Politics
in Central Europe

Perspectives and Problems of Democracies in East Asia and Central Eastern Europe

Next Issue:

Regional Politics in Central Eastern Europe

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EDITORIAL

Dear reader,

With issue 1/2011, the journal *POLITICS IN CENTRAL EUROPE –The Journal of Central European Political Science Association* enters into the seventh year of its existence. For the past six years, we have offered those interested in analysis of the political processes in Central Eastern Europe eleven issues of the journal, containing almost eighty specialised articles, studies and discussion contributions. For this entire period, the feedback from the contributors, the International Advisory Board and the readers themselves has helped the editorial staff in the selection process of the submitted material and in ensuring contributions of sufficient quality are chosen. A number of anonymous reviewers have contributed to this process, who, without seeking any remuneration, have helped the editors bring together the journal by means of their critical notes and commentaries. All those that have participated in the creation of the journal deserve to be thanked a great deal. At the same time, we would like to express our hope that they will cooperate with us in a similar manner or even more intensively in the years ahead.

For the past six years, the journal has been supported by the Department of Politics and International Relations at the University of West Bohemia in Pilsen that has provided the journal with the institutional and material background, as well as human resources. We would like to thank the department as a whole, as well as a number of colleagues operating there, in particular Linda Piknerová, who will continue managing the everyday operation of the editorial office of the journal.

We must also express similar gratitude to the institution that has agreed to support the journal from 2011 – Metropolitan University Prague and its senior representatives – Rector Michal Klíma and Chancellor Anna Benešová. In the times of intensive pressure to reduce costs both in the public and private sectors, we consider this commitment very obliging. We believe that we will be able to return this support in the form of the contributions published and through the journal as a whole.

We are glad that, with respect to continuity in preparing and publishing the journal, Lenka Strnadová has agreed to join the ranks of the members of the International Advisory Board. We are also happy that Jan Bureš, the head of the Department of Humanities at Metropolitan University Prague, has also become a new member of the International Advisory Board.

As in previous years, we would like to keep the publication monothematic but, at the same time, we are open to individual contributions on differing topics which we are also willing to publish. The first issue of the seventh year is dedicated to the comparison of the democratising processes in East Asia and Central Eastern Europe. It was the international conference *Perspectives and Problems of Democracies in*

East Asia and Central Eastern Europe that provoked us to take this approach. The conference took place in Pilsen at the beginning of November 2010 and it must be said that its participants presented some very interesting academic debates. That is one of the reasons why we asked the individual contributors to summarise their presentations into the form of specialised articles and essays. As is common in the academic world, not all replied to this request. In spite of this, we hope that even a partial probe into the conference and the discussions it brought about may offer the reader food for thought concerning the similarities and differences of the democratic development in the two respective world regions affected by the third wave of democratisation.

Ladislav Cabada & Šárka Waisová,
Editors

ESSAYS

Electoral Engineering and its Impact in the Former Yugoslav Republics

Danica Fink-Hafner, Damjan Lajh and Alenka Krašovec

Abstract: *Electoral engineering in the six former Yugoslav republics in the first decade following the first multi-party elections has helped to maintain or even recreate the authoritarian systems in which dominant parties could gain power and manipulate the timing and institutional rules of parliamentary elections. Institutional engineering in the context of war delayed the democratisation processes. Attempts at international and autonomous institutional engineering in ethnically segmented societies have so far failed to lead to the consolidation of democracy.*

Keywords: *electoral engineering, democratic transition, former, Yugoslav republics, political parties, ethnically segmented societies*

The Research challenge

Two main clusters of literature have so far tackled institutional engineering in post-communist countries – quantitative international comparative research into institutional impacts, and transitology.

The international comparative research on the impacts of political institutions on party systems has examined the influences of electoral systems and constitutional models (parliamentary or presidential systems). Only rarely has it focused on questions of democracy. Based on an analysis of electoral systems in 166 countries around the world, Blais and Massicotte (1997) discovered a link between electoral rules and the level of democracy. Although recently research has increasingly included a relatively large range of countries/units from all over the world, together with some post-socialist countries (e.g. Farrell 2001; Norris 2004), research still seems to be more focused on electoral system impacts in a narrower sense. Some of the (self-)criticism of this type of empirical research, which for the most part has been developed according to the Michigan model, states that election studies are facing fundamental methodological problems that are primarily intellectual in nature (Wlezien – Franklin 2002: 1). Curtice (2002) notes this is true not only of electoral studies primarily interested in individuals' voting behaviour but also for the segment of electoral studies examining electoral systems, such as the cross-national Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES). Among the solutions for

overcoming these deficiencies is Marsh's (2002) suggestion that researchers pay greater attention to contextual characteristics, including the context of a particular election, media structures, institutions that facilitate accountability, economic performance as well as global factors. The awareness of 'missing' variables has been growing recently and it is also sometimes noted that the quantitative analysis of a large number of countries does not take account of the particularities of many countries, while the application of their findings in reform processes in particular countries is heavily contextual (e.g. Norris 2004: 262–263). Nevertheless, there have not been many attempts at a comparative examination of institutional engineering in third-wave transitions without these deficiencies. Birch (2003) starts by observing the idiosyncratic importance of the first few elections in the transition to a democracy, but her research largely remains a quantitative analysis of electoral system impacts in 20 post-communist European states in the period 1990 to 2002. She only presents her incidental findings on the macro-impacts of electoral systems in detail in several outstanding cases. For example, the creation of the president-parliament opposition axis in Russia and the Ukraine is mentioned along with the important role of independent politicians and a qualitative explanation seeking to answer the question of why Bulgaria opted for former King Simeon as an appealing alternative to the two-party alternation during the 1990s.

On the contrary, transitologists have been especially interested in the macro pre-requisites and the factors that co-determine successful transitions towards young democracies and their consolidation. Since institutional arrangements influence the distribution of power, researchers have warned that the newly emerging third-wave democracies should opt for institutional engineering in order to prevent the domination of a majoritarian democracy (see e.g. Linz 1990; Lijphart 1991; Dahl 1991). In spite of certain academic 'pedagogical' trials, political forces in transition countries/politico-territorial units within some multi-national states were thinking rationally when opting for specific institutional solutions – first of all, taking into account their interest in political survival and even their predominant position in the political context after the break-up of the former regimes (Kasapović 1996). The relationship between the electoral engineering and the success of the transition to democracy has been neither predicted nor much studied. We believe that here the phenomenon of freezing or postponing the transition to a democracy with the help of institutional engineering is important.

Our thesis is that institutional choices in the transition period not only significantly influence the development of the party system but, at the same time, also influence the dynamics and success of the move to democracy. The apparently minor advantages enjoyed by certain political actors at the time of the historical decision-making on institutional choices could enable these actors to halt or postpone

democratisation for a longer period. Namely, by defining how political majorities are determined it is possible to influence the way politics functions (Sholdan 2000). In the idiosyncratic circumstances of democratic transition, e*lectoral engineering* can have a decisive impact on the character (democratic/undemocratic) of the resulting political system. For instance, the manipulation of institutional solutions to (re)shape the entire electoral system, or part of the system (such as altering the size of electoral districts, the introduction of a nationally defined parliamentary threshold, the introduction of new formulas for the translation of electoral votes into parliamentary seats) could help the elites in power to maintain their position. In this way, transitional institutional engineering cannot be directly compared to the fourth wave of the (re-)creation of electoral systems in some older democracies whereby countries like Italy, Japan and New Zealand radically changed their electoral systems in the 1990s (Snyder – Mahoney 1999; Farrell 2001: 179–180; Horrowitz 2003).

In this article, we first seek to show how the idiosyncratic contextual circumstances of transitions from communist regimes to democracies determine the particular role of electoral engineering in the democratisation processes. In such cases, it is not the potential democratic effects that determine the political choices of the key political actors, but rather the actual and expected power relations among the key political players. We focus on the distribution or redistribution of the power which lies at the heart of institutional engineering. Usually, political parties try to maximise their participation in power by manipulating institutional rules, either individually or in coalition with other parties to control a sufficient parliamentary majority. In addition, we stress that the struggle for a certain type of institutional solution is a struggle for a certain political interest to maintain or take over the key positions of power. The main question therefore is *for whom* is a certain institutional solution optimal or at least acceptable? That is why in our research we wish to move beyond Birch's (2003: 136) finding that 'in some respects the effects of post-communist electoral systems have been found to be similar to those in established democracies' and that 'in other respects they have been different'. *Our goal is to examine electoral engineering from the aspect of the success of a transition to a democracy while taking into account the findings of both schools – international comparative research on the impacts of political institutions on party systems, and transitology.*

We understand electoral engineering as a tool in the hands of the key political players struggling for power in the context of transition, which, as a rule, creates a greater space for institutional engineering. There are three types of electoral engineering: the manipulation of the timing of elections; the manipulation of elements within the same type of electoral system; and radical electoral system change. These

will be analysed with respect to the main transition characteristics. We expect to find more electoral engineering (more frequent elections, employment of a bigger variety of electoral rule changes) in situations where the old elites did not face strong political opposition and were able to control the process of political pluralisation. In these circumstances, we would expect that constitutional choices with more presidentialist elements would limit multipartism and support majoritarian democracy in favour of the political parties that emerged as the strongest following the first multi-party elections. In our examination of the specific effects of particular electoral rules, we expect to find the following: a) that proportional systems are the most open to a relatively large number of parliamentary parties; b) that the introduction of a national threshold in the parliamentary system is an effective way of lowering the number of parliamentary parties; c) that majority systems are tools for producing a high level of disproportionality between the shares of electoral votes and the number of parliamentary seats held by the largest party; and d) that there is a greater loss of electoral votes when stricter electoral rules are implemented.

In considering the effects of electoral rules, we will rely on certain quantitative measures that have been developed in comparative electoral studies. Therefore, changes to party systems will be observed with the aid of indicators, such as the following: the number of parliamentary parties after elections; the percentage share of electoral votes for the largest party; the percentage share of parliamentary seats for the largest party; the total percentage share of electoral votes for the three largest parties; the total percentage share of parliamentary seats for the three largest parties' an index of aggregation; and an index of fractionalisation. For the analysis, we used data gathered from national election commissions, OSCE election reports and literature produced by native political scientists (cited in the text).

In the next section, we will consider previous research findings on the impacts of institutional (especially electoral) engineering. In the third section, we will analyse in a predominantly qualitative way the relationship between the characteristics of the transition to a democracy and institutional engineering in the six countries/politico-territorial units (Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia). After a descriptive analysis of electoral engineering in the six cases, we will present a comparative view of institutional engineering and its effects on party system characteristics as described by quantitative indicators. The research findings are summarised in the concluding section.

Previous findings on the interplay of institutional choices and their impacts

The third wave of democratic transition and the building of new democracies contributed to a growing interest in political institutions (see e.g. DiPalma 1990;

Huntington 1991; Snyder – Mahoney 1999; Farrell 2001; Horrowitz 2003; Norris 2004). Until now, there has been little research into the *impacts of constitutional choices,* and the research that exists is methodologically limited. For example, after investigating the impacts of the presidential system and three electoral systems in two countries (the USA and Costa Rica), Lijphart (1994: 15, 132–133) concluded that a presidential system: a) tends to reduce multipartism (it initially cuts the effective number of political parties in a parliamentary arena); b) reduces the disproportionality of election outcomes; and c) increases the frequency of a parliamentary majority. Since a presidential system limits multipartism while the number of parties is closely linked to the dimensionality of a party system, it could be said that a presidential system has (at least indirectly) an impact on the scope of issues raised in the party system. In a two-party system a single dimension normally prevails (Taagepera – Grofman 1985). Usually it is a socio-economic dimension or a left-right division. In this way, other issues which are important for social minorities become squeezed out of the regular functioning of the party system.

Presidentialism also means a majoritarian democracy, the concentration of a considerable amount of power with the winning party, and especially in the hands of one person – namely, the President of the state. Lijphart (1991: 88) has warned that, even where presidential powers are not so extensive that one can talk of decisive power, the feeling of a superior democratic legitimacy may contribute to the reluctance or psychological inability of the President to compromise. Consequently, a consensual democracy is better for societies deeply divided by social, ethnic, religious or political divisions (Lijphart 1991: 76). Consensual democracy presupposes the division, limitation and a distribution of power, and is preferred option for social and political minorities.

Majority electoral systems are believed to encourage the creation of one-party governments, which also efficiently manage a parliamentary majority. In this way, the responsibility of the ruling party and government is also more transparent, while voters are directly able to sanction the ruling party at elections. In the majority system, small parties are further marginalised in the representative institution. The majority system systematically favours larger parties by enhancing disproportionality, since larger parties are overrepresented. This is why the system does not require a legally defined parliamentary threshold.

As a rule, the main characteristic of *proportional electoral systems* is the more proportional representation of shares of electoral votes into representative mandates than with other electoral systems. Nevertheless, there are cases where proportional systems (e.g. the system of party lists in Greece and Spain) often produce even less proportional results than hypothetically non-proportional systems (Farrell 2001: 5). Common arguments in support of the proportional system are its inclusiveness, its

stress on the importance of negotiations and compromises in parliament, government and in public policymaking. The characteristic effects of proportional systems are: the existence of several parties in the parliamentary arena; a lower disproportionality in translating electoral votes into representative seats; a greater openness of representative institutions even to extreme parties, protest parties and parties catering for relatively small social groups. It is therefore no surprise that the thesis of a correlation between the proportional system and party arena fragmentation prevails (e.g. Duverger 1954; Sartori 1976; Shugart 1992). Various electoral formulas within the framework of proportional systems produce different levels of proportionality (Norris 2004: 51; Farrell 2001: 156). Lijphart (1994: 159) clustered electoral formulas into three groups, namely: a) those which are most proportional (LR-Hare and pure Sainte-Laguë method); b) medium proportional formulas (LR-Droop, STV and modified Sainte-Laguë method); and c) the least proportional formulas (D'Hondt and two LR-Imperial formulas). In addition, entrance to parliament can be limited by an electoral threshold (at the national level, the level of an electoral unit or at the regional level) expressed as a percentage of electoral votes, as a certain number of votes, or as a minimum number of seats in a representative institution. The effects of introducing an electoral threshold can be considerable at the time of its introduction (e.g. a sudden large drop in the number of parties in the parliamentary arena).

Mixed electoral systems combine elements of majoritarian and proportional systems. In practice, they are hybrids of relative majority systems or absolute majority systems and proportional systems for elections to the same representative institution (Farrell 2001: 98). Due to the electoral threshold in the proportional part of the system, it is anticipated that small parties are excluded (a smaller number of parliamentary parties is meant to be produced), while all the parliamentary parties are overrepresented, although not to any great extent. Such combinations should resolve the problems of the disproportionality of the relative majority system as well as the lack of representation of electoral districts in the party list system. Nevertheless, the rich variety of mixed systems and their effects do not support these expectations. Farrell (2001: 120) emphasises Sartori's contention that such systems may actually combine the weaknesses of both electoral systems. By contrast, following an examination of the election systems in 20 post-communist states, Birch (2003: 137) suggests that mixed systems should be considered as a useful tool for electoral engineers since they have a moderating influence on the size of parliamentary systems whilst simultaneously allowing the achievement of relatively compact parliamentary party systems without sacrificing inclusiveness.

When considering the use of electoral engineering for the reconciliation of inter-ethnic and inter-religious conflicts the question of moderating political behaviour through institutional rules is central. In the search for possible solutions, ideas

concerning the special value of proportional systems are quite common. Above all, it is the electoral system which makes the representation social minorities possible. To achieve the same goal, some extra tools are also available, such as: reserved seats for special social minorities; multi-seat constituencies; lower thresholds for representatives of minority party lists; and common-roll elections. Special systems (such as a Condorset winner, alternative voting and Coombs' rule) have also been invented that favour moderate candidates over extremists in societies with deep ethnic or religious divisions (Horrowitz 2003: 122).

The most important determinant of the manipulability of a political system by utilising electoral rules is the level of electoral (dis)proportionality – the difference between the proportion of party seats and the proportion of its electoral votes (Lijphart 1994: 57). With its inherent highly effective threshold, the relative majority formula is the most effective instrument for electoral engineering (Lijphart 1994: 143). Additionally, based on research into electoral systems on a sample of 70 systems in 27 democracies (including EU member states of that time), it was revealed that the most effective instrument for influencing the level of electoral disproportionality is the imposition of an effective electoral threshold (Shugart 1992; Lijphart 1994; Horrowitz 2003). In fact, it has proved to be a useful instrument for pushing small parties out of the parliamentary arena. The higher the threshold, the more small parties are excluded, even though the ballot structure does not affect the number of political parties. The opposite holds true for district magnitude: the greater the district magnitude (the higher the number of people who are elected in an electoral unit) the greater the proportionality (Lijphart 1994: 11; Farrell 2001: 209). Manipulating the size of an electoral district involves manipulating the number of seats in the legislative body that are filled by successful candidates from that district. In this case, electoral engineering is based on the following findings (Lijphart 1994; Thomassen et al. 1994): a) the greater the electoral district, the less its representation is defined geographically; b) the greater the electoral district, the more its representation is defined ideologically or by sectoral/sectional interests; c) a small electoral district can have similar effects to the imposition of a high threshold – it limits proportionality and excludes smaller parties. Proportional systems deliver more proportional results when linked to larger electoral districts. It is only possible to talk of true proportionality when at least five political representatives are elected in one electoral unit. In the case of small electoral districts even the proportional system has a similar impact as the majority system. This is why Lijphart (1994: 12) stated that the size of an electoral unit and the legally defined electoral threshold are two sides of the same coin.

There is no conclusive detailed knowledge of how electoral laws influence voters and their representation in governments. What is known, however, is that electoral

laws not only have direct impacts but they also make a difference indirectly; in particular, they influence the number and the character of the political choices available to voters (Norris 2004). These characteristics further influence voters' political choices. Accordingly, institutional (especially electoral) engineering can be used as an effective tool in a struggle for power – including a struggle for a certain type of democracy.

Characteristics of constitutional choices and electoral engineering in the six units

The former Yugoslav republics, with their wide variety of institutional choices and contextual circumstances, represent a natural experiment that may help us better understand the characteristics and impacts of institutional engineering in transitional countries/politico-territorial units.

The **_Slovenian_** transition to democracy has more in common with the transitions in the Central European region than with the other transitions in the territory of the former socialist Yugoslavia (Fink-Hafner – Haček eds 2000; Fink-Hafner et al. 2005). Due to the relatively strong role of civil society, which developed through the 1980s and gained power during the liberalisation stage (at the end of the 1980s), a new institutional structure (including the constitution and electoral system rules) was designed in such a way that no political party was able to take advantage of the new constitution or the electoral system. After testing all three types of electoral systems at the first multi-party elections to elect representatives to the still-existing 'old' assembly structure of three chambers, the proportional system (used first for the Socio-Political Chamber in 1990) remained the main electoral system of choice. In a relatively fragmented party system where no party was sure of success at elections the principle of nearly no distortion between the proportion of votes and the proportion of seats prevailed. In spite of cyclical initiatives to radically change the electoral system (adopting a majoritarian system), no change has occurred, since changing the electoral procedure is only possible with a two-thirds parliamentary majority (see e.g. Ramet 2006: 557–558). Although the electoral system included a three-seat minimum for entering parliament, this did not in fact function as a serious obstacle (threshold) preventing change to the Slovenian party system. Even after the introduction of a nationally determined threshold of 4%, and a Droop quota in 2000, the new electoral rules have not functioned any stricter than before, since every party gaining more than 1% in these elections has entered parliament. Following the 2004 and 2008 elections, seven parties entered parliament, – i.e. one less party than entered parliament in 2000. We could say that the party system has been maturing. It has evolved in a 'natural way' to become a system with the same core parties, jointly gaining an ever bigger proportion of votes

and parliamentary seats (Fink-Hafner 2006). After incorporating the electoral into the Constitution (the constitutional amendment was adopted in 2000), attempts to change them have been less vigorous and less frequent than during the first decade following transition.

Compared with Slovenia (Table 1), ***Croatia*** presents quite a different picture. It tested all the main types of electoral systems and all the elements within electoral systems during the first decade following the first multiparty elections. After the use of a majority electoral system (the 1990 parliamentary elections) two variants of a combined electoral system (for the 1992 and 1995 elections) were adopted. Since 2000, parliamentary elections have been held on the basis of a proportional system with a nationally defined threshold. Electoral districts were changed for each election in the 1990–2000 period, which involved the mixing of rural and urban areas according to the predominant political party's calculations. Electoral engineering took place in the context of Croatian idiosyncrasies. For instance, after a short period of liberalisation, an opposition (movement-like) political party gained the political majority which the former political elite had counted on when designing the majoritarian electoral system. During the war (1991–1995), the dominant anti-communist political party was able not only to determine the timing of elections but also the electoral rules necessary for remaining in power. Furthermore, it also controlled the mass media. In the struggle to maintain its ruling position, *Hrvatska demokratska zajednica – HDZ/the Croatian Democratic Community* (the party of both the President and the parliamentary majority) even succeeded in broadening its electoral body. It not only included Croatia's diaspora, but also Croats living in Bosnia and Herzegovina (by this time already formally an independent state), who benefited from financial help from the Croatian national budget (Kasapović 2001; Cvrtila 2001) and behaved as 'a clientelistic group' (Kasapović 2001: 23). Many authors describe the political developments in Croatia during the 1990s as non-democratic in spite of the fact that elections were held regularly and political parties were visibly becoming institutionalised (see e.g. Cohen 1997; Kasapović 2000; Čular 2000; Lalović 2000). After the war ended, Croatia gradually moved towards a democratic system, including institutional reforms leading towards a parliamentary system and a democratic electoral process.

