the resignation

29. Of Latin American origin, the concepts of "democradura" ("hard" democracy) and "dictablanda" ("soft" dictatorship) graphically convey the hard-to-define political situations which lie at the interstice between democratic and nondemocratic regimes. "Democradura" would roughly parallel the concept of "pseudodemocracy" used by Michael Burton, Richard Gunther, and John Higley in their treatment of democratic settlements (see Burton, Gunther, and Higley, "Introduction: Elite Transformations and Democratic Regimes," in Higley and Gunther, eds., Elites and Democratic Consolidation, 1-80). "Dictablanda" comes close to liberalized, but not democratized, authoritarian regimes. For a similar view concerning Latin America, see Albert O. Hirschman, "On Democracy in Latin America," The New York Review of Books, 10 April 1986.

of Ramiz Alia from the office of head of state places this country ahead of Romania in the road to democratization in Southeastern Europe. More importantly, it tends to bear out Larrabee's point concerning the existence of a discernible and distinctive pattern in the democratization process currently unfolding in this region. This involves (a) an initial phase in which reform elements in the crumbling post-totalitarian regime initiate the transition and, in the face of a weak and disorganized opposition, manage to win the first elections by making efficient use of their administrative experience and lingering political strength in rural areas and among less educated strata; (b) a second stage which is marked by the burgeoning of the opposition forces, increasing popular pressures for reform, and the growing incapacity of the old-regime forces in control of the government to consolidate their electoral victory and effectively to slow down change. The result is (c) the calling of new elections in which a disparate coalition made up of various opposition forces triumphs and ensures the end of the old regime. In the next phase, which Bulgaria and Albania, but not Romania, have now entered, the democratic forces have to confront the formidable challenges and problems that have already been discussed in this chapter. Their capacity to do so effectively will, to a very large extent, determine each society's chances of negotiating a successful transition

or of entering into the vicious cycle of democraduras and dictablandas just referred to.³⁰

30. Larrabee, "Uncertain Democracies," 19. For a similar analysis, see also Offe, "Capitalism by Democratic Design?", 887-92.