Table 1: The intensity and instruments of electoral engineering with respect to the constitutional system in the six former Yugoslav republics in the period between the first multi-party elections and 2010

	1st cycle (old assemblies)	2nd cycle (1st in new parliaments)
electoral system	Slovenia-1990: proportional system without a nationally defined threshold Croatia-1990: a two-round majoritarian system B&H-1990: mixed system Serbia-1990: a two-round majoritarian system Montenegro-1990: proportional system with a nationally defined threshold Macedonia-1990: a two-round majoritarian system	Croatia-1992: mixed system **B&H**-1996: proportional system without a nationally defined threshold Serbia-1992: proportional system with a nationally defined threshold
introduction of a nationally defined threshold	Croatia-1990: threshold for the 2nd round elections: 7% Montenegro-1990: 4% Macedonia-1990: threshold for the 2nd round elections: 7%	Croatia-1992: 3% Serbia-1992: 5%
formulae for the distribution of mandates	Slovenia-1990: D'Hondt Croatia-1990: absolute majority in 1st round, relative majority in the 2nd round Montenegro -1990: D'Hondt	Croatia-1992: D'Hondt Serbia-1992: D'Hondt **Slovenia**-1992: Hare on the level of electoral district + D'Hondt on the national level
number of electoral districts/district magnitude	Slovenia-1990: 14 + 2 minority seats Croatia-1990: 80 districts (1 mandate each) B&H-1990: 7 districts Serbia-1990: 250 districts (1 mandate in each) Montenegro-1990: 20 districts (6.25 magnitude) Macedonia-1990: 120 districts	**B&H**-1996**:** 2 districts Croatia-1992: 60 for lower and 1 for upper tiers + 18 minority seats Montenegro-1992: 1 district (85 mandates) Serbia-1992: 9 districts (a bit more than 20 mandates per district) Slovenia-1992: district magnitude is 11+ 2 minority seats

3rd cycle	4th cycle	5th cycle
B&H-1998: modified proportional system without a nationally defined threshold Croatia-1995: modified mixed system – stressing of the proportional principle Macedonia-1998: mixed system	**B&H**-2000: modified proportional system without a nationally defined threshold Croatia-2000: proportional system with a nationally defined threshold Macedonia-2002: proportional system without a nationally defined threshold **Slovenia**-2000: proportional system with a nationally defined threshold	**B&H**-2002**:** proportional system with a nationally defined threshold
Croatia-1995 (5%; 8% for two-party coalitions and 11% for three-party coalitions)	**Slovenia**-2000**:** 4% Croatia-2000: 5% Montenegro-1998: reduction of 4% to 3%	**B&H**-2002**:** 3% (on a level of districts)
Croatia-1995: relative majority + D'Hondt **B&H**: Sainte-Laguë	Croatia-2000: D'Hondt + a non-fixed quota system in the 11th electoral unit – diaspora **Slovenia**-2000: D'Hondt on the national level + Droop on the level of electoral districts Macedonia -2002: d+Hondt	
Croatia-1995: 28 for lower and 1 for upper tiers + 19 minority and diaspora seats Montenegro-1996: 14 districts (5.07 magnitude) Macedonia-1998: (85 for lower +1 for upper tiers)	**B&H**-2000**:** 8 for lower+1 for upper tiers Croatia-2000: 10 districts + for diaspora and minorities Montenegro-1998: 1 district (78 mandates) Serbia-1997: 29 districts Macedonia-2002: 6 districts (magnitude 20)	Serbia-2000: 1 district (magnitude 250) Montenegro- 2001: 1 district (magnitude defined for each election; in the last decade was between 72 and 76; special polling stations)

Sources: Mirčev (1991); Grad (1996); Toplak (2000); Kasapović (2001:36); Pajvančić and Goati (1998); Goati (2000 and 2001); Birch (2003:29–31); a database published in Fink-Hafner, Lajh and Krašovec (2005); <http://www.rvk.si> (accessed on 2 September 2006); www. osce.org; election commissions in individual countries

*Note: bold font indicates **parliamentary systems**; ordinary font indicates semi-presidential systems*

Until very recently, ***Serbia and Montenegro*** remained together in a common state framework following the independence of the other former Yugoslav republics (since early June 2006 Montenegro and Serbia have also been independent countries, while Kosovo proclaimed its independence from Serbia in 2008 in spite of Serbia's refusal to recognise this). The old elites in both former republics were in a position to control institution-making during the transition to a multi-party system. Serbia and Montenegro were not considered to be free political communities during the 1990s (see e.g. Goati ed. 1998; Ramet 2006). The weak development of oppositional civil society coupled with the direct and indirect involvement of these countries in wars (their involvement in wars in other former Yugoslav republics between 1991–1995, and the international intervention in Kosovo, Serbia and Yugoslavia 1998–1999) enabled the former communists to create a climate in which they could create electoral rules to suit their needs. The political tensions were mirrored in several early elections (in Serbia early elections were held in 1992, 1993, 2000, 2003 and 2008, while in Montenegro in 1992, 1998, 2001, 2002 and 2009). Only when the socio-political context changed could the power-relations and the characteristics of elections change. It was not before 1997/1998 (presidential elections in 1997 and parliamentary elections in 1998) that the first peaceful change in power occurred in Montenegro, and it was not before 2000 that the same happened in Serbia (Miller 1997; Goati 2000; Ramet 2006). While Serbia replaced the majority electoral system with a proportional one in 1992 and introduced a 5% nationally defined threshold for early elections due to an agreement at round-table talks between the Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS) and the opposition, they only altered some elements within the same electoral system – chief among these was the change to the number of electoral districts (Goati 1999). In Montenegro electoral engineering predominantly involved the manipulation of electoral districts (for more on the mechanics and the impact, see Goati 2001: 173).

In ***Bosnia and Herzegovina*** (B&H) the delayed political pluralisation and slow pace at which the League of Communists adapted resulted in a political transition which, after the first multi-party elections, brought about the victory of oppositional ethnic parties without a clear programme for multiple transitions in B&H. It also brought about the segmentation of state institutions under Bosnian, Croat and Serb control and even led to internal divisions within individual institutions (Burg 1997; Kasapović 2005; Ramet 2006; Fink-Hafner – Pejanović eds. 2006). The intrusion of external actors in Bosnia's civil war (1992–1995) not only prevented the internal evolution of a consensus on institutional choices but also a consensus on maintaining the common state territory. The war ended with the help of international forces and the new constitution legalised by the Dayton Peace Agreement. It included a multi-level political system design (one state level, two entities, ten cantons, one district and many communes) which involved 14 constitutions, 14 legislatures,

14 executives, more than 200 ministries, three constitutional courts, three supreme and numerous other courts, three ombudsmen as well as a proportional electoral system with no nationally defined parliamentary threshold and a two-year electoral cycle. This system was changed in 2000 to include the introduction of a four-year electoral cycle. In spite of (or rather because of) the use of special institutional instruments (e.g. the replacement of the D'Hondt formula by the Sainte-Laguë method in 1998; the prohibition of individuals suspected of war crimes of becoming candidates at the elections in 2000; and the introduction of compensation mandates in 2000) to reduce ethnic divisions (a method described by Ramet [2006: 492] as 'Jacobin'), the proportion of ethnic parties in the parliament has remained exceptionally high, and so have interethnic tensions. The report by the International Commission on the Balkans (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace 1996) warned that the Dayton constitutional arrangement 'petrifies' ethnic democracy, discriminates against minorities and omits the development of democracy on the basis of liberal principles. The transition to a democracy in B&H remains incomplete and relatively uncertain since the optimal solution in the relationship between the consociational and liberal model of democracy has not yet been found (Kasapović 2005; Ramet 2006; Fink-Hafner – Pejanović eds. 2006).

Macedonia presents a special case as it was able to go through the transitional period on its own, however, due to its geopolitical position, international forces (UNPROFOR) had to help it remain an island of peace by intervening in Macedonia in 1992. The first multi-party elections took place in considerably unfavourable and deteriorating socio-economic conditions (Mirčev 1991). Georgievski and Škarić (2000: 97) estimate that the international sanctions imposed on Yugoslavia had stronger impacts on the transformation process in the economic and social sectors than in the political sector. The old elite succeeded in leading the transition, although it did not emerge the winner of the first multiparty elections held on the basis of a majority electoral system. Leftwing parties lost unexpectedly following a long and painful two-round election (on 11 and 25 November 1990). This was due to a number of factors: the rules on the translation of votes into seats; the influence of the Bosnian election results, which were published between the two rounds; and a number of incidents during the period which inflamed ethnic feelings; as well as the electoral strategy of the 'Macedonian' segment of parties (Mirčev 1991). Nevertheless, coalition parties in the 1991–1998 period were led by the former Communist Party. In collaboration with opposition parties which were only a few months old it made Macedonia an independent state. The semi-presidential system was accompanied by a party system characterised by a two-bloc polarisation between the Macedonian and Albanian clusters of parties. While the Macedonian bloc has mostly been split on the basis of a liberal/conservative division from the early stage of development, the Albanian parties have mostly been structured on an

ethnic basis (Georgievski – Škarić 2000: 90). The need for coalition governments and external threats seems to some extent to have helped to prevent the extreme ethnification of politics. At the same time, government/opposition splits among Albanian parties (especially since the 1999 presidential elections) have compromised successive coalition governments. However, it should be emphasised that Macedonia has enjoyed several peaceful elections in spite of ethnic conflicts. Ramet (2006: 567) describes the Macedonia of the 1990s as 'stable but impoverished'. There have been some important changes to the electoral system rules when in 1998 the majority system dating from 1990 was replaced with a mixed system variant. The proportional system adopted for the fourth elections is still in place and has so far produced no radical changes regarding the number of parliamentary parties. While Ramet (2006: 554) stresses the divisions among Albanian parties which have prevented ethnic polarisation from escalating to the threshold of danger, the conflict over the power balance between the Macedonian and Albanian blocs, which peaked in 2001, remains on the agenda. This is being addressed primarily by reforming the local level of government, which involves the replacing of the 1991 constitutional definition of Macedonia as a state of the Macedonian people with an emphasis on the constitutional equalisation of Albanians and Macedonians in the 2001 constitutional amendment (Ramet 2006: 567–568). Contrary to the expected lesson-drawing from the Bosnian experience, and due to the demands of the Albanian bloc of political parties, Macedonia opted for a proportional system following the 2001 Ohrid Agreement. These changes have opened the door to consociational ways of re-defining the political system, albeit with no clear outcome.

A Comparative view

Four of the six former Yugoslav republics (Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro) were able to function autonomously as political communities within the former Yugoslav region during the 1990s (Kosovo being formally part of Serbia and Montenegro being part of the ever shrinking Yugoslav federal state are somewhat idiosyncratic cases). Macedonia had been relatively close to this stage, having autonomously adopted its constitution and electoral rules – albeit in the presence of foreign peacekeeping /protective forces. B&H (with the exception of the first free elections) had been unable to function peacefully as a single (federal) political community.

At the beginning of the 1990s, only Slovenia decided on a parliamentary system and simultaneously also on a proportional electoral system, which had been changed only to a limited extent by 2000. By comparison, such institutions in B&H were externally designed to establish a post-war political community; the electoral rules have been altered quite often in order to achieve political moderation

in the context of ethnic divisions, and the first electoral cycles following the Dayton agreement were frequent (biannual).

Four former Yugoslav republics at the first multi-party elections opted for a more majoritarian democracy with a semi-presidential constitutional system and a majoritarian electoral system (Croatia, Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia). A majoritarian democracy prevailed in circumstances where the transition was delayed, civil society was weak, and where one party dominated the parliamentary arena after the first multi-party elections (in Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro – see Table 2). The leading parties in Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro were able to use many tools to ensure their dominant political position. Aside from the timing of elections and radical changes to the electoral system, the electoral engineering tools most often used in the units investigated have been (see Table 1): the introduction of a parliamentary threshold; an electoral formula; the re-designing of electoral districts; and various combinations of these instruments.

Table 2: Constitutional choices, over-representation in party systems, and the success of democratic transition

Unit	Constitutional system	Victory after the 1st elections	Over-representation of the largest party after the 1st multi-party elections	Average over-representation of the largest parliamentary party 1990-2002	Average over-representation of the largest parliamentary party 2003-2010	Average number of parliamentary parties 1990-2002	Average number of parliamentary parties 2003-2010	Involvement in war	Fate of democratic transition	Freedom House's evaluation of democracy during the 1990s	The time of 'de-freezing' interrupted transitions
Slovenia	pa	opposition	0.2 P	1.1	2.4	8	7	a ten-day war	continuous, gradual	free	
Croatia*	sp	**opposition**	26.9 Ma	14.7	9.8**	5.8	9.5	yes	'freezing'/postponement	partly free	2000
Serbia	sp	**communist party**	31.5 Ma	14.3	3.7	8.6	8.3	yes	'freezing'/postponement	not free***	2000
Montenegro	sp	**communist party**	10.2 PW	9.2	5.6	4.8	8	yes (indirectly)	'freezing'/postponement	not free***	1997/1998
Macedonia	sp	communist party	N/A	N/A	5.2	6	6.5	yes (indirectly)	continuous while 'protected' by the presence of international forces	partly free	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	pa	opposition	N/A	N/A	N/A	9.8	12.5	yes	'freezing'/postponement	partly free	in the making

Source: Fink-Hafner, Lajh and Krašovec (2005); www.osce.org; election commissions in individual countries

Note: **Bold** indicates an individual predominant party; sp - semi-presidential system; pa - parliamentary system

Ma=majority electoral system; P=proportional system; PW=proportional system with a nationally defined parliamentary threshold

* In 2001 Croatia changed its constitutional system to a parliamentary system; ** Calculations made on results in 10 constituencies; *** est

In line with expectations, during the first decade following the first multi-party elections, the semi-presidential systems tended to produce a smaller number of parliamentary parties than the parliamentary systems (the average number of parliamentary parties in all former Yugoslav republics with semi-presidential systems during the 1990–2001 period was 6.3, while in the parliamentary systems the average was 8.9). The semi-presidential systems in our research go hand in hand with the greatest disproportionality between party votes and their parliamentary seats, which is not quite in line with Lijphart's (1994) findings, that presidentialism reduces the disproportionality of an election outcome.

We can confirm (see Table 3) that proportional systems tend to open the parliamentary arena relatively widely, although the largest number of parliamentary parties in the units investigated (15) was observed in a two-round majority system (in Serbia in 1990). The introduction of a nationally defined parliamentary threshold only functioned as a stricter rule limiting the number of parliamentary parties when the threshold was high enough and therefore efficient. Similarly, as shown in the Croatian case, a mixed electoral system emphasising the majoritarian or proportional elements did not bring about the expected results (Kasapović 1994: 158; Gaber 1996: 354–355).

Table 3: Number of parliamentary parties in relation to the electoral systems in Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia 1990–2010

Electoral system	Unit (1st elections)	No. of parl. parties after the 1st elections	Unit (2nd elections)	No. of parl. parties after the 2nd elections	Unit (3rd elections)	No. of parl. parties after the 3rd elections	Unit (4th elections)
PR without a nation-ally defined threshold	Slovenia	9	Slovenia	8	Slovenia	7	
			B&H	6	B&H	10	B&H
							Macedonia
PR with a nation-ally defined threshold	Montenegro	4	Montenegro	5	Montenegro	5	Montenegro
							Slovenia
							Croatia
			Serbia	9	Serbia	7	Serbia
mixed	B&H	6					
			Croatia	8	Croatia	8	
					Macedonia	6	
majority	Croatia	6					
	Serbia	15					
	Macedonia	5[1]	Macedonia	7[2]			

| No. of parl. parties after the 4th elections	Unit (5th elections)	No. of parl. parties after the 5th elections	Unit (6th elections)	No. of parl. parties after the 6th elections	Unit (7th elections)	No. of parl. parties after the 7th elections	Unit (8th elections)	No. of parl. parties after the 7th elections
13	B&H	14	B&H	13	B&H	12		
7	Macedonia	8	Macedonia	5				
5	Montenegro	5	Montenegro	4	Montenegro	8	Montenegro	8
8	Slovenia	7	Slovenia	7				
5	Croatia	9	Croatia	10				
8	Serbia	4	Serbia	6	Serbia	11	Serbia	8

Sources: Fink-Hafner, Lajh and Krašovec (2005); www. osce.org; election commissions in individual countries

Notes: 1. Besides the five parties, five independent candidates also succeeded in entering parliament

2. Besides the seven parties and coalitions, seven independent candidates also succeeded in entering parliament

Despite the fact that the number of parties does have an impact on the mechanics of the party system, it seems that the distribution of power is more important. The decisive factor in the party systems was the redistribution of political power by applying electoral rules, that is to say, by the specific translation of electoral support into parliamentary seats (Table 2). Hence, majority electoral systems enabled *Hrvatska demokratska zajednica* (HDZ) to translate its 41.9% of electoral votes at the first multi-party elections into 68.7% of the seats, while *Socialistička partija Srbije* (SPS) gained 46.1% votes and even 77.6% of the seats. The over-representation of the first three political parties is also visible in the case of Serbia, where their over-representation fluctuated by between 17.4% following the first multi-party elections, 21.3% after the second, 15.7% after the third and 13.4% after the fourth elections. In spite of the differences in the electoral systems, a similar trend can also be observed in Croatia, Montenegro and to a somewhat lesser extent in Macedonia.

Changes to party systems through electoral engineering are to some extent visible in their fragmentation and aggregation (Figures 1 and 2). In most cases, shifts in the level of fragmentation and aggregation happened immediately subsequent to (in some cases relatively frequent) changes to electoral rules. The effects of electoral manipulation are especially visible in the cases of Croatia, Serbia, Montenegro and (due to the international institutional engineering) in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Figure 1: Levels of fragmentation (Fp)* in the party systems of the former Yugoslav republics in the 1990–2010 period
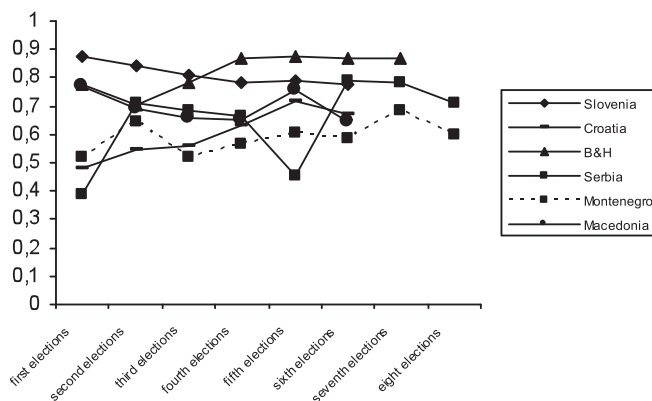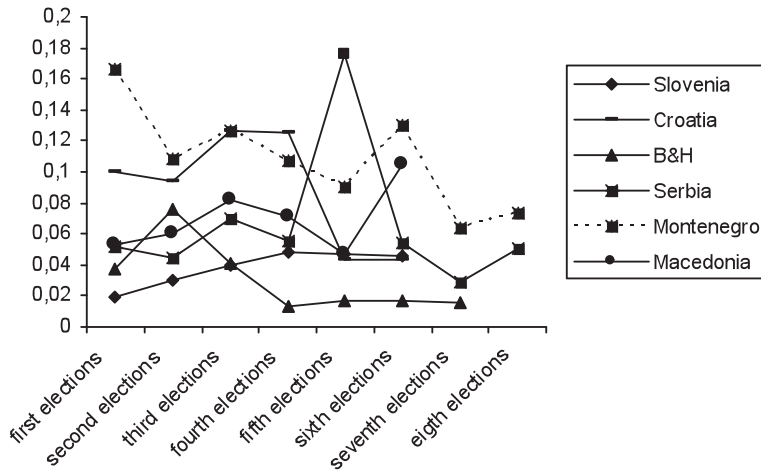

* Fp = Rae's index of fractionalisation is computed on the basis of the following formula (Sartori, 1976: 307):

$$Fp = 1 - \overset{N}{\underset{i=1}{S}} p_i^2$$

where N = the number of parties, p_i = the share of seats of the i-th party.

Figure 2: Shifts in the value of the index of aggregation (ia)* in the party systems of the former Yugoslav republics in the 1990–2010 period

* Ia = index of aggregation = the relationship between the share of seats of the largest party and the number of all parties in the parliament

Political parties are not always successful in adapting to electoral rules. This is usually indicated by sizable losses of electoral votes (Table 4). For example, sizable losses occurred in Serbia when the majority system was replaced by a proportional system with a 5% nationally defined threshold, and in Montenegro after the introduction of a single electoral district. Nevertheless, the greatest proportions of lost votes did not always emerge as expected. For example, in Slovenia in 1992, when the proportional system without a nationally determined electoral threshold was in place and an indirect threshold of only three seats was introduced, the loss of votes was the greatest. This was due to the development of a thriving multipartism. In 1992, the greatest number of parties (33) competed at parliamentary elections. This further dispersed the already quite fragmented electoral support (Fink-Hafner 2006).

Table 4: Proportion of 'lost votes' after each election and their averages in the units investigated in the 1990–2010 period

Politico-territorial unit	1st elec-tions	2nd elec-tions	3rd elec-tions	4th elec-tions	5th elec-tions	6th elec-tions	7th elec-tions	8th elec-tions	Aver-age 1990-2002	Average 2003-2010	Average 1990-2010
Slovenia	8.0	17.7	11.4	3.8	11.7	7.8	not yet held	not yet held	10.2	9.7	9.9
Croatia	3.6	11.8	11.2	3.3	10.2	6.4	not yet held	not yet held	7.5	8.3	7.9
Bosnia and Herzegovina	N/A	N/A	12.7	0.2	N/A	14.9	18.3	not yet held	6.4	16.6	11.5
Serbia	10.9	19.9	12.9	11.7	8.2	14.2	11.3	4.7	12.7	10.1	11.4
Montenegro	7.3	21.3	16.6	5.6	6.3	5.6	8.5	13.6	10.4	11.1	10.7
Macedonia	N/A	N/A	5.1	11.5	11.6	9.0	not yet held	not yet held	8.3	10.3	9.3

Sources: Fink-Hafner, Lajh and Krašovec (2005); www. osce.org; election commissions in individual countries

Some of the findings cannot be explained without examining the natural process of party emergence. It should be noted that, as a rule, a large number of new political parties proliferated at the end of the old authoritarian regime. Also, the processes whereby political parties mature involve both party mergers and splits. Only the fittest parties succeed in institutionalising and surviving. Furthermore, it should also be noted that in most former Yugoslav republics (with the clear exception of Slovenia), irregularities took place during most elections during the 1990s. Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro all experienced a decline in the level of electoral participation, election boycotts, as well as oscillations in the number of voters on official registers, which was due to inaccurate records, and changes in the official definition of voting rights. The unclear status of war refugees (about 600,000 came to Serbia and Montenegro predominantly from Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina) also should be taken into account (see e.g. Goati 2001: 174–175; Kasapović 2005: 136; Ramet 2006: 508).

Conclusions

The qualitative analysis of Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia has shown that the power relations between the old and new political elites in the (pre)transitional period as well as the related constitutional and electoral choices were the key (co)determinants of the power struggle

during the decade following the first multi-party elections. Institutional engineering during democratic transition was predominantly determined by the interests of the key political players who sought to gain and/or maintain power.

Our research has shown that, in the absence of a relatively strong opposition and a liberalisation stage, the goal of the old elites (including the goal of their institutional engineering) was to *stop* the transitional stage or to at least to control the new multipartism. A similar strategy was open to use by the new elites, as the case of Croatia shows. In the semi-presidential system electoral engineering was more frequent and mixed as well as linked to a greater disproportionality in the case of the largest parliamentary party. The combination of semi-presidentialism with a majority electoral system and the rise of a dominant party following the first multi-party elections during the war supported the survival/creation of a non-democratic political system.

The struggle for power that took place within the framework of electoral engineering was not primarily a struggle for a lower absolute *number* of parties in parliaments, but rather a struggle for the aggregation of prevalent power positions within the party system. This means that electoral engineering was primarily about disproportionality in the translation of votes into parliamentary seats and not so much about leaving as many parties as possible outside the parliamentary arena. The old party elites and the new party elites which gained their dominant positions in the party systems at the first multiparty elections used these positions to (re) create electoral rules according to suit their needs. Political elites behaved rationally, in light of the knowledge of institutional engineering provided primarily by Western sources. Nevertheless, some of the key political actors failed to estimate correctly the impact of importing institutions into specific transitional contexts. The old political elite in Croatia, for example, made a mistake in opting for the majority electoral system at the first multi-party elections. Similarly, the impacts expected did not follow the introduction of a mixed electoral system in 1992 and electoral threshold in 2003.

Those systems with stronger presidents in the 1990s tended to limit multipartism (taking into account relevant parties and excluding the smallest parliamentary parties) as well as support the majoritarian democracy in the investigated countries. Although proportional systems are open to a relatively large number of parliamentary parties due to the idiosyncratic circumstances of democratic transition, quite a large number of parties were found in all parliaments during the 1990s. Surprisingly, the largest number of parties was found in a majoritarian electoral system (15 parliamentary parties in Serbia – though many of them extremely small). More in line with theoretical expectations is the observation that an electoral threshold seems to be efficient in reducing the number of parliamentary parties in the

investigated units with that system, providing that the threshold is high enough. It is not important how it is achieved – either with the nationally defined threshold or via the manipulation of the size of electoral districts. Several biases from the rule have appeared during the last decade, especially in countries which adopted lower thresholds for minority party lists (e. g. Serbia and Montenegro).

Bosnia and Herzegovina confirms the thesis that proportional systems can actually reinforce ethnic divisions (Norris 2004: 37), a thesis which runs contrary to the predictions of consociational theorists despite some additional elements in the electoral system for preventing the escalation of ethnic divisions.

To sum up, although electoral rules do seem to have determined the political winners, the extent and effect of their manipulation cannot be fully understood without taking into account the broader socio-political context. Over the long term, electoral engineering during the first decade of democratic transition in the six former Yugoslav republics has had limited success. Furthermore, its limited impact can also be observed in the new millennium. After ending the war and its negative socio-economic effects, and after changing the power relations between the opposition and main ruling parties, the new democracies gained new characteristics. Whilst institutional change in some former Yugoslav republics has followed the path favoured by transitologists (a regional trend toward proportional electoral systems, a shift towards the parliamentary system in Croatia), this does not seem to be the case in ethnically segmented Bosnia and Herzegovina. The autonomous institutional engineering in Macedonian to accommodate ethnic divisions has taken a similar direction to the international engineering in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Together with Kosovo and Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia is still on a fragile path to democracy. The question 'what kind of democracy?' (consociational democracy or partitioned liberal democracies of relatively ethnically homogeneous politico-territorial units) remains open in ethnically segmented countries.

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Comparing National Security Strategies of the United States toward Central Europe and East Asia after the Cold War (1990-2010)[1]

Pavel Hlaváček

Abstract: *Central Europe and East Asia have played significant role in the US foreign policy since the end of the Second World War. Since the end of bipolar division, however, its importance has changed. Our data, taken from the US National Security Strategies, confirm that the interest of the USA in Central Europe gradually declines to the lowest recorded levels since 1990. In case of East Asia, it has fluctuated and stabilized at the levels from the beginning of the 1990s.*

Introduction

Central Europe and East Asia belong among the locations on the world map that geographically are very remote from one another. Despite their distance, both traditionally capture the attention (not only) of American experts in the field of international security. Increased interest in the noted regions has not been caused by their cultural heterogeneity, but by geostrategic significance: during the Cold War, a line passed through them that divided the world into two ideologically opposed camps.

After the fall of this bipolar arrangement – when the American doctrine of containing communism reached its "raison d'être" – in Washington a reevaluation took place of the geopolitical significance of both regions for the security of the United States. The submitted study will attempt to assess what significant roles the noted regions have played in the foreign and security policies of the USA following the end of the Cold War. We will evaluate the significance according to the increase or decrease in incidents of the terms "Central Europe" and "East Asia" in the security strategies of the USA (NSS[2]) from the years 1990–2010.

In the first chapter, we briefly devote attention to the common characteristics of American security strategies and to some of the criticisms articulated to address the strategies.

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[1]   Translated by Perry Tapper, MA. – Licensed Freelance Czech-English Translator/Interpreter.
[2]   NSS – National Security Strategy of the United States of America.

The core of this text consists of the second and third chapters. These sections closely define our understanding of the aforementioned terms and the circumstances under which they are displayed in individual security strategies. We have proceeded in the following manner: we conducted mechanical searches for key terms by submitting the searched terms into a word search engine. We recorded all terms created on the basis of the words Central Europe and East Asia. In both cases, the searched terms occurred in American security strategies either with reference to a geographically defined unit or in the title of an institution of which the governments of the given region were members.

We expressed the results of our measurements graphically, while determining whether the occurrence of the searched terms has a rising or declining trend. We begin from the assumption that the greater number of references to the monitored terms also express greater interest presidents of the USA ascribe to the given regions through specific strategies.

While the length of the strategies and the number of searched terms may be expressed by an exact number, the correlation between the interest of American administrations about the given region and the frequency of the occurrence of the given region in specific security strategies are affected by multiple factors. Aware of these facts, we have attempted primarily to show what quantitative shifts occurred in the given area. A qualitative analysis or justification as to why this happened exceeds the scope of this work.

Security strategy of the USA

National security strategy – sometimes rather simplistically marked as »grand strategy« – is one of the approximately two thousand reports that the federal government must submit to Congress each year. The obligation to formulate the NSS is established in the Goldwater – Nicholson Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986. This act binds each American president, annually and no later than within 150 days from his inauguration, to present his views about the position of the USA in the world, possible threats, risks or challenges and options to confront these.

No American president since the approval of GNA 1986 has yet failed to satisfy this condition without delay. For example, President Obama published his first strategy initially 16 months after his inauguration (May 2010), President Clinton 17 months (June 1994[3]) and the younger President George Bush even 20 months (September 2002) after stating the presidential oath.

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[3] Bill Clinton had his strategy prepared by the deadline (i.e. by 15 June 1993), however after the tragic fallout of operation UNOSOM II in Somali Mogadishu, he was forced to withdraw it. He issued the revised version about a year later. Since 1994, he published a new strategy annually or at least revised the previous ones.

These time delays are one of the reasons why the authors of security strategies are criticized. Some legislators believe that the content of the strategy is not sufficiently detailed and that it does not provide anything of essence that could not be viewed in other documents published even before the publication of the strategy itself. Senator Strom Thurmond, one of the authors of GNA 1986, complained in this context: "Even when submitted, the National Security Strategy report has generally been late… In addition, the … report has seldom met the expectations of those of us who participated in passing the Goldwater-Nichols Act" (Gaddis 2002: 53).

Despite these criticisms, for us the NSS represents a pivotal source of information. Their content reflects the personality of the president himself (and his advisors), the current policy composition in the Congress of the USA, the ability of the USA to project its power in the international system, the distribution of its power in the world and many other factors of domestic and foreign policy. The combination of these facts makes each security strategy unique.

In the period from the end of the Cold War to the present, four presidents from both main political parties have alternated in the White House. During this period, thirteen "Grand Strategies" have been issued, while five of these were initiated by presidents elected from the Republican side (George H. W. Bush, George W. Bush) and eight NSS came from presidents who were or are members of the Democratic Party (William J. Clinton, Barack H. Obama).

The scope of each strategy covers several dozen pages; nonetheless their length differs rather significantly. When viewing Table no. 1, it is apparent that the longest NSS (or the most extensive in the sense of the greatest number of characters) was issued in 2000, its length exceeding 300 thousand characters. On the other hand, the shortest NSS date from 1993 and 2002 – both are practically the same length (in the range of approximately 81 thousand characters).

If we compare these numbers (see Table no. 1), it is apparent that the security strategies of presidents elected from the Republican Party are markedly shorter than security strategies published in the period of the government of presidents originating from the side of the Democratic Party. The approximate length of the security strategies of Republic presidents (i.e. the period 1989–1993; 2001–2009) on one side and Democratic presidents (1993–2001; 2009–present) on the other is approximately the same. In the first case, this covers around 100 thousand characters, while the difference between the average length of security strategies of the elder George Bush and George Bush the younger equals less than 5 thousand characters.

In the second case, it is somewhat more complicated; while during the government of Bill Clinton seven security strategies were issued, Barack Obama has hitherto issued only one (NSS 2010). If we tally the average length of all security strategies of President Clinton, we find that their scope correspond to approximately 196 thousand characters (rounded up). This scope very closely approximates the scope of the single security strategy of Barack Obama (184 thousand characters).

If the terms Central Europe and East Asia were given the same attention in security strategies from the years 1990 to 2010, then the occurrence of the searched terms in the text should copy the rough outline for the scope of individual strategies. If the size of the strategies from the period of the elder George Bush's administration correspond to the length of the strategies from the period of the younger George Bush's administration, then the occurrence of the terms Central Europe or East Asia should remain in principle the same, without regard to which of them was actually in power. The same should apply for Democratic presidents.

Definition of keywords

Central Europe

The borders of Central Europe have never been precisely established. Only in general terms has this region been identified with the area between Western Civilization and Eastern Civilization. Since the beginning of the 1990s, Central Europe has been discussed at two levels.

The broader concept of Central Europe consists of all states between Western Europe and Russia: from the Baltic states in northeastern Europe to the Balkan Peninsula in southeast Europe. In this broad space, several international cooperative institutions have originated, nonetheless not even one of these has been associated with all the countries of such a defined region. The closest this concept approximates is the Central European Initiative (CEI[4]), members of which also included southern European Italy and western European Austria; on the other hand it entirely lacked Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

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[4]   Central European Initiative (CEI), originally known as Quadragonale, was founded in Budapest (1989). The aim of this organization was to bridge the lack of cooperation between East and West: at the time of foundation, two states from the Eastern Block (Hungary, Yugoslavia) and two states from the Western Block (Austria, Italy). Within two years, Czechoslovakia and Poland joined and the organization was renamed to CEI.

In the narrower definition, Central Europe was identified with member states of the Visegrad Group (VG[5]) and the Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA[6]): Czechoslovakia (since 1993 divided into the Czech Republic and Slovakia), Poland and Hungary. These three or four states underwent political and economic transformation. One of the factors that unified them was interest in the dissolution of regional organizations such as the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance (COMEA[7]) and the Warsaw Pact Organization (WPO[8]).

The founding states of VG and CEFTA openly considered themselves as part of the Central European region. Despite the goal, not even one of these institutions ever created alternatives toward the Western European integration process. On the other hand, in all three cases (VG, CEFTA, CEI), it applies that the aforementioned institutions had to struggle as a forum for communicating experience during the common path to the Euro-Atlantic structures (i.e. entry into the EC/EU and NATO).

As we show below, the Central Europe region was interpreted as part of Western Europe, Eastern Europe, sometimes it has been displayed separately, elsewhere as "Central and Eastern Europe". For example, we may target Estonia for including in northeastern Europe (as one of the Baltic states), in Central Europe (in its broader concept) and even in Eastern Europe (as a former member of the USSR). Similarly, we may include the Czech Republic in Central Europe (as the founding member of VG and CEFTA), but also in Eastern Europe (as a country of the former East Bloc), possibly into the group of countries from Central and Eastern Europe (as a combination of the two previous variations).

For this reason, if we are not able to distinguish a precise definition of the region, it is not possible to limit just to the search terms that contain the word "Central Europe". It is necessary to take into consideration the broader and narrower concepts of this region. In the texts, therefore, we have searched and calculated in our statistics the following terms: Central Europe (CE), Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), Eastern Europe (EE), North East Europe (NEE) and South East Europe (SEE).

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[5]   Visegrad Group, also the Visegrad Triangle, was founded (1991) by the presidents of Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland. The name of this institution is derived from the town of Visegrad (Hungary), where the first meeting took place. Since the split of Czechoslovakia (1993) into Czech Republic and Slovakia, the Visegrad Group is usually referred as Visegrad Four (V4).

[6]   Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA) was founded (1992) by the member states of Visegrad Group. Once these countries achieved to enter the European Union (2004), they left CEFTA to the new member states from the Balkan Peninsula (Bulgaria, Romania, Moldova and all states from former Yugoslavia).

[7]   COMEA (also COMECON) was an economic organization founded (1949) by the Soviet Union and its satellite states in Eastern Europe. It was dissolved in 1991.

[8]   WPO (also the Warsaw Treaty/Pact), officially known as Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance, was a military alliance of the Soviet Union and countries of the Eastern Block between 1955 and 1991.

East Asia

American security strategies define East Asia by a more specific understanding than it is in the case of Central Europe. In all analyzed documents, East Asia has been included in the region marked as "East Asia", also "East Asia and the Pacific" and "Asia-Pacific." In addition to East Asia itself, the regions of northeastern Asia (Japan, North and South Korea) and Southeast Asia are also included in this category[9] (Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and the Philippines). Australia and New Zealand are understood as part of the Pacific region.

East Asia is specific in several perspectives. Primarily it is its structure, which has remained unchanged despite the end of bipolar conflict. In the Western world, we have the habit of perceiving the end of the Cold War as a victory of democracy and the overall discrediting of communist ideology. But we neglect the fact that the revolutionary events at the turn of the 1980s and 1990s affected East Asia only to a limited degree. The majority of communist regimes (in China, Vietnam, Laos or North Korea[10]) the fall of the Berlin Wall has died away, while China or Vietnam in the past 20 years have even undergone a period of economic conjunction. Even North Korea has remained communist. This has regularly extended economic difficulties and even famine, but for now there is no way to force its government to end its costly nuclear program (possibly to cease to provide technology for the production of nuclear weapons to other countries).

Although the Cold War in East Asia ended 20 years ago[11] than in Europe, its result was not understood as a victory from the standpoint of the USA: The United States did establish diplomatic relations with China, but they were defeated in Vietnam and as a result of this, they abandoned the military alliance the South East Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO[12]). This fact itself explains in part why after 1989, the

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[9]   The Southeastern Asia region has been displayed as an independent region, while Northeastern Asia is most frequently understood as a subregion of East Asia.

[10]   Cambodia is the exception, which has been politically marked as a country in (unending) transition.

[11]   We think of the end of the Cold War in East Asia primarily in two events: a) the establishment of diplomatic relations (1971-1972) between the United States and the People's Republic of China (PRC), as a result of which, the representatives of Taiwan were replaced in the United Nations Security Council with representatives of continental China; b) the death of Mao Zedong (1976), as a result of which the entire government in Beijing was taken over by so-called "reform communists" (e.g. Deng Xiaoping), who began to promote capitalist economy (1978-1979).

[12]   SEATO (also the Manila Pact) was a military alliance, which was initiated by the USA, in order to contain the expansion of communism in the region of South East Asia. After failure in the Vietnam War, it was officially disbanded in 1977.

removal of American troops in East Asia did not correspond to the withdrawal of the American army from Germany and Western Europe. While in (West) Germany this occurred in 1990–2007 to a decline in American troops by 230 percent, in East Asia, only by 40 percent (in Japan), or 23 percent (in South Korea).[13]

Another specific of the region of East Asia rests in regional cooperation. According to all measurable factors – such as number of members, economic power, etc. – the most successful integration projects are represented by The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC).[14] Both institutions were not established to serve for the integration of member states into other international organizations (as it was the case with VG and CEFTA). The significance of APEC and ASEAN, on the contrary, has exceeded its region and they have been transformed into actors of global range.

Therefore, to establish the precise dividing line between East and Southeast Asia, possibly east and Northeast Asia is not simple. For example, according to various interpretations, we could include the Republic of China (Taiwan) either in Northeast Asia (as a former colony of Japan), in Southeast Asia or also East Asia (as part of the People's Republic of China). But we could hardly defend the assertion that it lies in south Asia or north Asia. Similarly, we could contend whether the Philippines still belongs to Southeast Asia or already in the Pacific region. Nonetheless, from a logical standpoint, this work is not so determining as to the word form basis of all three regions is East Asia, or the region "East Asia and the Pacific."

If the goal of this work is to find the frequency in the occurrence of the term "East Asia," it is therefore necessary to search not only for the occurrence of the term itself, but also the significant regional institutions, the title of which is bound to the given region. In the security strategies of the USA, therefore, we have searched and calculated in our statistics the following terms: East Asia (EA), North East Asia (NEA), South East Asia (SEA), ASEAN and APEC.

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[13] In West Germany, a stable total of around 250 thousand American troops served during the Cold War. Their numbers began to rapidly decline after 1989 and in 2007 only 57 thousand remained in the country. At American bases in Japan during the Cold War, there were nearly 50 thousand soldiers and in 2009 35 thousand remained. In South Korea, the number of Americans since the end of the Korean War has been gradually decreased. In the 1980s, this declined to 35 thousand and by 2007 in this country were registered 27 thousand American GIs.

[14] Another example of successful regional integration is represented by the East Asia Summit (EAS), nonetheless this was established initially in 2005.

Occurrence of keywords in NSS

Central Europe

For security strategies from the years 1990-1993, it is distinctive that the term "Central Europe" is used only minimally. More precisely stated, only in a third of the cases, always in NSS 1990 (1990: 6, 10, 26). The NSS of 1990 divides Europe as during the Cold War, i.e. into "Western Europe" and "Eastern Europe" along the border created by the Iron Curtain.

The NSS 1990 extensively informs about the gradual withdrawal of the military strength of the Soviet Union back to its own territory and at the same time states that for preserving stability, it will be necessary for the United States to leave part of its own units in the region. "For the foreseeable future, we believe a level of 195,000 U.S. troops in Central Europe is appropriate for maintaining stability after a CFE[15] reduction" (NSS 1990: 26). If we consider the placement of American military bases in Europe in 1990, we come to the conclusion that NSS 1990 ranks "Central Europe" into the broader region of Western Europe. As we note below, this understanding of Central Europe is entirely exceptional.

In NSS 1991 and NSS 1993, a significant decrease occurs in the occurrence of the term "Eastern Europe": from 25 times in NSS 1990 to 5 times in NSS 1993. And this declining trend continued also in the Clinton strategies. The term "Central Europe" itself does not appear in NSS 1991 and 1993, but the term "Central and Eastern Europe" or "Eastern and Central Europe" newly appears. In both cases, the national security strategies (1991 and 1993) define this category as states of the former East Bloc, which after the fall of the Berlin Wall were in the process of a transition from dictatorship to democracy. NSS 1991 writes about this region: "East Europeans are determining their own destinies, choosing freedom and economic liberty. One by one, the states of Central and Eastern Europe have begun to reclaim the European cultural and political tradition that is their heritage. All Soviet forces are gone from Czechoslovakia and Hungary and withdrawals from Germany and Poland are underway" (NSS 1991: not paginated).

In the citation above, we notice two facts. First, that Central and Eastern Europe is understood as a sub-region of Eastern Europe. This concept is in conflict with how Central and Eastern Europe was defined by President Clinton in NSS 1996. And second, we note the mention of Germany. At this point, it is necessary to consider that Germany was thought of only as the territory of the former East Germany[16], from which USSR units withdrew (not the entire territory of the unified Germany).

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[15]   CFT = Conventional Armed Forces in Europe.
[16]   We think of East Germany as the German Democratic Republic (Deutsche Demokratische Republik), which was one of the Soviet satellites in Eastern Europe. GDR disappeared by unification of Germany not quite a year after the fall of the Berlin Wall.

As is apparent, the national security strategies during the administration of George H. W. Bush understood Central Europe as part of Western Europe. None of NSS 1990 in connection with mention of Central Europe notes a specific country. From the context, it nonetheless appears that one Central European country was mentioned, West Germany[17]. More precisely stated the country in which the USA had its military bases.

The region "Central and Eastern Europe" corresponds to the states of the former East Bloc, which lies on the borders with the region of Western Europe. Specifically, this includes Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland. All the other states to the east of Central Europe were included in the region "Eastern Europe".

The first security strategies issued during the Bill Clinton administration (NSS 1994 and 1995) fluidly continued in the trends established by the elder Bush. As is apparent from Table no. 2, until NSS 1996, they didn't speak of "Central Europe" per se. We can also observe here a clear decrease in the occurrence of "Eastern Europe" while in NSS 1996, 1997 and 1998, it does not occur at all. And in one third, we see a gradual increase in the occurrence of the term "Central and Eastern Europe": from 7 times in NSS 1994 to 15 times in NSS 1996. For the most part, this increase may be ascribed to the growing interest in selected countries for membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). In other cases, the American administration declares a willingness and support to assist the political and economic transformation of countries from the former East Bloc

From the standpoint of our analysis, we consider as pivotal the security strategies from the years 1996, 1997 and 1998. In these reports, we can find three priorities: In part, it is here that Clinton first uses the expression "Central Europe" (NSS 1996) and the expressions "South East Europe" (NSS 1997) and "North East Europe" (NSS 1998) first appear. Each of these references confirm that concepts such as East Europe and Central and Eastern Europe are too broad.

As we have suggested as to the definition of Central Europe in NSS 1996, it is interesting that an entirely opposite definition of Central Europe is used by George Bush in NSS 1990. In the section in NSS 1996 where the fight against international organized crime is addressed, Hungary is introduced in connection to Central Europe: "To help police in the new democracies of Central Europe, Hungary and the United States established an international law enforcement academy in Budapest" (NSS 1996: not paginated). In NSS 1998, Central Europe is named in connection with the signing of the ratification of new member states to NATO (Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland). These citations show that "Central Europe" in the Clinton strategies is understood as a sub-region of "Central and Eastern Europe."

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[17]   West Germany, or the Federal Republic of Germany (Bundesrepublik Deutschland) – member state of NATO and key ally of the USA in Europe.

If we compare this word with NSS 1990, we cannot but notice one interpretational shift: the country Clinton considered as Central Europe, Bush noted as Central and Eastern Europe. As has already been noted, the elder Bush considered Central Europe as part of Western Europe. On the other hand, Clinton included the countries of Central Europe into the group of countries of the former East Bloc, that is the broader category of Central and Eastern Europe.

NSS 1997 is specific in that here is first mentioned "South East Europe." From the beginning, this region included the Aegean Sea, the issue of Cyprus and the border zone between Turkey and Greece. The Balkan Peninsula in NSS 1997 is noted as a separate category, first later (NSS 1998, 1999 and 2000) are these two items included into one section. Also, thanks to these changes in the frequency of the use of the term "South East Europe" in the security documents of the USA steeply increased – from 4 times in NSS 1997 to 20 times in NSS 2000.

In the final analysis, it is worth mentioning that in three security strategies of Bill Clinton (NSS 1998, 1999, 2000) we also find reference to "North East Europe." This term included also the "Baltic States" (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania). This was mentioned in relation to the "Charter of Partnership signed on January 16, 1998, which clarifies the principles upon which U.S. relations with the Baltic states are based and provides a framework for strengthening ties and pursuing common goals" (NSS 1998: 39).

Generally, we may state that during the 8 years of the Bill Clinton administration, the frequency in the occurrence of the terms Central Europe, South East Europe, and Eastern Europe stabilized. If we also calculate the terms North East Europe and South East Europe, then during the 1990s there was even an increase.

With the election of George W. Bush (2001–2009), there was a significant change. In his two security strategies (NSS 2002, NSS 2006), we find only one mention of Central and Eastern Europe. Furthermore, this mention is rather a marginal chapter, which mentions the success of the USA during the establishment of freedom and democracy in the past: „Today… we can encourage change – as we did in central and eastern Europe between 1989 and 1991, or in Belgrade in 2000" (NSS 2002: 3).

The absence of references to "Central Europe" and "Central and Eastern Europe" surprisingly persists in the security strategies of Barack Obama. In NSS 2010, we find only one mention of Eastern Europe. "Building on European aspirations for greater integration, we are committed to partnering with a stronger European Union to advance our shared goals, especially in promoting democracy and prosperity in Eastern European countries that are still completing their democratic transition and in responding to pressing issues of mutual concern" (NSS 2010: 42). NSS 2010 does not name the countries to which this relates, but it is not difficult to surmise that this involves primarily Belorussia (where the dictator Lukashenko rules), and Ukraine and Moldova (both are in transition to democracy). We further add that

reference or mention of Central European institutions, noted in the previous sub-chapter – CEI, VG and CEFTA – do not occur in the analyzed documents.

East Asia

In the security strategies of the elder President Bush, East Asia is marked as one of the critical regions of American national interests. In NSS 1990, 1991 and 1993, East Asia is devoted its own sub-chapter, which reflects the security situation at the turn of the 1980s-1990s. President Bush declares here a resolve to preserve the present American units, to permit their overall decline.

American interests in the region incorporated into five priorities (five-fold agenda). Support for the alliance with Japan is marked as the most important, then expansion of market arrangements (e.g. via the organization ASEAN), to watch the rise in power of China, to support the process of the peaceful unification of the Korean Peninsula and finally to support the normalization of relations in Indochina and cooperate with the organization ASEAN.

President Clinton restricted his priorities toward East Asia to three basic circles: continuation of building a security environment (i.e. preserving military presence), support in the creation of democratic institutions and introduction of market reform (NSS 1994: 23–24). On the other hand, during the government of Bill Clinton, we can record that attention was devoted to countries from the region of East Asia and the monitoring of regional institutions (APEC, ASEAN) drastically increased.

One of the factors which doubtless affected the aforementioned trends was the Asian financial crisis. NSS 1998 devoted an unexpectedly large amount of space to it. Among other items, we find here this warning: "There also is a risk that if the current crisis is left unchecked its effects could spread beyond East Asia. Simply put, we cannot afford to stand back in hopes that the crisis will resolve itself… In the face of this challenge, our primary objective is to help stabilize the current financial situation" (NSS 1998: 45).

Nonetheless, the Asian crisis first burst out in 1997, while the increase concerning East Asia can be noted already in NSS 1997 from May of that year. This means that the Asian crisis accelerated the rise in interest in East Asia, but did not start it. Interest in East Asia requires a perception in broader contexts of the overall political and economic rise of the region of East Asia and the Pacific, while primary attention is placed primarily on the institutions of APEC and ASEAN.

While the elder President Bush in his three strategies mentioned APEC only once (NSS 1990), Clinton in his seven strategies mentioned it 71 times (i.e. approximately 10 times per one NSS). APEC was given central attention particularly after the fall of 1993, when the annual meeting of its members was organized in the

United States (Seattle). In NSS 1995, then is the following justification: "Today, the 18 member economies of APEC – comprising about one-third of the world's population produce $13 trillion and export $1.7 trillion of goods annually, about one-half of the global totals. U.S. exports to Asian economies support millions of American jobs, while U.S. direct investments in Asia represent about one-fifth of total U.S. direct foreign investment. A prosperous and open Asia Pacific is the key to the economic health of the United States" (NSS 1995: 29).

The organization ASEAN is also devoted increased attention, even not to such a degree as in the case of APEC. For example, although ASEAN is not mentioned at all in NSS 1994, in subsequent strategies there is a gradual increased, which culminates in NSS 1999 and 2000 (12 times or 11 times). Clinton's strategies refer to the significance of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ART), as a key institution for strengthening security and economic relations in the region: "Our strategic interest in Southeast Asia centers on developing regional and bilateral security and economic relationships that assist in conflict prevention and resolution and expand U. S. participation in the region's economies" (NSS 1999: 37). In this context, it is also noted that the government of the USA arranged for the establishment of the International Law Enforcement Academy in Bangkok (Thailand) – the same institution that was established in Budapest. The main goal of this step was to provide professionals in the region with "high-caliber training in areas such as drug trafficking, alien smuggling, cyber crime, and other transnational threats" (NSS 1999: 37).

Increased interest in APEC and ASEAN lead to an overall growth in references to the regions of East Asia (EA), North East Asia (NEA) and South East Asia (SEA). This growth may be well illustrated in the shift in security strategies from the years 1996, 1997, and 1998. While in NSS 1996, the total number of references to the aforementioned regions (EA, NEA, and SEA) reach the number 5, in NSS 1997, this is more than double (11) and in NSS 1998, more than triple (16) the value from NSS 1996.

After Bill Clinton was replaced by the younger George Bush, the frequency in occurrence of the searched terms markedly changed in the security strategies. Initially, there was a steep decline in NSS 2002, though this is subsequently compensated for in NSS 2006. In NSS 2002, East Asia or North East Asia is mentioned only in the context of the war on terrorism: "To contend with uncertainty and to meet the many security challenges we face, the United States will require bases and stations within and beyond Western Europe and Northeast Asia… for the long-distance deployment of U.S. forces" (NSS 2002: 29).

In the second strategy of President George W. Bush (NSS 2006), the number of references to East Asia and its institutions returns to the value in security strategies from the middle of the 1990s. The increase, unlike strategies from 2002, may be

ascribed to various impacts. NSS 2006, for example, mentions the inclusion of the USA in the humanitarian mission to help the afflicted as a result of the tsunami in south East Asia from December 2004. But other information indicates that the growing attention to East Asia is not just a transitory matter. The United States are marked in the NSS as a "Pacific nation, with extensive interests throughout East and Southeast Asia" (NSS 2006: 40). According to President Bush, the security and stability of East Asia depends on the degree of American engagement, while "Existing institutions like the APEC forum and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Forum, can play a vital role. New arrangements, such as the U.S.-ASEAN Enhanced Partnership, or others … can likewise bring together Asian nations to address common challenges" (NSS 2006: 40).

The last American strategy focuses its attention primarily on Southeast Asia. NSS 2010 presents it as one of several "models of regional success and stability" (NSS 2006: 3), with which the United States intends to deepen its cooperation. In addition to the institutions APEC and ASEAN, Obama's strategy first mentions a newly established institution: "We will work to advance these mutual interests through our alliances, deepen our relationships with emerging powers, and pursue a stronger role in the region's multilateral architecture, including the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation forum, the Trans-Pacific Partnership[18], and the East Asia Summit[19]."Generally, we can say that in the security strategy of Barack Obama, East or Southeast Asia is devoted less attention than in NSS 2006, but greater than in NSS 2002.

Evaluation

In the submitted text, we have attempted to evaluate how the foreign policy and security interests of the USA toward Central Europe and East Asia changed after the end of the Cold War. We begin from the assumption that growing or declining interest of the United States can be quantified by the number of references to the given region in the National Security Strategies of the USA in the years 1990–2010.

[18] Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) is multilateral free trade agreement among Brunei, Chile, New Zealand and Singapore. It was founded in 2005 and currently, the United States and four additional countries (Australia, Peru, Malaysia and Vietnam), are negotiating to become full members.
[19] East Asia Summit (EAS) is annually held forum of currently 18 leaders of countries from East Asia and the Pacific region. First EAS Summit took place in 2005 in Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia).

*Figure 1: Development of the length of NSS during the period 1990–2010 (number of characters including spaces)*
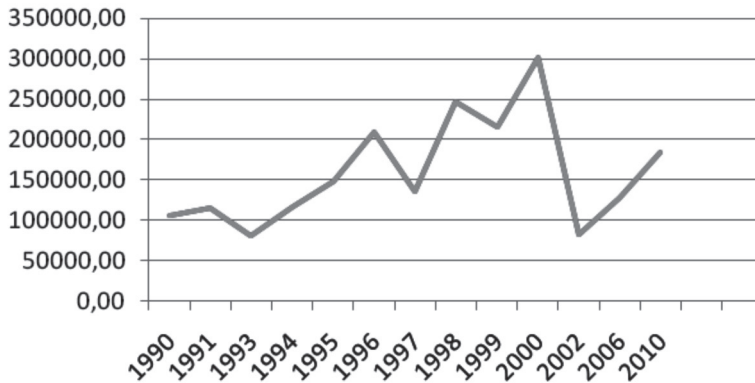
Source: Author

Growth or decline in references to the searched terms necessarily is affected by the overall scope of individual security strategies.[20] Figure number one illustrates how over the course of the 1990s – during the administration of the elder President Bush and President Bill Clinton – the length of strategies (in number of words, resp. characters including spaces) gradually increased. After the election of the younger George Bush, there was a drastic drop to the values at the beginning of the decade, while with the election of Barack Obama, the length of strategies returned to the average shown by the strategies of Bill Clinton (compare with Table no. 1).

Figure number two starts from the same value, while illustrating the average length of security strategies during the election campaign of individual presidents of the USA. From Figure no. 2 and also from Table no. 1, it is apparent, that Presidents George H. W. Bush and George W. Bush issued strategies of approximately the same length (100–105 thousand words, resp. characters including spaces); but markedly shorter than those strategies issued by Presidents Obama and Clinton (183–196 thousand words, resp. characters including spaces).

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[20]   Measured by the number of words including spaces in one strategy.

Figure 2: Average length of NSS during the administrations of individual presidents (number of characters including spaces)
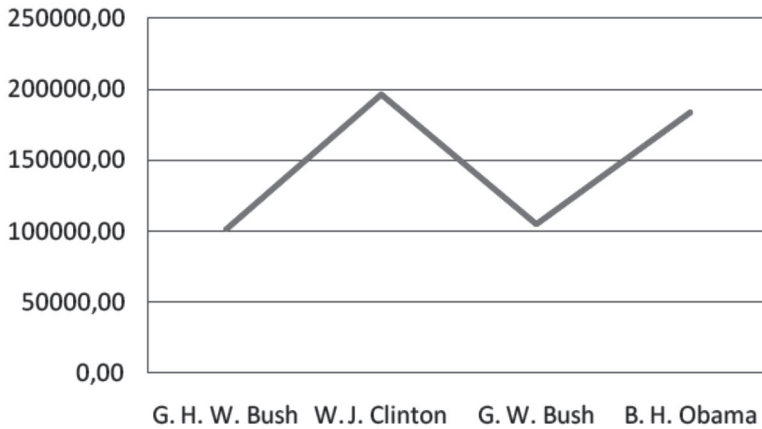
On the basis of our determinations, we may state that both monitored regions show a tendency that is not copied in the curves of figures one and two. Despite this, it is possible to say that the data measured when searching the term Central Europe (see Figure no. 3) are far more conclusive in their tendencies than for those for the term East Asia (see Figure no. 4).

Figure number three is devoted to the value measured for the term Central Europe The first curve expresses the total of terms Central Europe (CE), Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) and Eastern Europe (EE), the second curve the terms North East Europe (NEE) and South East Europe (SEE). The third curve then is the total of both of the previous curves.

Figure 3: Occurrence of searched terms for the Central Europe region in NSS in the years 1990–2010
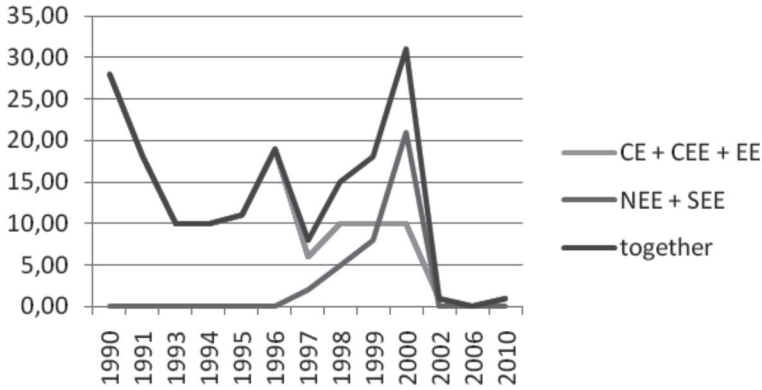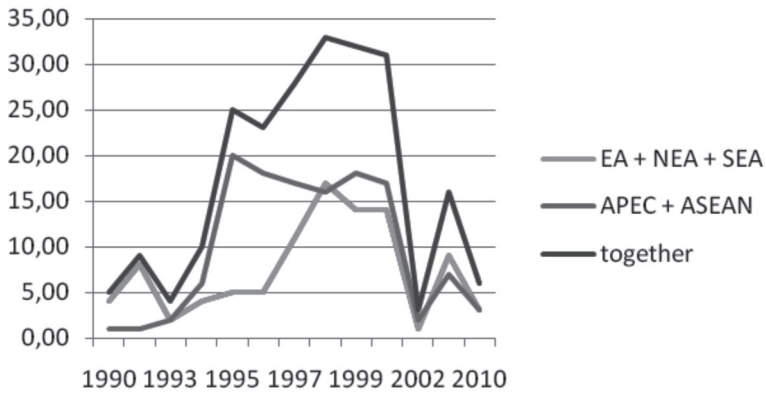

Source: Author

If we observe the first curve, we see a relatively marked decline in the occurrence in strategies from the years 1990, 1991 and 1993. During the government of Bill Clinton (NSS 1994–2000), stabilization occurred. An abrupt decline followed in the strategies from 2002. The second curve only tempers this decline and shifts attention primarily to South East Europe.

This data relatively clearly confirms that the size of values from the period during the government of the elder Bush and the younger Bush do not correspond the same as data does not correspond during the administrations of presidents Clinton and Obama.

Figure number four captures the measurement of the occurrence of the term East Asia. The first curve expresses the total of the terms East Asia (EA), North East Asia (NEA) and South East Asia (SEA). The second result represents the number of terms APEC and ASEAN, and the third is the total of both the previous curves. To establish the overall trends in this case is somewhat more complicated.

Figure 4: Occurrence of searched terms related to the region of East Asia in NSS in the years 1990–2010
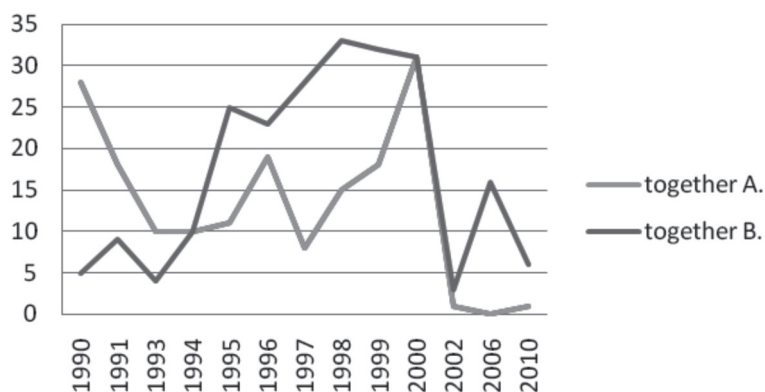

Source: Author

During the government of Bill Clinton there occurred a drastic increase in the number of occurrences, particularly in connection with the organization APEC. In the security strategies since 2002, there was a decline nearly to zero both in the first and second curves. Despite this fact, in the strategies since 2006, there is a clear increase and subsequent slight decline in the values from the beginning of the 1990s (NSS 1990, NSS 1991 and NSS 1993). This data demonstrates that the size of values from the period during the government of the elder Bush and the younger Bush in essence correspond, but the data does not correspond during the administrations of presidents Clinton and Obama.

On the basis of our measurements, we came to this conclusion: interest of the USA in Central Europe – in its broad and narrow concept – declines, whereas from the beginning of the 21st century – in NSS 2002, 2006 and 2010 – it fluctuates around the lowest recorded levels. Interest in Central Asia during the past decade fluctuated, but stabilized and corresponds approximately the same interest as at the beginning of the 1990s. These determinations are apparent in Figure number 5, which illustrates the total of all values from Figure number one (CE + CEE + EE + NEE + SEE = together A) and all values from Figure number two (EA + NEA +SEA + APEC + ASEAN = together B).

Figure 5: Total occurrence of searched terms from Figures 3 and 4

Source: Author

Table 1: Average length (μ) of NSS

	NSS of	Number of characters (including spaces)
George Herbert Walker Bush (1989–1993)	1990	106 019
	1991	115 412
	1993	81 442
μ of NSS 1990 –1993		100 958
William J. Clinton (1993–2001)	1994	117 129
	1995	147 758
	1996	209 208
	1997	136 207
	1998	247 145
	1999	215 663
	2000	301 336
μ of NSS 1994 –2000		196 349
George Walker Bush (2001 – 2009)	2002	81 886
	2006	128 091
μ of NSS 2002 and NSS 2006		104 986
Barack H. Obama (2009-now)	2010	183 965
μ of all US presidents (1990–2010)		(cca) **160 000**

Source: Author

Table 2: Occurrence of searched words (Central Europe) in NSS (1990–2010)

NSS of	Central Europe/an (CE) Central and East/ern Europe/an (CEE) East/ern Europe/an (EE) Southeast/ern Europe/an (SEE) Northeast/ern Europe/an (NEE)	(CE+CEE+EE) + (SEE+NEE) = All together
1990	3x CE + 0x CEE + 25x EE 0x SEE + 0x NEE	28 + 0 = 28
1991	0x CE + 3x CEE + 15x EE 0x SEE + 0x NEE	18 + 0 = 18
1993	0x CE + 5x CEE + 5x EE 0x SEE + 0x NEE	10 + 0 = 10
1994	0x CE + 7x CEE + 3x EE 0x SEE + 0x NEE	10 + 0 = 10
1995	0x CE + 11x CEE + 0x EE 0x SEE + 0x NEE	11 + 0 = 11
1996	4x CE + 15x CEE + 0x EE 0x SEE + 0x NEE	19 + 0 = 19
1997	1x CE + 5x CEE + 0x EE 2x SEE + 0x NEE	6 + 2 = 8
1998	2x CE + 7x CEE + 1x EE 4x SEE + 1x NEE	10 + 5 = 15
1999	0x CE + 6x CEE + 4x EE 7x SEE + 1x NEE	10 + 8 = 18
2000	1x CE + 7x CEE + 2x EE 20x SEE + 1x NEE	10 + 21 = 31
2002	0x CE + 1x CEE + 0x EE 0x SEE + 0x NEE	1 + 0 = 1
2006	0x CE + 0x CEE + 0x EE 0x SEE + 0x NEE	0 + 0 = 0
2010	0x CE + 0x CEE + 1x EE 0x SEE + 0x NEE	1 + 0 = 1

Source: Author

Table 3: Occurrence of the searched words (East Asia) in NSS (1990– 2010)

NSS of	East Asia/an (EA) Northeast/ern Asia/an (NEA) Southeast/ern Asia/an (SEA) Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)	(EA+NEA+SEA) + (APEC+ASEAN) = All together
1990	4x EA + 0x NEA + 0x SEA 0x APEC + 1x ASEAN	4 + 1 = 5
1991	6x EA + 0x NEA + 2x SEA 1x APEC + 0x ASEAN	8 + 1 = 9
1993	1x EA + 0x NEA + 1x SEA 0x APEC + 2x ASEAN	2 + 2 = 4
1994	4x EA + 0x NEA + 0x SEA 6x APEC + 0x ASEAN	10 + 0 = 10
1995	5x EA + 0x NEA + 0x SEA 18x APEC + 2x ASEAN	5 + 20 = 25
1996	4x EA + 0x NEA + 1x SEA 15x APEC + 3x ASEAN	5 + 18 = 23
1997	4x EA + 1x NEA + 6x SEA 11x APEC + 6x ASEAN	11 + 17 = 28
1998	11x EA + 1x NEA + 5x SEA 9x APEC + 7x ASEAN	17 + 16 = 33
1999	8x EA + 1x NEA + 5x SEA 6x APEC + 12x ASEAN	14 + 18 = 32
2000	7x EA + 1x NEA + 6x SEA 6x APEC + 11x ASEAN	14 + 17 = 31
2002	0x EA + 1x NEA + 0x SEA 1x APEC + 1x ASEAN	1 + 2 = 3
2006	5x EA + 0x NEA + 4x SEA 4x APEC + 3x ASEAN	9 + 7 = 16
2010	1x EA + 0x NEA + 2x SEA 1x APEC + 2x ASEAN	3 + 3 = 6

Source: Author

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Path Making: Democracy in the Baltic States Twenty Years After

Lars Johannsen and Karin Hilmer Pedersen

Abstract: *Despite shared values and similar choices with respect to the institutions of democracy there is a difference between Estonia on the one hand and Latvia and Lithuania on the other. Estonia has had more success and developed a mature democracy whereas Latvia and Lithuanian are bogged down by corruption, polarization and populism. Articulating and establishing a discourse the virtuous circle in Estonia is the result of an unusual high degree of consensus among an alternatively elite that formulated a political project and acted under a sense of urgency.*

Keywords: *consensus, consolidation, institutionalism, Baltic states, path making, populism*

Is the construction of new democratic institutions sufficient to ensure stable democracies? The development of democracy in the aftermath of the soviet regime's breakdown has by many scholars been linked to institutional agreement among concerned interests (Przeworski 1991; McFaul 2002). Following insights from transitology, this line of reason was based on the breakthroughs in institutional theory linking actors' preferences and strength to institutional outcomes, and much effort went into the discussion and comparison of constitutions and electoral systems (Lijphart 1994; Geddes 1996; Pogany 1996; Frye 1997; Johannsen 2000). Institutional equilibriums would appear, and once in place, rational and sociological institutionalism could be used to predict political behavior. The assumption was, accordingly, that countries with similar institutional setups and values would develop along the same lines.

There is a great deal of mileage in these insights. The Baltic States chose institutions in accordance with their values and have managed to consolidate liberal democracies in spite of unfavorable conditions. However, this is not to say that these democracies are necessarily stable. According to Satori (1987), democratic stability is related to the degree of pluralism. While "moderate pluralism" equated with a bell-shaped distribution of voter preferences seeks to stabilize the political system around democratic values, "extreme pluralism", where two peaks fall on the far left and the far right side of the political spectrum, has a destabilizing effect on otherwise democratic regimes as told by historical cases like Germany during the Weimar Republic and the Third and Fourth Republic in France. While rational institutional theory suggests that institutionalizing liberal democratic institutions

would in itself foster democracy, we suggest that democratic institutions are not a sufficient condition but must be combined with elite's clear break with the past and a clear view on the road ahead to advance "moderate pluralism" and, thus, a consolidation of democracy.

Despite being similar on practically all variables, including formal democratic institutions and values, Estonia has been more successful in creating a virtuous circle where formal institutions and informal values are congruent with elite behavior and sentiments in the population. Thus, as concerns the degree of pluralism, Estonia has turned into a path of 'moderate pluralism' initiated by elites holding a political consensus and acting under a sense of urgency, political developments in Latvia and Lithuania have been marred by polarization and populism, implying that initial values of power-sharing and corporatism have been changed somewhere along the way.

We develop our argument in four steps. First, we make a theoretical exercise to link insights from institutional theories to our argument that a clear break with the past and consensus among the elite improve the chances of having a society in congruence with the values behind "elite bargaining" and the institutional effect expected thereof. Second, using our methodological design upfront, the analysis is organized in three parts. In the analysis, we argue that the Baltic States constitute a perfect *most similar system design* sharing similar conditions at the outset of the transition. Furthermore, we find that Estonian democracy is more congruent with the initial values and, by way of example, institutionalism than Latvia and Lithuania. Questioning the difference, we then argue that the Estonian break with the past was not only organized and articulated but also took place under a sense of urgency. In the conclusion, we discuss if what from the outset looks as a clear success may also be viewed as a potential risk for Estonia's further development.

Institutionalizing a liberal democracy and then what?

Institutional theory stresses the importance of institutional choice on actual behavior. However, within the field of institutional theory, behavior follows different logics (see among others Hall – Tailor 1996; Schmidt 2010). While behavior according to rational institutionalism reflects individual rational assessment of institutional consequences, sociological institutionalism points at existing informal norms of appropriate behavior within institutions as decisive. However, in both cases, choice of institutions equals "the distribution of preferences (interests) among political actors, the distribution of resources (power), and the constraints imposed by the rule of the game (constitution)" (March – Olsen 1989: 162). Thus, in the context of regime transition, the constitutional arrangement is not fixed but rather developed as an outcome of interests and power. We now turn to the theoretical assumptions behind constitutional choices.

Liberal democracy is defined by a combination of free constitutions, civil and political rights, electoral systems guaranteeing competitive elections, and the rule of law (among others; Schumpeter 1974 [1942]; Diamond 1999; Dahl 1971). In the literature, especially two issues have been highlighted in the debate about when formal democratic institutions are "the only game in town". First, the two-turnover test claims that democracies are consolidated if and when government has changed hands twice in peaceful elections, thereby demonstrating preparedness to accept a democratic defeat (Huntington 1991). Following this, the rational behavior for political actors when democratic institutions are constructed in terms of a multi-party system and proportional elections will be power-sharing and acceptance of opposition (Lijphart 1999). Thus, according to the rational account, institutions will contribute to actual behavior that follows the ideas behind democracy.

Second, Linz (1978) focuses on the values and attitudes of the populations, arguing that a democracy is consolidated when there is no disloyal opposition to undermine democracy. His claim is further substantiated by Diamond (1999), who says that no more than 15 percent of the population must prefer a different (authoritarian) political system. In the terms of a "thick" understanding of democracy, this implies that democracy is first consolidated when a democratic political culture and its values are embedded into peoples' mindset (Barber 1984). Geoffrey Pridham follows the same line of arguments, noting that given the institutionalization of democratic rules and procedures, a new political order is not consolidated until the rules and procedures are internalized and disseminated through activation of civil society and the "remaking" of a political culture (2002: 955). This "thick" version of democracy places our argument in the camp of sociological institutionalism and cultural theories the main challenge of which is how to explain and expect change (March – Olson 1984; Eckstein 1988; Appel 2000).

While liberal democracy is better at suggesting a clear measurement for democratic consolidation, this is not the case with democracy's "thick" definition. Indeed, consolidated democracy in this case becomes a fluffy concept which may be accused of "degreeism" and thus difficult, if not impossible, to use empirically (Satori 1991). Quoting Valery Bunce:

> What does "consolidation" mean in an empirical sense? – Is it the absence of democratic collapse or the presence of certain features, such as a democratic political culture? Does consolidation entail political stability and, if so, what does this mean? Is it the absence of such factors as significant anti-system protest, the government's loss of its coercive monopoly and sharp divisions among citizens and among political leaders, or is it the presence of such factors as relatively durable governing coalitions and widespread public support for the institutions and procedures of democracy? (Bunce 1995: 124-125)

The problem pointed at is that democratic development as a never ending project will never have an end state that can be defined as consolidated. Accordingly, there is a clear advantage in limiting the discussion on democratization to the formal institutionalization of democracy. However, although the formal institutionalization of democratic rules is a first step on the path to a substantial democracy, it does not necessarily create a shared belief system or a supportive population towards the new system. Kathleen Thelen (1999) argues that when the institutional context changes, interests invested in the current political institutions are reevaluated in the light of these changes. Moreover, interests being discriminated upon during a previous regime can reverberate and change the institutional development in their interests. The thesis of *path dependency* whereby institutional development follows a certain path may rest upon the distribution of powers within the system.

According to rational and sociological institutionalisms, formal institutions and elite norms should predict liberal democracy to blossom into its mature and consolidated variant, either because it is individually rational to follow the formal institutions' incentives of power-sharing or because it is individually appropriate to enhance informal institutions' norms of inclusion and participation. However, recent development in institutional theories has stressed the specific and distinctive importance of "discourse" to explain change. Vivien A. Schmidt argue that the traditions of rational, sociological, and historical institutionalisms are successful in explaining stability because of their inherent logics emphasizing institutions' external constraint on actors either through rational incentives, historical paths, or cultural norms (2010: 14). In contrast, discursive institutionalism's focus on constructs of the mind not only serves as a constraint on actors' behavior, but also constitutes a possibility for change. Moreover, the change capacity increases when there is a dissonance between the context for action and the cognitive frames of the mind. Following Harry Eckstein, "transformative processes involve not only adjustment to necessity but also the deliberate engineering of great change" and further "if discontinuity begets 'formlessness' of culture, then revolutionaries can hardly do much to reorient people in the short run" (1988: 799). Thus, changes depend on actors' ability and will to escape the legacy of existing institutions and reformulate a new developmental path.

Taking these insights to our topic of democracy 20 years after the Soviet regime broke down we argue that what causes the Estonian's virtuous circle is the elite's utilization of a critical juncture to construct a clear break and a concrete view on the road ahead. In contrast, Latvia and Lithuania not only struggled with sentiments over the past but also failed to formulate and communicate the perspectives for the future. However, before discussing the explanation, we turn to the empirical design of our analysis.

The starting point: background similarity

The Baltic States constitute a unique micro-cosmos in post-communist transitions as the only former Soviet Republics succeeding in forming a liberal democracy. While generalizations are limited from the outset, being a small-N is not a disadvantage, but can rather be seen as an advantage that allows the use of a comparative research design within Mill's tradition of "method of disagreement" also known as most-similar systems design (Landman 2000: 27–33; Mahoney 2004), and to dig deeper into the explanatory factor that facilitates democratic consolidation. Table 1 reveals the argument behind the Baltic States as suitable for at most-similar system research design.

Table 1: Unfavorable conditions, similar choices and success of establishing liberal democracy

Background variables	**Estonia**	**Latvia**	**Lithuania**
Unfavorable conditions	Former Soviet Republic Russia as close neighbor Large Russian minority	Former Soviet Republic Russia as close neighbor Large Russian minority	Former Soviet Republic Russia as close neighbor Different minority groups
Formal democratic institutions	Multiparty system, coalition governments and indirect elected, symbolic presidency	Multiparty system, coalition governments and indirect elected, symbolic presidency	Multiparty system, coalition governments and direct elected semi-presidentialism
Informal norms or democratic values among the elite in the 1990s.	Participatory (74 pct.) Corporatist (98-85 pct.)	Participatory (75 pct.) Corporatist (98-61 pct.)	Participatory (68 pct.) Corporatist (100-83 pct.)
Success: Liberal democracy	Free and fair elections since early 90s. Two-turnover test passed.	Free and fair elections since early 90s. Two-turnover test passed.	Free and fair elections since early 90s. Two-turnover test passed.

Sources: Nørgaard – Johannsen 1999; Johannsen 2000; Demstar-elite survey database, Freedom House various years

Note: With respect to corporatist values, the first number expresses the share that believes that involving non-state actors in policy formulation is preferable. The latter number expresses the share that believes the involvement of non-state actors will improve implementation.

The three unfavorable conditions are the basis of our discussion on the Baltic States as the most similar case selection. First, as former Soviet Republics, the Baltic States were fully integrated in the all-union economic setup and compared to Central and Eastern Europe more exposed to the distinct mentalities produced from this. Second, their proximity to Russia and Belarus, whose democratic credentials are more than questionable, not only induces the spill-over effect identified by Diamond (2000) but also makes the Baltic States more vulnerable to Russian

interference in domestic affairs. Third, at the dawn of independence, they were all challenged by the existence of ethnic minority. Population heterogeneity is not a problematic precondition for democratic consolidation in itself. However, in Estonia and Latvia, the proportion of the titular population was as low as 61.5 percent and 54 percent respectively, which constituted the predominantly Russian minority as a possible ally for Russian interests. The situation in Lithuania was not as problematic, partly because the titular Lithuanian population were larger (approximately 80 percent), partly because the minority was more heterogeneous, including not only Russians but also a considerable Polish group (Nørgaard 1994: 163).

Looking at institutional choices and values in the 1990 the three countries are also remarkably similar. First, as regards the form of government, multiparty systems with the parliaments as the core institutions were adopted (Nørgaard – Johannsen 1999; Johannsen 2000). Even though Lithuania at the outset differs in choosing a semi-presidential system and a mixed proportional electoral system combining single seat constituencies with a national proportional list, the difference has proven to be negligible as elections in all three countries have produced either minority governments or coalition governments. The first Lithuanian Democratic Party (LDDP) government in Lithuania did, on paper, appear as a majority government but in reality, the LDDP ticket included several strong factions (Nørgaard – Johannsen 1999; Johannsen – Stålfors 2005). Moreover, the powers of the Lithuanian president remains limited although the typical cohabitation issues found in semi-presidential system are present (Johannsen 2000; Talat-Kelpša 2001).

Second, as regards informal values, the *demstar-elite survey* manifests that solid majorities of the political elites holding office in the 1990s ascribe to the same values and the same model of democracy. In interviews with respectively 50, 50 and 53 ministers of government in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, roughly three quarters expressed that they preferred a participatory democracy where the public is engaged in parties, associations and local governments, etc. to gain influence on politics. In turn, few thought the more passive form, where participation is restricted to voting, attractive. Moreover, the elite also deem the corporatist model superior. In the same survey, almost everyone finds that decisions are improved when the concerned interests (i.e. non-state interests) are involved in policy formulation and that majorities, that is 61, 83 and 86 percent in Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia respectively find that involving non-state actors improves implementation (for a thorough discussion on this aspect of the survey, see Johannsen 2002).

To complete the argument behind a most-similar-system design, the three countries also show a remarkable degree of success in building liberal democracy. Despite what unfavorable conditions at the outset, the three countries have escaped the grey zone between democracy and authoritarianism to become fully liberal

democracies. *Freedom House* has ranked all countries as "free" for almost two decades, which in terms of time makes a backslide to authoritarianism less likely. Moreover, all countries have passed the two-turnover test, meaning that governmental power has been passed on peacefully between political parties and actors, which from the outset also contribute to socializing democratic values. However, despite the remarkable success, the outcome can be seen as democracies in degree.

The endpoint: Democracy in degree

Despite the high degree of similarity in conditions, choices, and the success in establishing liberal democracy, it is argued that the countries differ with respect to the inherent congruency between the choice of formal institutions of democracy, the initial values of participation and inclusion, and the "real world" as experienced by the population and observed in the behavior of political actors two decades after system breakdown.

The rhetoric of Baltic presidents when addressing problems related to domestic democracy represents a journey in "degree of democratic consolidation" from North to South. Beginning in the North, Estonia's A. Rüutel addresses the lack of participation and dialogue. In Latvia, V. Vike-Freiberga focuses on the sustainability of liberal democracy in spite of a conflict-ridden Parliament, while in the South, Lithuania's V. Adamkus is even concerned about the stability of liberal democracy in itself:

> The experience shows that representation democracy implements only the decisions of the elected majority. But it is the continuous dialogue in the society and attempts to consider as wide a spectrum of interests as possible, which manifest the maturity of democracy. The more there is participatory democracy in the society, which simultaneously offsets the inevitably limited possibilities of the representative democracy, the higher the cohesion of the society (Estonian president Arnold Rüütel 2003).

> In a way it is a miracle that we have advanced in our development as far as we have, considering how often our governments have fallen and how difficult it has been for coalition partners to come to an agreement even on seemingly matter-of-course goals (Latvian president Vaira Vike-Freiberga 2006).

> … the deficit of a stable democratic order based on justice and truth. We should establish this order by strengthening all tiers of the state governance: political and judicial, public service and self-government. A strong democratic state is not possible without strong political parties and strong political power. Our parties are still weak (Lithuanian president Valdas Adamkus 2001).

On this journey from North to South, Estonia seems more successful in turning the country into a coherent and vibrant democracy following both the expectations from rational and sociological institutionalisms. We base our analysis of the different outcomes on the elements set out in table 2.

Table 2: Democracy in degree

	Estonia	**Latvia**	**Lithuania**
Public trust * -Government -Parliament -Political parties	38 31 16	10 6 5	19 10 8
Civil society **	Higher	Low	Low
Participation ***	Lack of inclusion and social dialogue	Institutional engineering	Institutional engineering

*Sources: * Eurobarometer, 2009; ** US-aid, 2010; *** authors analysis of presidential speeches 1998-2009*

Popular distrust in government, parliament, and political parties suggests that the process of consolidation is still underway. According to *Eurobarometer 2009*, less than 20 percent of the Latvian and Lithuanian populations have faith in their government, and only 6 and 19 percent respectfully trust their parliament. These percentages are considerably below the Estonian. In Estonia, trust in government and parliament is about 35 percent, and while only 16 percent trust in political parties, this is still far above the Latvian 5 percent and Lithuanian 6 percent. Even though one may argue that the Estonian population is not very trustful in their political system, they do have more faith in the ruling elites compared to Latvia and Lithuania. Moreover, the differences between the three countries have been consistent over the years. In their examination of the early years of Baltic independence, Nørgaard and Johannsen (1999 96–99) find that both as regards trust and satisfaction with democracy, Estonians are more trustful and satisfied than Latvians and Lithuanians. The snapshot presented above is thus not influenced by temporary scandals or events.

Second, the lack of a vibrant civil society has been a core feature of post-communist countries. Although civil society organisations mushroomed in the 1990s, Howard (2003: 160) argues that public interest to participate in civil society has been frustratingly low, and according to Bǎdescu, Sum – Uslaner (2004), fewer East Europeans than West Europeans are members of at least one organization. Moreover, NGOs typically have few active members, are understaffed and economically depressed (Lindén 2008). As a consequence, many organisations are nurtured by financial and organizational assistance from the West. USAID, which carries out an "NGO sustainability" assessment each year, find that while Latvia and Lithuania had just escaped the mid-transition by 2009, the Estonian civil society is well into the process of consolidation and supposedly more consolidated than the otherwise vibrant civil society in Poland (USAID 2010).

When the debates concerning participation and civil society are examined through the presidential speeches, the same differences come to light. Lithuanians and Latvians are still engaged in institutional engineering to address the lack of participation, whereas the Estonian debate is more preoccupied with improving the social dialogue and the link between elected government and civil society (Estonian presidents 2000, 2001, 2003). Also in Latvia, a social dialogue is needed but framed in a different context. In Latvia, social dialogue is called to bridge ethnic divisions (Latvian president Vike-Freiberga in 2002) and there is a dire warning that the lack of participation and debate will produce uninformed citizens who will fall for populist appeals. However, in Estonia, institutional engineering is not totally absent in presidential speeches, but in contrast to the other two countries, the intentions behind Constitutional changes have primarily been a question of individual ambitions of presidential wannabees (Estonian president Rüütel in 2002).

The public trust in political institutions and more engagement and participation from civil society correspond both to the expected effects of the chosen institutions and to elite norms and values. The background variables should indicate similarity on these aspects, but we do find that the Estonian context does better than the Latvian and Lithuanian. These differences in democratic degree correspond nicely to the transition paths in other areas. A few years into the transition it was already apparent that Estonia had a head start vis-à-vis the two other countries. Estonia leads the way with respect to developing governance capacity and never looked back. According to Kaufmann & Mastruzzi (2010), from the early 1990s, Estonia scored better on government effectiveness, rule of law, and control with corruption. These findings are supported by interviews with 153 former ministers of government in the three states. When asked about improvement in the professionalism of civil servants since the regime change, none of the Latvian ministers saw any signs of improvement, which is astonishingly low compared with a positive outlook by 65 percent of the Lithuanian ministers and no less than 85 percent of the Estonian. In a similar fashion, the majorities in Lithuania and Latvia reported that civil servants were more efficient in implementing decisions during communism (Pedersen – Johannsen 2004).

Evaluating Estonian 'democracy in degree' it becomes clear that a virtuous circle has been set in motion in which better performance on a wide range of issues foster improved governance capacity, generates trust in the democratic institutions and individual motivation for participation. Once set in motion, virtuous as well as vicious circles become self-explanatory which observations from cross-sectional and surveys studies on the effects of performance on public trust also suggest (Mishler – Rose 1997: 25; Mishler – Rose 2001: 56; Letki – Evans 2005). What concerns us here, however, is the ignition of the process.

Virtuous and vicious circles: Articulating a clear break

Explaining why Estonia managed to create a virtuous circle one should take notice of the Estonian uniqueness. Estonian politics has been characterized by a unique degree of consensus among the political parties. Pettai (2009) labels it a "tutelary" transition in which the elite came to agreement about the long term goals. Mikkel (2006) argues that Estonian politics has always been characterized by a high degree of pragmatism, and thus, opposing sides have always found common ground for co-operation and coalition building.

Tallo (1995) argues that the vote at the first free elections in Estonia in 1992 was not so much a vote for new policies as it was a vote for new elites. Isamaa (Fatherland), who became the leading partner in the government coalition, had carried the slogan "Clean the place!" (*Plats Puhtaks*!) during the campaign, and once in power, replacements throughout the civil service began. Only administrators untouched by communism were acceptable to the government. In practice, this meant that experienced administrators were replaced with inexperienced young cohorts trading experience for loyalty and innovation.

A difference between Estonia and the two other countries was that prior to the independence, a counter-elite had emerged. Li Bennich-Björkman's (2005, 2006, and 2007) research clearly identifies the roots of the radical break in the Young Tartu (Noor Tartu) movement to which Mart Laar, later prime minister, belonged. Even if these primarily young academics studying at or graduating from Tartu University had little political experience, their debates centered on a western, neo-liberal agenda coupled with the rejection of "alien" communism. Furthermore, a sense of urgency prevailed to use the window of opportunity to secure independence and make the process towards liberal markets and democracy irreversible (Nørgaard – Johannsen, 1999). The Estonian urgency was articulated as a threat from Russia as formulated by Vello Pettai:

> For the Estonian elites of the 1990s, the moral was clear: the country cannot rely on Russia remaining weak or suddenly becoming a permanently benevolent neighbor. …. Put in the starkest of terms, Estonia could be said to have again received perhaps at best a 20-year window of opportunity to secure its sovereignty and freedom, and if its elites were unable to realize this opportunity the country would probably face even greater doom than in 1940 (Pettai 2009: 74).

The flame of the process is not only kept alive by sporadic conflict with Russia – the relocation of the statue of the bronze soldier in 2007 a case in point – but more importantly, kept alive by articulating a dichotomy between the moral Estonian "we" and the corrupt Soviet "other". As president, Lennart Meri made numerous references portraying the Estonians as the moral good people who should hold the

loyal and dedicated (new) civil servants dear but "be still more uncompromising … towards the incompetent and corrupt civil servants whom we have inherited from the totalitarian past" (Estonian president Lennart Meri 1995). The moral Estonians who treasure freedom, democracy, and civil service are in contrast to the frame given by presidents in Lithuania and Latvia. In Latvia, president Valdis Zatlers' argues that although his country had been occupied by Russia the "…communist regime… [has become]…part of the gene pool of our peoples" (Latvian president Valdis Zatlers 2009), and the Lithuanian president Valdas Adamkus takes a step further and calls moral corruption for homegrown and claims that "our country is driven to despair by a record number of cases, when politicians and officials, who have overstepped the standards of decency, mixed up public and private interests, go unpunished, not even publicly denounced, and claim to recognize only legal responsibility" (Lithuanian president Valdas Adamkus 2006). Thus, the distinct articulation in Estonia of a "clean we" in contrast to a "corrupt Russian/Soviet other" stands in clear contrast to the other two countries, where the populations have socialized to the evils of communism.

Following the lack of a clear break with the Soviet past, political life in Latvia and Lithuania is more polarized. Presidents in both countries have called for the political parties to come together. No less than 12 different persons have held the position as prime minister in Latvia since 1993, and cabinet reshuffles are even more frequent as partners withdraw from the governing coalition. Perhaps it is no wonder that the Latvian president Vike-Fribergas in the quotation above believes the otherwise impressive Latvian track record to be a miracle. In 2009, Lithuanian president Valdas Adamkus addressed the issue, arguing that there is neither stability nor predictability in the behavior of political parties. Parliamentarians switch parties and vague political programs mostly characterizing non-binding slogans have lead to unexpected coalitions. The Lithuanian situation has its roots in the early days of transformation. From the outset, distrust marked the relationship between left and right. After a protracted constitutional struggle, the popular front (Sajudis) and the reformed communist party (Lithuanian Democratic Labour Party) reached a compromise shortly before the first free elections in 1992. In the constitution, a separate clause was invoked that forbids Lithuanian to participate effectively in any alliance based on the former Soviet Union. Apparently, Sajudis needed reassurance that the Labour Party in advent of electoral victory would not seek rapprochement with and eventual membership of the CIS (Nørgaard – Johannsen 1999).

Furthermore, the political polarization is also reflected in the lives and deaths of populist parties. In Estonia, right populism based on extreme right ideology has been relatively unsuccessful (Kasekamp 2003). Although the rise of Res Publica to muster a quarter of the votes in the 2003 parliamentary elections is an evidence

of the appeal of an anti-establishment platform in Estonia, Res Publica was soon made coalition partner in the government and later merged with the conservative Pro Patria. Res Publica was thus made *establishment,* and the union of the two parties was almost halved in the 2007 elections. In contrast, Latvia and Lithuania have had several prominent populist parties emerging throughout the two decades but in contrast to Estonian right-wing populism, populism in Latvia and Lithuania has taken the form of "pure" populism, building their platform on anti-establishment platforms with only symbolic references to ideology (Ucen 2007: 58). Although populism is often connected with rising inequality and rampant corruption (Pabriks – Štokenberga 2006; Učeň 2007: 58; Sikk 2009), the differences between the three countries do not support Laurĕnas's (2006) argument that populism is born of the transition linked to naive and unfulfilled expectations of independence and pro-capitalism. Rather, populism can set a dangerous path where the ability to govern the state democratically may be lost. The problem is that populism destroys the institutional framework that relates voting to electing and thus decreases the propensity to participate, that is, to vote in elections (Przeworski 2009). Thus, low turnover in elections, which has been common throughout the post-communist area, may not just be a sign of apathy or lack of participatory interest, but rather a sign that electoral institutions and, more narrowly, the rhetoric of politics in elections campaign are not reflected by the outcome, neither in terms of government formation, nor the actual policies.

The Estonian break with the past has all the characteristics of making a critical juncture. Counter-elites formulated a project in the form of negating soviet rule – independence, democracy, market. As regards the civil service communist autocratic management style, corruption, secrecy, and inadequate concern for efficiency (Vanagunas 1999) were to be replaced by the virtues of loyalty, innovation and transparency. The counter-elite could carry this project under a sense of urgency, and because it was socially and morally coherent (Bennich-Björkman 2007), it succeeded in the continuous framing of its vision. Once the project was underway, it became self-reinforcing, creating the virtuous circle. Despite similar institutions and values, the Latvians and Lithuanians have had less success.

Concluding: the disadvantage of the advantage

We have argued elsewhere that the big-bang styled, neo-liberal reforms contributed to curbing corruption, and the extent of the consensus, which included the exclusion of ethnicity as a political issue, meant that Estonia could keep pace of the reform (Johannsen – Pedersen 2009). In contrast, Latvia was often bogged down in the politicized citizenship question, and the polarization in Lithuania slowed down the reform. The flip side of Estonian consensus and pragmatism, however,

is a narrow policy distance between political parties leaving Estonia short of an effective opposition. Thus, the strong consensus which has paved the way for the Estonian success may also be its Achilles heel. This is not only a question about the inclusion of the non-citizens. The limited inclusion of the population at large has been traded off for the capacity to master what the elites saw as the long term interest of the country. This point is also reflected in two speeches by president Toomas H. Ilves. In 2007 he argues that an effective opposition is the cornerstone of democracy, and in 2009, he lambasted the state of democracy when the government could introduce austerity measures virtually without any debate. Thus where Estonia has secured the determination of political principles the distribution of values will increasingly be questioned if an effective opposition emerges. That said the articulation of a clear break with the past and determinacy among the elite on where to go did foster more trust and participation in the Estonian society, compared with Latvia and Lithuania.

Presidential Speeches

Estonia

   Lennart Meri 1995, 2000, 2001
   Arnold Rüütel 2002, 2003
   Henrik Ilves 2007, 2009

Latvia

   Vaira Vike-Freiberga 2005, 2006
   Valdis Zatlers 2009

Lithuania

   Valdas Adamkus 2001, 2006**,** 2009

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Indonesia After Soeharto: Thirteen Years of Democratic Reforms

Tomáš Petrů

Abstract: *This paper attempts to provide an analysis of Indonesia's trajectory from a ruthless authoritarian regime of General Suharto to a new emergent democracy in less than a decade. While hailed by some as the only democratic regime in the region and a potential economic powerhouse, others deride Indonesia as a flawed democracy where chaos, corruption and nepotism thrive, Suharto's former cronies are still influential and human rights of minorities are at stake. Therefore, it is the objective of this paper to provide a more balanced look on the political transformation of this remote, but important and fascinating country, including the reforms in four key fields - i.e. the decentralization of the state, electoral legislature, the army, and the judiciary - and to assess their outcome.*

Few other countries have a more contradicting image than Indonesia. In the mainstream media, Indonesia has the stereotypical image of an emblematic 'disaster-land', which is sustained by the continual delivery of reports of natural calamities such as tsunami, volcanic eruptions and earthquakes, landslides and floods as well as man-made tragedies such as terrorist attacks or separatist rebellions.

This stereotypical image is, however, quite misleading, as the recent development of Indonesia is much more complex. Politically and economically, the story of Indonesia is one of great success and, also, failure, and so any attempt to sum up the country's recent political development in an attractive catchphrase is next to impossible. There is no denying that in the years of 1998–1999 Indonesia appeared as a big democratic surprise. However, what has happened ever since has provided for rather mixed feelings. Thus, on the one hand, many analysts tend to admire the country's quite incredible trajectory from the ruthless authoritarian regime of General Soeharto to a new emergent democracy in less than a decade. They might also laud Indonesia as the only democratic regime in the region[1] and a potential economic powerhouse. On the other hand, other commentators openly deride it as a flawed democracy where chaos, corruption and nepotism thrive, Soeharto's

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[1]   With the new Aquino administration, incumbent since 2010, the Philippines is likely to return to the path of democracy in the near future, too.

former cronies are still influential and human rights of minorities are at stake. Therefore, it is the objective of this paper to provide a more balanced and precise look on the post-authoritarian political transformation of this remote, but important and fascinating country, so badly overlooked in the Central European region whose post-authoritarian era does share quite a few similar features.

However, before we start examining the various aspects of Indonesia's transformation after the demise of Soeharto, we need to realise a few things. Indonesia is a vast archipelagic country, extremely geographically and ethnically diverse, and extremely populous – it is a home to almost a quarter of a billion people, and it is also a state with the world's largest Muslim community.

In short, Indonesia is a very improbable place, a country that, if all facts added, theoretically should hardly function, or, even exist, at all. However, despite all these odds, the mere fact that the country still holds together and keeps on going is quite an achievement in itself.

This improbable country which was, to a great extent, a creation of Dutch colonialism, has existed as an independent republic for only six decades. Until the recent commencement of democratic reforms at the turn of the millennium, Indonesia enjoyed only a brief period of representative democracy in the early and mid-1950s. After that, it lived under the grip of two authoritarian regimes for 41 years, just like the former Czechoslovakia – first, the increasingly nationalist, leftist semi-dictatorial regime of Soekarno who embarked on the policy of guided democracy in 1957[2], and then the dictatorial regime of General Soeharto who came to power in 1965–1966 and ruled the country with an iron fist for 32 years.

Soeharto's New Order, as the General dubbed it, mainly to emphasise its novelty and difference from the Old Order of Soekarno, was a highly reactionary, dictatorial regime, in principle not dissimilar to other proto-fascist states like Chile under Pinochet, Spain under Franco and Portugal under Salazar. As such, it can be characterised by heavily authoritarian methods, highly bureaucratic capitalist rule, pandemic corruption, cronyism, and, last but not least, the strong role of the army and the police[3]. Unsurprisingly, it was a country where state violence was intense and the term 'human rights' was meaningless.

In spite of Soeharto's family devastating corruption, brutalities including mass murder, kidnappings, imprisonments without trial, censorship and many other trespasses against human rights, Soeharto could still rule for three decades unchallenged because, at least in the eyes of the Javanese, he had a strong *wahyu* (ruler's

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2   Soekarno's regime in 1957-1965 is sometimes described as Soekarno's personal dictatorship, for he disassembled the parliament, reduced the power of the government as well as the role of political parties and ruled primarily through presidential decrees.

3   See Britt, http://barrybeck.com/forms/defining.pdf (viewed November 4, 2010).

charisma). The proof for this was clear – his country did not starve, it was relatively stable and, generally, there was a discernible trend towards prosperity, although opposition was already beginning to rise. Under Soeharto, Indonesia was on the way to become one of the second-tier Asian tigers, along with Thailand and Malaysia, and almost became a Newly Industrialised Country (NIC).

Being able to feed his people, build roads, clinics, schools and infrastructure, Soeharto soon began to style himself as a patriarch ruler caring for his people, or, as he preferred, the Father of Development or *Bapak Pembangunan* (Friend 2003: 137). Economic growth, stability and prosperity became the key words, but the toll the country had to pay was extremely high and its brutal legacy has left a very deep impact to this day.

When the Asian monetary crisis hit East and Southeast Asia at the end of 1997, devaluating the Thai baht and Indonesian rupiah and causing a drastic economic downturn, Soeharto's position was shaken as he was no longer able to fulfill his self-styled role of the benevolent father of development as almost overnight many people faced unprecedented poverty, lack of basic commodities and even malnourishment and hunger. There was a wave of students' demonstrations, accompanied by protests of angry crowds of low and lower-middle class origin and wide-scale looting and rape. Only then, when the political and social turmoil was getting out of hand, even the generals, who had backed the regime, lost their patience and Soeharto was forced to step down on May 21, 1998.

Soeharto was succeeded by his personal protégé, then vice-president B. J. Habibie. Personally hand-picked by the abdicating autocrat, Habibie was an improbable president, without much of a power base in the army and among Soeharto's diehards (Crouch 2008: 21). All of a sudden, he was challenged with the impossible task of managing the political transition which required both the calming down of the situation as well as starting the democratisation process in Indonesia. The demise of the former regime and the call for change was heartily cheered as *reformasi* by tens of thousands demonstrators across Indonesia.

This was when Indonesia started the decade-lasting trajectory from an almost bankrupt, heavily authoritarian, centralised, army-based cleptocracy to a decentralised, democratising and modernising country – the process which has been so often regarded as a model for other transitional, post-authoritarian countries. However, and this must be stressed, the process also has disappointed many and was, especially in the first phase, very painful.

The essential liberalisation measures that President B. J. Habibie initiated were freeing the press and opening the public space to political competition, releasing political prisoners, relaxation of censorship, and the most important step toward democratisation, conducting the first democratic parliamentary elections after

45 years – in 1999. Although he was often criticised as a weak politician, and, generally, dismissed as a New Order figurehead, without him many of the steps, including the East Timor referendum leading to its secession and independence, would have been completely unthinkable.

As to the disappointing factors, the vital question is whether Indonesia has managed to build a real *pro people* democracy or a more or less opportunistic arrangement for the New Order elite who have only adjusted to new conditions to secure their survival? Mohtar Mas'oed (2008) argues that Indonesia's transition to democracy was an 'elitist' one. He distinguishes two major streams*: the pro-status-quo*, who could be further divided into two factions. The first one were the 'hard-liners' who rejected any political reform whatsoever as it would destroy their position of wealth and power – these could be represented by the type of the ruthless ultraconservative general – one who still prefers to send battalions to Papua to crush any hint of opposition – with an iron fist.

The 'soft-liners', on the other hand, were ready to join the reform movement with the condition that it would not destroy the general political framework that they considered still workable (Mas'oed 2008: 18). These represent the Golkar-bureaucracy type politicians who did not favor violence, but tried, quite opportunistically, to stress the unity and harmony of the nation in line with consensus-obsessed *Pancasila* state ideology, promoted and often misused by the New Order.

The 'radicals': demanded 'revolutionary change, now'. They consisted of mostly loosely-organised groups whose dynamics mostly came from student leaders (Mas'oed 2008: 18). The 'moderates' wanted political reform without unnecessarily and completely destroying the whole system, which secured them much broader support from the diverse groups in the opposition, especially from the leaders of the biggest Muslim as well as nationalist organisations.

Given these facts, it comes as no surprise that during the critical 18 months between May 1998 and October 1999 the most natural outcome was a co-operational platform formed by the pro-status-quo soft-liners and moderate reformers, which allowed the production of a crisis-ridden compromise. In other words, to maintain a power share, to avoid violence and not to spark further conflict, the soft-liners opted for adaptation, which became a key word.

Thus, not being able to crack down on the radical opposition as well as to reduce the looming threat of renewed disorder, Habibie's government was convinced that it had '*little choice but to adopt electoral provisions that inevitably undermine Golkar's own prospects in the coming elections*" (Crouch 2008: 8). Paradoxically, the former authoritarian regime's proponents did their utmost to introduce electoral democracy into Indonesia**.** Nevertheless, it was both a necessity to avoid violence as well as a product of the calculation to make the best out of a bad situation.

In other words, Golkar representatives in the government knew they would lose their dominant position on the political scene in the first elections, but they could save at least a proportion of their power and influence (Crounch 2008: 8).

Another typical feature of the dismantling of the highly centralised New Order regime and the crisis-ridden transition was the implementation of the drastic decentralisation program. The nation was teetering on the verge of disintegration following the first few years after Soeharto's demise and this was the Habibie's government's response to the menace.

The threat of disintegration, stemming from a wave of communal, ethno-religious and separatist violence (Maluku, Central Sulawesi, Central Kalimantan, Aceh and Papua) was a heavy toll the nation had to pay in the first phase of the democratisation process. Some of the conflicts – especially the one in Maluku (the Moluccas) – were deliberately incited or enhanced by provocateurs, sent and paid by former Soeharto allies. There were two reasons for that – both connected to the dictator himself. While the first one was to make the Indonesian public call for the iron rule of Soeharto back, during which all such conflicts would be swiftly suppressed, the second one was to divert attention from the possible prosecution of the corrupt autocrat (Petrů 2008). The conservative generals also provided weapons and support to pro-Indonesian militias in East Timor in their campaign against the majority will of East Timorese who had just voted for independence (Petrů 2008). Such was the hardliners' response to a development they did not welcome, but in the case of East Timor there was already no going back – and one might say it was an act of sheer revenge.

Decentralisation as it was approved by the Golkar-dominated parliament represented a departure from the highly centralised system toward the adoption of one of the developing world's decentralised systems (Crouch 2008: 9). This solution enabled localising reformation after Soeharto's demise and, also the distribution of resources and power on lower levels, thus providing a new regional framework for the oversized archipelago. Stronger local governments helped to deepen democracy, practicing the virtues of 'small government', close-up accountability, and checking the centre (Raillon 2009: 2). In other words, this very reform probably saved Indonesia from falling apart and allowed the introduction of democratic methods and principles on the provincial and regional levels.

The downside of decentralisation or *pemekaran* (the blossoming of the new provinces) was, however, more corruption, nepotism and bureaucracy on the regional level as, for one thing, the new regional heads did not know and could not master any other style of governance than that of Soeharto who had ruled the country for 32 years (Steenbrink 2008). They sometimes assumed the self-styled image of a semi-feudal regent (*bupati*) – a sort of benevolent patron, who, in accordance with

the traditional patronage system, were obliged to provide positions for their clients. Unsurprisingly, the consequence of this was more nepotism as new bureaucratic positions for family and friends had to be formed and with more bureaucrats, logically, there was more bribery. This direct form of corruption was not uprooted with the change of regime – this task proved impossible as corruption was not generally perceived as something bad. The extra *uang rokok* (cigarette money) the officials asked elegantly for was far from anything wrong; it just smoothed out the required administrative procedure. Such an attitude also went hand in hand with the age-old, semi-feudal principle known as *asal bapak senang* (as long as the boss is happy), reflected in the stereotypical Indonesians' approach to their elders and superiors, which has persisted into the post-Soeharto era, hindering deeper democratic changes in the society to this day.

While Soeharto's former allies introduced the best functioning electoral mechanisms in Southeast Asia and decentralised the country's administration, they were not capable of reforming the army and the judiciary substantially. The trouble with the army was that president Habibie was perceived as an enemy by the generals, so he exerted little personal influence on the armed forces and had to agree they would manage the reform on their own. As they were aware that Soeharto-style suppression would cause more upheaval, the pro-reform generals started a cautious reform to reduce the army's political role (Crouch 2008: 23), upon which the doctrine of *dwifungsi* (the army's dual function) was gradually abolished (formally in 2004), although this process was not very smooth as the army mainstream thought otherwise. Nevertheless, as part of the reform process, the police was separated from the military, which further reduced the military's direct involvement in governmental matters.

Previously, under the dual function concept, the military usurped a strong role in civilian, especially socio-political affairs. This concept was conceived to give the government justification for the placement of officers in the civilian bureaucracy at all government levels and in regional and national legislatures.[4]

However, with the crisis being over, there was less pressure to implement further reforms, so the changes ended half-way with only a partial reform of the military. The army has been officially depoliticised, top army officers are not allowed to run for political positions and active (professional) soldiers are deprived of suffrage. Nonetheless, the army does retain strong political and economic influence. The current president Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono himself is a former Soeharto regime general.

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[4]   See http://globaledge.msu.edu/countries/indonesia/government/, viewed November 4, 2010.

The fourth major institution – the judiciary – is the least reformed pillar of the state in Indonesia. Despite protests against the failure of the courts to deliver just sentences in some particular cases, especially proponents of the New Order, the Indonesian public did not press for drastic reform of the courts. That may be considered quite strange for the courts were perceived as incredibly corrupt, but unlike the legislature and the army there was little awareness that similar reforms should be implemented. While a few judges identified themselves as the pro-reform movement, the 'court mafia' continued to work as usual (Crouch 2008: 10). The other factor of such little change in the judiciary was the politicking in the parliament. As the political situation began to consolidate in the early 2000s, the parliamentary parties, themselves involved in 'money politics' and vulnerable to corruption allegations, were not keen at all to pass staunch anti-corruption bills. When all of this is combined, there is no wonder the unreformed court showed little willingness to bring Soeharto and many of his allies to justice. The case of suing Soeharto, however, was more complex itself, as many influential people called for the dropping of the charges against him on health grounds.

While the governments of B. J. Habibie and the first democratically elected president Abdurrahman Wahid were characterised by crises-ridden conditions, the second half of Megawati's rule was heading towards a more consolidated period. Typically, for under *politics-as-usual* the situation was not pressing, reforms tackled under her government did not comprise any radical changes, which was stressed by her leaning towards anti-reform conservative generals.

However, analysts usually regard as the end of Indonesia's transitional period the presidential election in 2004, which marks the rise of Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, often dubbed as SBY. The presidential ballot poses a landmark as it was the first direct election of a head of state in Indonesian history. Under the old system where a party-based parliament chose the president his chances would have been limited, as his electoral vehicle, the newly created Democrat Party, was rather weak, winning only 7.5 %. In the in the new system, however, as a popular politician, he overwhelmingly defeated the incumbent president, Megawati. Nevertheless, the party division of the parliament would still pose a major obstacle for him in the role as president. He solved this quite smartly – by choosing Jusuf Kalla as his running mate for vice president, he secured the support of the strongest party, Golkar.

This politician is a man of gentle manners and has the reputation of an intellectual, sometimes dubbed as the 'thinking general', perhaps to emphasise him being different from those notorious generals-butchers like Prabowo and Wiranto. He quickly stabilised the political scene by his moderate ways, wisdom and charisma and started implementing cautious economic reforms. He and his vice president Jusuf Kalla also managed to reconcile the army and Aceh secessionists in the

aftermath of the tsunami. After the chaotic rules of Abdurrahman Wahid and Megawati Soekarnoputri, Indonesia finally had a capable leader who united the country rather than divided. Under his leadership, in 2006 Indonesia also embarked on the war on terror in which it became a major ally of the United States.

SBY also started an anticorruption campaign based on laws which had already been passed but little exploited, and unlike Megawati, who had delayed investigations into the cases of senior officials, under his administration quite a few big shots were sentenced to severe terms in prison. Critics would argue, however, that most of them were only 'second-level' elite, and justice never really reached the top floors. SBY himself also lowered the sentences of several of the convicted, including the father-in-law of his son (Crouch 2010: 38). To be objective, while corruption and nepotism still pose a major problem in Indonesia, and, particularly on the regional level, thanks to the Susilo cabinet campaign and other factors, there have also been great improvements. That's to say, in 2001, Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index place Indonesia among the three most corrupt countries in the world, while in 2009 the index "*ranked Indonesia 111th out of 180 surveyed states, making it one of the fastest and most consistent climbers up the list*" (Aspinall – Mietzner 2008: 9).

The political stability of the first years of Yudhoyono's administration, supported by economic reforms, enabled economic growth and started a trend towards prosperity. Now that Indonesia, despite the recent global economic downturn, boasts a 6 % growth in its GDP for several years in a row, optimists even speak of Indonesia, a former economic pariah, as a future economic powerhouse of Southeast Asia. However, with one quarter of the population living around or even below the poverty line, no one would probably argue that the journey is going to be long.

Hillary Clinton, the US Secretary of State, proclaimed upon her arrival in Jakarta two years ago: "If you want to know if Islam, democracy, modernity and women's rights can coexist, go to Indonesia".[5] Yes, Mrs. Clinton was right – but only to some extent. Lasting widespread poverty and social discrimination often generate the politicisation of religion, which may bring about undemocratic effects, especially towards women and non-Muslim minorities.

The discriminatory policies have appeared on the provincial level, especially in the form of *sharia*-inspired local bylaws (*perda* or *peraturan daerah*), which are in force in several regional administrations, or even on the national level, such as the controversial anti-pornographic bill. They aim not only at pornography, but also against nudity even in art and traditional dances. On the national level, the

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[5]   See http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2009/05/04/indonesia-a-democracy-model.html, viewed November 4, 2010.

government's ban on Ahmadiyah, a religious sect, which was banned for proselytising – most likely to cater to radical Muslims, generally caused a backlash from human rights activists and recieved generally negative media coverage from abroad, but also a degree of legitimacy for the violent attacks on its members.

However, this attempt at creating an Islamic state did not receive voters' approval in the April 2009 general election. Major Islamic parties then dropped from 38 to 26 percent, losing some 12 percent of the votes (Raillon 2009: 5). On the other hand, while the role of Islamic parties is diminishing, the influence of Islamic militants and violent-prone vigilantes is not. These well-organised groups loudly call for the banning of troublesome sects and cleansing neighborhoods from 'places of vice' such as bars and night clubs and often take justice into their hands. If poverty is not massively reduced, more and more frustrated jobless men will multiply the lines of such Islamic radicals (see Kristiansen 2003). The main worry does not stem from the activities of these men, however aggressive they may be, but from the tolerance (and silent support) of the police who are not willing to act against them as they do not to be seen as un-Islamic, and lately from the statements of the new chief of the police who even proposed to integrate such vigilante groups into a wider platform for national security.[6]

To make things more complicated, some of the incumbent cabinet ministers even enjoy warm relations with the leaders of the Islamic Defenders' Front, as the most notorious group is called. Worse still, despite the general reduction of the army from direct political representation, some former generals use these aggressive vigilantes as power tools to pursue their particular political aims.[7]

Human rights activists, religious minorities and liberal Muslims naturally see this as a downright threat to national unity, which is based on plurality and tolerance, not on conservative Islamic moral principles, as the Islamic radicals claim. This is even sadder as Indonesia used to be a stronghold of religious tolerance and plurality.

This worrying situation, in which many groups, and it is not only explicitly Muslim groups, boldly break the law by engaging in such violent behavior with impunity, is a result of crisis of lawlessness that is plaguing Indonesia today. Needless to say, such state of lawlessness is severely hindering further democratic development in Indonesia, in which neither the police nor the courts work properly.

As for the political party scene, political analysts have been also intensely discussing a phenomenon called the 'Philippinisation' of the Indonesian party politics. Although the precise interpretation of this term has at times been the subject of

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6   See http://www.tempointeraktif.com/hg/hukum/2010/10/07/brk,20101007-283067,id.html, viewed November 4, 2010.
7   See http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/pdfid/4b6fe2010.pdf, viewed November 4, 2010.

a heated academic debate, most would agree it implies the rise of presidential or presidentialised parties (*Partai Demokrat* in the case of Indonesia); the dominance and even 'normality' of 'money politics', including the dependence of many M.P.s on the 'system'; increasing intra-party authoritarianism; cartelisation of political parties; and the rise of new local elites (see Ufen 2008; Mietzner 2009; Crouch 2010). Although it is beyond the scope of this short paper to give this topic the space it deserves, it is evident that that all these features, and especially money politics, pose a great obstacle on Indonesia's future democratic journey.

To conclude, Indonesian democracy has been evolving for more than 10 years of continual development, including the alteration of parties in power. Thus, in one sense, it is already a consolidated democracy. However, the political elite seems to overemphasise the electoral procedures – Mas'oed speaks of 'electoral fallacy' – There is a "*danger of placing too much weight on free and fair elections while undervaluing other aspects of democracy*" (Mas'oed 2008). This argument can be supported by the way the incumbent government ignores the importance of the rule of law as well as the protection of human rights and civic liberties, which poses even a graver problem. Also, Indonesia has a 40-plus-million army of the unemployed, underemployed and underpaid, who tend to become easy prey to proponents of Islamic radicalism, conservatism and other dangerous -*isms*. On the other hand, the economic figures are promising, the worst of third world poverty is gradually being eradicated and the middle class is a growing which might also provide a certain guarantee of the country's further democratic development.

All in all, despite all the flaws, some being quite serious, Indonesia boasts arguably the most thriving democracy in Southeast Asia. There is freedom of speech, press and public assembly, and a free pluralistic political competition. If one realises that the long-time ruthless authoritarian regime was brought down only 11 years ago and around the year 2000 the country was on the verge of breaking apart, then one must applaud Indonesians for such positive progress and conclude that the latest political development under president SBY has been quite an achievement. At the same time, the odds of Indonesia being a pluralistic and religiously tolerant place are low, money politics still plagues the party scene as well as the parliament and corruption generally remains rampant.

To create a healthy, transparent society in every country is an extremely difficult task, let alone in a country which had long been plagued by an authoritarian or even repressive dictatorial regime. They say recovery from any such regime to a fully democratic and open society takes at least the same time as the previous regime itself. Unsurprisingly, it might as well take a generation or two to get rid of the ghosts from the past. In this respect, the citizens of the Czech Republic share

quite a similar fate with Indonesians. There is no other way but to work hard and be patient.

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Money Can Buy Love: How Money Rolled Over Anticommunism and Support for Democracy. China's Strategy to Delegitimise Taiwan and What Was Taiwan Able to Do?

Šárka Waisová

Abstract: *The objective of the article is to analyze causes of the decline in number of Taiwan´s diplomatic allies and mainland China´s strategy to delegitimize Taiwan and think about policy recommendation for Taiwan, i.e. present something such as counter-strategy. I come to the conclusion, that it is of course bitter for Taiwan to have less diplomatic allies, but the knowledge, that most of them were weak states needed foreign "loans" for securing of their basic functions and services, should lead Taipei to conclusion, that it is not real lost. ROC should go out from the premise that the world has changed. This has had many negative impacts on Taiwan´s international position, but Taipei can also profit from that change. The most important seems to me the rise in a number of international and regional organizations and bodies based on non-state membership principle, the rise of global civil society and its influence and the rising importance of values and norms in international system*

Keywords: *Taiwan, Mainland China, Taiwan as member of IGOs, China´s strategy to delegitimize Taiwan*

Careful observers can see that the global number of states recognising Taiwan as an independent state is declining – from 68 states in 1971 to 23 currently. The decline in the number of Taiwan's diplomatic allies is especially strong in last two decades. At the beginning of 1990 there were strong allies such as South Korea and Singapore (in 1992) and South Africa (in 1998), who left Taiwan. Later, after the Asian financial crisis which started China's economic boom and *ipso facto* its demand for energy and raw materials and thus foreign expansion,[1] there were many other weaker states, mainly from Africa, which ceased to recognise the Republic of China (Taiwan) (ROC). Today, just four African countries still recognise Taiwan (Burkina Faso, Sao Tome and Principe, Swaziland and Gambia), the other (excepting the Holy See) are small states from East Asia, the Pacific and Latin America.[2]

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[1]   PRC is since 1993 net crude oil importer.
[2]   For the list of Taiwan diplomatic allies see: Ministry of Foreign Affaires ROC, Diplomatic Allies (http://www.mofa.gov.tw/webapp/ct.asp?xItem=32618&CtNode=1865&mp=6, November 5, 2010).

Do we have some explanations for such an evolution? There exist, of course, some quite easy answers which include mainland China's anti-coexistence policy combined with its economic and political rise. But such an answer does not adequately demonstrate if it is a natural evolution of international politics or if some other cause is behind what is happening

The objective of this chapter is to analyse the causes of the decline in the number of Taiwan's diplomatic allies and mainland China's strategy to delegitimise Taiwan and to consider policy recommendations for Taiwan, i.e. to present something such as a counter-strategy. I will firstly analyse, why concrete diplomatic allies ceased to recognise Taiwan in order to show if the People's Republic of China's (PRC) has a defined strategy concerning Taiwan. Later I will discuss where Taiwan succeeded and on the basis of this I will formulate some policy recommendations for the ROC.

Before starting the analysis, it is necessary to say that this chapter is rather a form of policy analysis or a policy paper than an academic, deeply scientific or theoretical text.

Before analysing the causes of the decline, I must first introduce who were and are Taiwan's diplomatic allies. They can be divided into three groups:

1. The first group (states such as Australia, Canada, the Netherlands, Spain and the US) recognised the ROC as an independent state so long as it was present in the United Nations (UN). On October 25, 1971, the UN General Assembly passed United Nations Resolution 2758 (XXVI) which stated that the People's Republic of China is the only legitimate government of China. The resolution replaced the ROC with the PRC as a permanent member of the Security Council in the United Nations and all other UN organs. This was one of the results of decolonisation and of a growing number of Third World independent states in UN General Assembly oriented towards the Eastern Bloc. But following this resolution a number of Western states also started to stop recognising the ROC – for example Australia, New Zealand and the Netherlands ceased to recognise the ROC in 1972, Spain in 1973, and Ireland and the United States in 1979.

2. The second group of the Taiwan's allies was loyal to the ROC throughout the Cold War (their motives were often rooted in shared anticommunism), but the end of the bipolar conflict and the economical and political rise of mainland China changed the situation and many of these states cut their diplomatic relations with the ROC. This group consisted of economically strong states, such as South Africa, as well as smaller nations such as Costa Rica or Malawi.

3. Third group of Taiwan's allies were small, poor and underdeveloped states, which recognised Taiwan in 1990s but after a few years or so cut diplomatic relations with the island and closed diplomatic relations with mainland China.

Within this group there are also states which several times closed and later cut diplomatic relations with Taiwan or mainland China respectively.

To say something about the existence of mainland China's strategy to delegitimise Taiwan and about the character of this strategy, it is necessary to analyse the relations between each of Taiwan's former diplomatic allies and the PRC. I will analyse those states cutting diplomatic ties with the ROC after 1990.

South Africa was a longstanding ally of Taiwan and one of its strongest and most important partners. Diplomatic ties between South Africa and Taiwan were terminated in January 1998. Taiwan has cut off diplomatic ties with South Africa and suspended government-to-government aid projects and closed the embassy after Pretoria recognised Beijing as the sole legitimate government of China. The reason seems to be Pretoria's interest in Chinese investments and the handover of Hong Kong to China. South Africa has had considerable economic links with Hong Kong and not having diplomatic ties with Beijing would probably have meant the loss of ties with the territory.[3] In 2004 the total volume of two-way investment between China and South Africa was well above $ 500 million. South African conglomerates such as the Anglo-American, SAB-Miller, Khumba Resources and Naspers have a substantial presence in China. Chinese investors, on the other hand, have by no means been lagging far behind. TV sets and other home appliances manufactured with Chinese investments and technology have already secured a niche in the South African market. Preparations are under way for Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations between China and the South African Customs Union (SACU).[4]

Guinea Bissau gave diplomatic recognition to the ROC in 1990, but cut its diplomatic relations with Taiwan in 1998. Since that time it has regularly received agriculture loans from the PRC and Beijing forgave Guinea Bissau part of its debt[5]. Over the longer term, China may gain access to important oil reserves, if Guinea-Bissau's hopes for major discoveries pan out. In order to prevent a return of Taiwan to Guinea Bissau, and to preserve its hard-won victory there, China has launched a major aid effort in the country. At the same time, it is emphasising that its "sincere and friendly help" will be a long term commitment. China also announced it was going to fund the construction of a massive dam and rehabilitate the main highways. Beijing also has provided funds for direct budget assistance including

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[3]   BBC News 1997/12/30: *Taiwan loses a major ally* (http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/world/analysis/43290.stm); BBC News 1998/01/01: *South Africa and Taiwan sever relations* (http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/43856.stm, November 5, 2010).
[4]   The Chinese Economy and China-South Africa Cooperation. Presentation by Ambassador Liu Guijin at the Asia and Middle East Business Seminar, 2005/02/16. Embassy of the PRC in the Republic of South Africa: http://www.chinese-embassy.org.za/eng/zngx/t183555.htm. (November 5, 2010).
[5]   Reuters 2007/01/09: *China denies checkbook diplomacy in Africa* (http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/01/09/AR2007010900381.html, November 5, 2010).

a $4 million donation to assist the government in paying delayed salaries to its civil servants. China has also assisted Guinea Bissau with some of its diplomatic representation expenses in Beijing by providing its diplomatic mission with vehicles and office equipment. Large numbers of public servants and some military officers are expected to head to the PRC for training, and the numbers of Chinese assistance personnel in Guinea Bissau are expected to increase, particularly in the areas of agriculture, health and fisheries. In 2006, Guinea Bissau become the first country to sign a deep water fisheries agreement with China, opening the door for large numbers of Chinese fishing vessels to operate in its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) (Horta undated).

The Central African Republic (CAR) changed its relation to the PRC and the ROC for several times. The CAR had diplomatic ties with the ROC during 1962–1964, 1968–1981 and 1991–1998. The country cut its diplomatic relations with Taiwan in 1998 and since that time it regularly has received agricultural loans from the PRC. Beijing also has forgiven the CAR some of its debt.[6] Another reason for the severing of ties seems to have been Taiwan's decision to decline a request to provide money to pay the salaries of government officials (BBC News January 29, 1998) and China's offer to help realise many bilateral agricultural and housing projects.[7]

Macedonia recognised Taiwan in 1999, but cut diplomatic relations with Taiwan after a few months, after Beijing veto in the UN Security Council extension of UNPREDEP's mandate[8].[9] UNPREDEP was established in March 1995 to replace UNPROFOR in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The mandate of UNPREDEP remained essentially the same: to monitor and report any developments in the border areas which could undermine confidence and stability in Macedonia and threaten its territory. Because of the influx of thousands of refugees from Kosovo, UNPREDEP was absolutely essential for the maintenance of security and stability of Macedonia's border. Many argued that there could be a spill-over of the tensions from Kosovo across the border. The functions of the force came to an end on February 28, 1999, when the Security Council, on February 25, 1999, did not renew the mandate of UNPREDEP due to the veto of China, a permanent Member

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6   Reuters 2007/01/09: *China denies checkbook diplomacy in Africa* (http://www.washingtonpost. com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/01/09/AR2007010900381.html, November 5, 2010).

7   Ministry of foreign affairs of the PRC, bilateral relations with Central Africa: http://www.mfa. gov.cn/eng/wjb/zzjg/fzs/gjlb/2944/ (November 5, 2010).

8   Established on March, 31 1995 to replace UNPROFOR in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The mandate of UNPREDEP remained essentially the same: to monitor and report any developments in the border areas which could undermine confidence and stability in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and threaten its territory.

9   BBC News 1998/01/29: *Central African Republic switches diplomatic recognition from Taiwan* (http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/51678.stm, November 5, 2010).

of the Council.[10] For Macedonia, to cut diplomatic relations with the ROC, meant the chance to extend the mandate of UNPREDEP and to get other missions from the UNSC if need be.

Liberia recognised Taiwan during 1989–1993 and 1997–2003. Mainland China and Liberia re-entered diplomatic relations in 2003 and the first technical agreement between the two countries was signed in 2004. Liberia's Foreign Minister described in September 2010 China-Liberia relations as cordial and excellent and said, that "China continues to provide short and long term training programs for Liberians from all spheres of Liberian society; this is greatly helping to transform our country." Since Liberia re-established diplomatic ties with China, about 2000 Liberians have benefited from the short and long term programs. Eighty-eight Liberians have enrolled at various universities in China. The program was attended also by members of the diplomatic Corps.[11]

Senegal recognised Taiwan in 1996, but in 2005 re-established diplomatic relations with the PRC signing an agreement that reportedly included an initial $ 600 million in financial assistance (Halper 2010: 100 and[12]). Senegal's President Abdoulaye Wade sent a letter telling the Taiwanese government that his nation had resumed ties with the PRC. Taiwan is claims Wade said in the letter: "Our nation has no friends and only interests" and is accusing the West African nation of succumbing to pressure and cash enticements from Bejing (Rickards 2005).

Grenada established diplomatic relations with the ROC in 1989, but during 2005 Grenada also re-established diplomatic ties with the PRC. After Taiwan had offered Grenada $40 million to rebuild its cricket ground, Grenada made the decision by hoping to get reconstruction aid from Beijing to repair damage caused by Hurricane Ivan.

Dominica also cut ties with the ROC in 2004, claiming that its policy had been based on mistaken historical assumptions. Dominica declared that it recognises the government of the People's Republic of China as the sole legal government representing the whole of China and that Taiwan is an inseparable part of China's territory. The PRC later announced that it would give aid to Dominica worth more than $100 million over five years.[13] The Prime Minister further announced that

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10   More see UN, UNPREDEP: http://www.un.org/Depts/DPKO/Missions/unpred_p.htm (January 14, 2011).

11   Heritage, 2010 Rated Fruitful Year in China-Liberia Relations, September 29, 2010: http://www. heritageliberia.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1213%3A2010-rated-fruitful-year-in-china-liberia-relations&catid=1%3Apeople-a-places&Itemid=44. (November 5, 2010).

12   BBC News 2005/10/26: *Senegal picks China over Taiwan* (http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/4377818.stm, November 5, 2010).

13   BBC News, Timeline: Dominica: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/country_profiles/1166512. stm; BBC News Tuesday, 30 March, 2004: Taiwan's 'Caribbean headache' (http://news.bbc. co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/3583733.stm, November 5, 2010).

Dominica is expected to receive grant funds in the order of $122 million by virtue of this agreement over a six year period. He reported that Dominica has already received $4 million.[14]

Costa Rica left Taiwan after more than 60 years of being the ROC's diplomatic ally in 2007 (Economist 2009: 52–54). Costarican president Arias said the switch was based on China's economic might and it has been an act of elemental realism.[15]

Malawi announced in 2008 it had cut diplomatic relations with Taipei, when Beijing offered $ 6 billion in aid (Halper 2010: 100). Diplomatic relations between Taiwan and Malawi were terminated after 42 years. To quote Foreign Minister Joyce Banda, "Malawi has decided to switch from Taiwan to mainland China after careful consideration on the benefits that we will be getting from mainland China".[16] The People's Republic of China is constructing three multi-million-dollar structures that would completely change the face of Malawi's capital. Through its Export-Import Bank, it has also pledged to provide a loan of $65 million to Malawi towards the construction of a modern, 40,000-seat national stadium in the capital. An additional loan of $ 92.3 million has been granted for the construction of a modern International Conference Centre and a five star hotel alongside it. A state-of-the-art parliament building costing $ 40 million has already been finished and is occupied by the national assembly (Mithi 2010).

Chad recognised the ROC between 1997 and 2007. A series of secret meetings with Chinese officials led to an undisclosed amount of aid going to Chad from China (Halper 2010: 100) which was in 2007 added to with deals worth $80 million which included aid,[17] and the establishment of diplomatic ties with Beijing. China and Chad have also vowed to boost military cooperation.[18]

Paraguay is still Taiwan's diplomatic ally, but its future position is in question because of growing domestic pressure to switch diplomatic recognition to the PRC. In the past Taiwan has given Paraguay various grants for the construction of public housing and for a new Congress building, but Paraguay has failed to turn this charity into a development partnership. Concurrently, China looms greater and supplies more than 20 per cent of Paraguay's imports. Many Paraguayans say that the lack of

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[14] Dominican.net March 29, 2004: Dominica Establishes Diplomatic Relations with Mainland China, Volume No. 1 Issue No. 56, http://www.thedominican.net/articles/dachina.htm (November 5, 2010).

[15] Taiwan cuts ties with Costa Rica over recognition for China. *The New York Times*, June 7, 2007: http://www.nytimes.com/2007/06/07/world/asia/07iht-costa.1.6036203.html?_r=1. (November 5, 2010).

[16] BBC NEWS 2008/01/14: *Malawi severs links with Taiwan* (http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/7186918.stm, November 5, 2010).

[17] Reuters 2007/01/09: *China denies checkbook diplomacy in Africa* (http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/01/09/AR2007010900381.htm, November 5, 2010).

[18] China, Chad vow to boost military cooperation, *People's Daily Online* September 22, 2007: http://english.people.com.cn/90001/90776/6268659.html (November 5, 2010).

diplomatic ties with the PRC has become a problem, because of China's economic boom (Economist 2006: 47).

A similar inclination – i.e. switching recognition to mainland China – seems to have also taken **Panama** and **El Salvador**, whose presidents expressed interest in establishing formal ties with the PRC (Economist 2009: 49). Panama and El Salvador also hope to have closer relations with mainland China and this was also reflected by their participation in the Shanghai World Expo in 2010. Panama and the PRC also established the Panama-China Trade Development Office. One of the reasons for Panama's possible switch seems to be that China is the second largest user of the Panama Canal.[19]

To sum up this short analysis about why some states ceased to recognise ROC, it has to be said that the main reason has been the economic opportunities growing from the economic rise the PRC and its growing demand for food and raw materials, including oil. But the former allies of Taipei have not left the ROC only because of getting access to better economic opportunities and new markets, but they also left because of millions of dollars in "aid". In other words, to get better economic opportunities including access to the market of the PRC and direct foreign investments was in the second place. The most important factor was the financial aid for support of basic state functions and services.

This is what leads me to the conclusion, that while it is of course a bitter pill for Taiwan to swallow to have less diplomatic allies, the knowledge that most of them are weak states that needed foreign "loans" for the shoring up of their basic functions and services, should lead Taipei to the conclusion that it is not a real loss. How should weak states that have internal problems be reliable and strong partners and diplomatic allies?

We can also look at Taiwan's situation from another side and analyse, where the ROC has succeeded in the last two decades and deduce from that what could be a better strategy to get international recognition.

In the last two decades Taiwan succeeded in various issue areas and was able to join international as well as regional organisations and bodies thanks to its active and clever public diplomacy and humanitarian activities, its good international name, including its reputation as a good and responsible international citizen.

To sum up areas where Taipei succeeded the following must be mentioned:

- Taiwan underwent rapid domestic democratisation including the rise of civil society and this process was internationally acknowledged and the ROC is now presented as a liberal democratic state. Taiwan is often presented as

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[19]   Peoples Daily Online 2010/04/13: Panama hopes for closer relationship with China (http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90001/90776/90883/6949543.html, November 5, 2010).

a "best-case" democratisation. Despite their economic interests, Western states especially cannot drop Taiwan because of the matter of shared norms and values.

- After leaving "dollar diplomacy" and the realisation of many humanitarian development projects (recently, for example, in Haiti), the ROC has been highly acknowledged as a good humanitarian and foreign aid donor and has developed the reputation of a responsible global citizen, similar to countries that form part of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, Development Assistance Committee (OECD DAC), or the Human Security Network.

- In 2009 Taiwan was formally invited to participate as an observer in the 62nd World Health Assembly. It was the first time Taiwan had been involved in the UN system since losing membership and being forced to withdraw from UN institutions in 1971. Taiwan communicates with the World Health Organization (WHO) under the International Health Regulation mechanism.[20]

- The ROC formally demanded accession negotiations with the General Agreement of Tariffs and Trade (GATT) as a custom territory, gaining observer status in 1992. The ROC joined the World Trade Organization (WTO) on January 1, 2002, under the name "the Separate Customs Territory of Taiwan, Penghu, Kinmen, and Matsu" or "Chinese Taipei", in fact only one year later than the PRC.

- Taipei was granted dual participation or co-membership in various regional governmental organisations such as the Asian Development Bank, the Asian Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) or the Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering. This participation was won on the basis of the non-state membership principle or co-membership rule of these organisations. Co-membership refers to Taiwan and China having membership in the same organisation, without any implication of sharing the membership. Dual participation refers to Taiwan and China's participation in the forum based on the non-state membership principle (for example GATT/WTO or APEC where signatories are "contracting parties" or "economies" and "governments", respectively).

- Thanks to WTO membership, Taipei can close free trade agreements (FTAs) and other regional economic arrangements according to WTO rules in the same way and to the same quality as other WTO members. Taiwan has already

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[20] MOFA, Foreign Policy Report, 7th Congress of the Legislative Yuan, 5th Session (March 11, 2010): http://www.mofa.gov.tw/webapp/ct.asp?xItem=45688&ctNode=1877&mp=6 (November 5, 2010).

signed three FTAs: The first with Honduras and El Salvador, the second with Nicaragua, and the third with Panama.[21]

- Taiwan is an observer at the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and participates in some OECD-sponsored forums and committees and is invited to participate in other such events.

- The ROC significantly improved its economic ties with India, including the establishment of bilateral economic and trade bodies (the Taiwan-India Co-operation Council was launched in 2006 for example; see The Economist 2006: 42–43). The connection with India has logic especially because India is an economic and political challenger of mainland China as well as because India's economic growth is very dynamic and, prognoses say, will be longer lasting than the Chinese one. The reason behind the agreement could also be the character of India's economy, which is much more similar, or to put it better, more compatible with the Taiwanese one (see The Economist 2006: 72–74; The Economist October 2, 2010: 11 and 67–69).

- Last but not least, the trade agreement signed between mainland China and Taiwan signed in June 2010 needs to be mentioned. The Economic Co-operation Framework Agreement (ECFA) removes tariffs on hundreds of products and could boost bilateral trade that already totals $110 billion a year. Almost $14 billion worth of Taiwanese goods exported to China will have their tariffs reduced or removed and Taiwanese companies will also gain access to a number of mainland service sectors, including banking and insurance. The pact will remove many of the trade disadvantages Taiwan has suffered relative to other Asian countries. This trade zone comes after direct air and sea links were established between two countries back in December 2008.[22]

Conclusions and policy recommendations

To come back to my first pre-conclusion, it need to be said that while it is of course a bitter pill to swallow for Taiwan to have less diplomatic allies, the knowledge that most of them were weak states that needed foreign "loans" for the shoring up of their basic functions and services, should lead Taipei to the conclusion, that it is not a real loss.

The ROC should work on the premise that the world has changed. This has had much negative impact on Taiwan's international position, but Taipei can also profit

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[21] See WTO: http://rtais.wto.org/UI/PublicSearchByMemberResult.aspx?enc=bUbyxPA3Wob5p G8+pdmN/yDnm/ytfObWIVp05KAo3KCJDL5isRKs4dzkF/URyYuuxAGzgyUsKFTLaposMN 0yCsgU+Q+UJH14/aM567I6He0= (November 5, 2010).

[22] BBC News: 2010/06/29: *Taiwan and China sign landmark trade agreement* (http://www.bbc. co.uk/news/10442557, February 28, 2011).

from that change. The most important seems to be the rise in the number of international and regional organisations and bodies based on the non-state membership principle, the rise of global civil society and its influence and the rising importance of values and norms in the international system. Based on that premise:

- The ROC should work on its international reputation as a responsible global citizen and a strong and stable liberal democracy. Taipei should boost its democratic and humanitarian image by public diplomacy and various other activities including the support of democratisation in other countries, because Taiwan's image of being a liberal democracy and responsible global citizen will bring it the support of the growing international civil society which is imminently effective in various international campaigns (such as the International Campaign to Ban Landmines and Jubilee 2000) and can put strong pressure on international decision-makers. Furthermore, the value and norm-based politics that can build up such an image of the ROC, means that other states presenting themselves as liberal democracies cannot drop Taiwan as a partner.

- The ROC should go further in joining various international and regional bodies. It helps to win the reputation of a responsible global and regional citizen, but also would make it possible to reach statehood inch by inch and committee by committee (not state by state). The costs of such a strategy are not much higher than the costs of checkbook diplomacy and various "aid" grants but the effectiveness seems to be higher and the credibility and reliability of such bodies is often much bigger than that of small, weak and impoverished states.

- The ROC should strengthen its economic cooperation with India and other states, but not necessarily on the bases of FTAs. Taipei should orient itself towards developed economies or on developing economies based on high tech and knowledge, not on economies producing mere raw materials. FTAs could be a good strategy but also bring risks – risks such as the noodle bowl effect[23] or collisions between FTAs within the Asia-Pacific region or FTAs with the participation of the PRC.[24]

- Last but not least, Taiwan should build and strengthen confidence and constructive relations with mainland China.

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[23]   The term "noodle bowl effect" or "spaghetti bowl effect" describes many crisscrossing FTAs. Authors argue that discriminatory trade liberalisation occurs under multiple, overlapping FTAs and that the systemic aspect is due to the same commodity being subject to different tariffs, tariff reduction trajectories, and ROOs for obtaining preferences. With a growing number of FTAs, the international trading system is likely to become chaotic.

[24]   For more examples see the Asian Development Bank, Asian FTAs and the Noodle Bowl: http://www.adbi.org/working-paper/2009/04/14/2940.asian.noodle.bowl.serious.business/asian.ftas.and.the.noodle.bowl(January 12, 2010).

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DISCUSSION

The Transformation of China After 1989

Petra Andělová

Abstract: *China has changed but is it possible to speak about transformation? Transformation is something different in quality than simple change. To undergo transformation a social contract must be changed and that did not happen in PRC. Tools of Western-style political systems have been absent in PRC ever since but new mechanism has been appearing after the Deng's reform era started. Institutionalisation and routinisation of top leaders selection process can be called the most visible change but is it sufficient to be considered as transformation?*

During the last two decades the PRC has changed more than it had in the preceding century. [1] China has changed, that is for sure. But it is not sure, if it is possible to speak about transformation as a qualitative change or if only *change* is the appropriate term for the processes the PRC has been undergoing since 1989. GNP product has been growing rapidly and the Chinese economy is the fastest growing in the world. However, certain things have remained the same or more or less the same.

What has changed and what has not in the political system of China? "China is ahead of time concerning its production and economy, but in the meantime it is lost politically" (Cheng 2008). Or more precisely said: the Chinese political system has been increasingly inadequate for dealing with the needs of the economy and society since Deng Xiaoping's economic reforms started.

The events in Tiananmen Square (TAM) in June 1989 can be seen as a proof of the above mentioned claim and the first major example of the widening rift between the needs and demands of Chinese society and its political leadership. TAM events were so important that even rigid leadership, or better said, *headship* could not ignore them, nonetheless the reaction was not the one expected. In Eastern and Central Europe such rigid political systems fell the same year but in China they did not. For a short period after TAM an even more rigid political representation came to power with Li Peng and his followers. So why did the liberalisation of the Chinese political environment not come?

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[1]   PM's speech at Beida University: http://www.number10.gov.uk/news/speeches-and-transcripts/2010/11/pms-speech-at-beida-university-china-56820 (viewed November 2, 2010).

The basis of political power – the source of legitimacy, which is sometimes neglected in modern political science debates, played a major role in the process of transformation. Summing up what is probably generally known but needs to be stressed: 1) the basis of the very existence of any government is a *social contract*, that is the *deepest* principle of its existence and therefore the root of political power; 2) the type of a social contract implicates the political system because it is the defining pillar of political power and therefore of the distribution of power also. According to Professor Nugent, from Edinburgh University, in non-democracies we can distinguish several types of social contracts (Nugent 2010). His spectacular analysis is focused on African states, but as any good theory it is applicable to all states. Western type democracy is based on the *agreement type of SC*: Citizens or the majority of them agree with the form of government that can be smoothly changed if they cease to agree. The main tools of change are elections and a system of checks and balances exists. That is not the case of the People's Republic of China.

The social contract of China is the *coercive* one, that means in cases of patronising or authoritative government the pillars of power are restrictive ones, that is the army or police, and the only reason for its survival is the fear of its citizens – the fear that if the government fell, situation would be even worse. Power is exercised by a narrow and closed or semi-closed elite, no checks and balances exist and such a government tends to be a dictatorship. Even coercive government must have some rationalisation and some reason for its existence. In the case of China and for "the ruling elite", or it may be better to say the ruling classes, it used to be the improvement of social standards of people both as a main goal and as a vindication of communist ideology. Its core has been an economical one ever since and politics has ever since been viewed as a servant or supporting superstructure of the economy.

Without a change in the nature of the social contract the political system cannot be transformed and so far has not changed more than superficially in the PRC. From this point of view the growing gaps between the rich and the poor and between urban and rural areas[2] can be more dangerous for the headship of the PRC than anything else. Such gaps are products of the economic and political changes China is undergoing. One of the most visible features of this change, which sometimes has been overestimated, is the process of the institutionalisation of the decision making process at the top levels of the leadership and routinisation of the succession process, that means not only inside the Communist Party of China (CPC), but also

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[2]   Annual income in China's cities averaged CNY 17,175 (2009) against CNY 5,153 in rural areas. That is 3.33:1 (2009) compared to 2.5:1 (1979). See Cervellera, Bernardo. *Communist Party absolves itself.* Available at: www.asianews.it (viewed November 2, 2010).

on the level of the non-party decision making body, that is the National People's Congress (NPC).

The process of institutionalisation began in the early 1980s and it is very clear why it started: the top leaders wanted to prevent any single leader from obtaining the kind of power that Mao Zedong had held. The reason why is also very simple: they did not want the nightmare of the so-called Cultural Revolution to repeat itself. The first step was to ensure the regularity of meetings both of the Party leadership and NPC (see Kubešová 1983: 51–53). More significantly there were fixed term limits written into the Constitution (1982) – concerning the NPC[3] – and comparable norms for the retirement of the top Party cadres were set – later on.[4] The routinisation of the turnover began with Jiang Zemin, but also on the precedent of Deng Xiaoping, who in successive steps retired from all government posts[5] he held between 1987 and 1990. The last and probably the most important was the chairmanship of The Central Military Commission (CMC). That is why he (and not his successors) have been held responsible for the crackdown on the democratic movement in 1989. In Jiang Zemin´s case CMC chairmanship was also the last post he held and will probably also be in the case of Hu Jintao.[6] This smooth change in China's leadership will probably start repeating after 2012, when the 18th CPC Congress will be held and the transfer of power, at least publicly, would happen in the above-mentioned sequence. This can also be seen as another proof of change (not transformation) of the PRC power system.

The doctrines of the supreme leaders can be viewed as a kind of routinisation too. In this case the process did not start with Deng but with Mao's Ideas. So first were these Ideas and later came Deng's form of *Socialism with Chinese Characteristics* which was succeeded by Jiang's *Theory of Three Represents*. Hu Jintao's *Doctrine of Peaceful Rise* will probably be next in line. It is foremost associated with foreign policy but it is applied to the domestic one as well.[7]

The submission of the CMC to the NPC was also very important (two CMCs exist – one under the NPC, and the other under the CPC with the same personal make-up) in 1982 (Constitution of PRC 1983). The recreation of the post of the chairman of state in 1982 (abolished 1975–1982) was also a step towards further

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[3]   Pars. 60 and 66 of the Constitution (1982).
[4]   Changes in China's Political Landscape: the 17th Party Congress and Beyond. The Brookings Institution and The John L. Thornton China Center Conference, Washington, April 12, 2007, www.brookings.edu (viewed October 28, 2010).
[5]   Chairmanship of the CMC was the only top position with the exeption of chairmanship of the Fifth CPPCC which is only a consultative body.
[6]   The triad of the top posts as boss of the Party, country and armed forces Hu acquired in 2002, 2003, and 2004 respectively.
[7]   In the field of foreign policy that means the peaceful rise of China and in the domestic one it means the peaceful rise of the economy, ie. it is beneficial for all.

"normalisation" and from that point of view the switch to the title of President in 1992 was even more important (John 1998). Using a standard title for the head of state can be seen as a signal that headship of the PRC would like to be viewed as "standard" political leadership of the country regardless of the key role of the CPC and personal interconnection with its top organs.

All of these superficial changes were carried out because of image and credibility. The goal is to meet the formal requirements for a modern state and appear modern and progressive. The question of which public face to put on is very important in the Chinese context. In the absence of competitive elections, the leadership succession process must have fixed rules to avoid both a destructive power struggle and the creation of an all-mighty leader. As far the new incoming leaders are concerned, the appointment of Xi Jinping to the CMC has so far been the only deviation from the above described pattern. The fact that he had not been elected to the CMC for the first time in 2009 was a big surprise, but for the second time he succeeded.[8] The pattern until this point did not change but this event may be viewed as the beginning of a more Western-standard power struggle.

Concerning the NPC, it has strong parliamentary authority on paper partly due to its huge size and the short duration of its meetings. There were some signs of the emancipation of this political body in the 1990s (Cunshan 2000: 137–161). Two events can be stressed especially: the 1992 state visit of the Japanese emperor Akihito and the NPC "revolt" concerning the compensation of Japanese War victims. A resolution was passed against the will of the CPC and the government in 1995 when the parliament refused to appoint a new vice-premier (Goldham 1997: 251–257). This short era of revolt ended when Qiao Shi retired in 1998. Under (former premier) Li Peng and his successor Wu Bangguo no revolt has been possible. But, according to many commentators, the role of the NPC ceased to be only ceremonial and has started to be more practical as a kind of litmus test of public displeasure, despite such a thing not being allowed in China.[9]

Hence, the first main changes in the PRC political system were institutionalisation and routinisation of the leadership institutionalisation is very important not only as an instrument of the standardisation of the Chinese political environment, but also as a mechanism of gaining experience for the so called leaders-in-waiting and for the continuation of policy and power holding.

Despite the continuity of power holding a very strong shift of the policy focus from an emphasis on the coastal region to a policy favoring inland regions[10] can

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8   For example The Next Emperor. *The Economist*. October 21, 2010 www.economist.com (viewed November 2, 2010).

9   Corruption is one such topic. Interviews with representatives of the "people" concerning social evils are regularly published by official Xinhua Press Agency (www.xinhua.com), even in English.

10   Open up the West Campaign started 2000.

be seen. Simultaneously the stress moved from the rich and business people to the farmers and migrant workers. Hu said that growth at the expense of public welfare is impossible.[11] In that we can also recognise a strong pattern: Deng started with the stress on the coastal region with Special Economic Zones at the beginning of the 1980s, and that emphasis was carried on by Jiang, but in his era the policy of "state-care" was introduced and became central for Hu.

Created patterns of institutionalisation are not eroding the power of the CPC. On the contrary, they can be seen as a tool for strengthening it, and so can the shift of focus in terms of policy. Both may be seen as proofs of the tremendous ability of the power holders to adjust to the subtle changes in the political environment.

The second most visible or most praised change in the PRC political system are the so called *grass-root elections*, which are the basic level elections of village self-government. Their possible influence on the political system is really very small. This experiment with free elections started during the Deng era in 1987[12] and I would interpret it as another post legalisation of the status quo. After the dissolution of peoples communes (1984) there was power vacuum on this basic level: land reform and later peoples´ communes destroyed traditional bonds and the power structures of Chinese villages and replaced them by CPC committees. Under the Deng reforms they started losing their influence and the model of traditional family fraternities reemerged. According to the statistics, 5 years of reform (1979–1984) abolished more than 40 % of village CPC committees, and ten years later only 25 % of them were still functioning (Gregušová 2001). Therefore, village elections are more of a legalisation of the status quo than a proof of the first seeds of Western-style democracy. To speak about elections in the PRC is highly problematic and using the term selection is probably much better. According to statistics there are up to 92 % of villages participating in it[13]. *Grass-root elections* on the Party level started five years ago but their effect on the democratisation of the character of the CPC and execution of power seems to be only marginal.

The third main change is concerning law. Jacques Delisle speaks about legalisation without democratisation[14] and that is very in place. In the Jiang and Hu eras law has been a powerful mechanism for the diffusion of international norms into China – it provided a framework for the market economy, it made another link that could integrate China with the outside world, and it ameliorated the worst excesses of

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[11]   http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2010npc/2010-03/05/content_9546215.htm (viewed October 25, 2010).

[12]   Xiang Jiquan. *Self-Government in Chinese Villages: An Evaluation* in http://www.oycf.org/Perspectives2/4_022900/self_government.htm (viewed November 2, 2010).

[13]   http://english.people.com.cn/90001/90776/90785/6667757.html (viewed November 1, 2010).

[14]   http://www.brookings.edu/~/media/Files/events/2007/0412china/20070412.pdf (viewed November 1, 2010).

CPC rule, but it did not provide a means to bring about a system change. Law also became a priority in the 1990s for several reasons. First, criminal law was amended and the "counter-revolutionary crime" was abolished unlike crimes against the state. This was followed by a debate concerning Property Law. A Property Law was passed in 2007, exactly three years after the new constitution, which also stressed the right to private property. Law is very important and it is studied in China, even international law. Starting in 2004 the number of law students graduating from Beijing University has been higher each year than in the previous 50 years together. There are more than 100,000 new lawyers annually.[15] Education concerning the social sciences is equally high. The educational backgrounds of PRC leaders are also changing in favour of the humanities and law.

There are some suggestions that in the new economic reality the traditional *guanxi* would be overruled and that the law functions as some kind of check on CPC power. For example, an incident concerning a household in Chongqing and its owner, who refused to move until her legal rights were fulfilled, became very famous. This event was something very new in the Chinese context.

As for the mechanism of change: China is changing step by step and very systematically. The phrase "crossing the river by groping for stones" has been widely quoted. The first step was the creation of Special Economic Zones and their special law and tax environment. Before 1990, there had been only very few of them (4) but their number has increased by hundreds in the following years. Generally speaking, central planning remained intact until 1993. The core of the reform was the improvement of incentives and the expansion of the market. The so-called incremental reform (*zengliang gaige*) was very successful. "Incremental" means rising around an intact central planning system without privatisation. Economists stress the main feature of that period is relatively low direct foreign investment (less than 5 %) and the small significance of private firms. The so called Township-Village Enterprises (TVEs), controlled by local government were predominant.[16]

The Decision on Issues Concerning the Establishment of a Socialist Market Economic Structure was adopted by the 3rd Plenum of the 16th Congress of the CPC in 1994 and it stressed the necessity of building supporting institutions and privatisation. The second phase is defined as 1) foreign exchange reform; 2) tax and

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[15] http://www.brookings.edu/~/media/Files/events/2007/0412china/20070412.pdf (viewed November 1, 2010).

[16] http://elsa.berkeley.edu/~yqian/how%20far%20across%20the%20river.pdf (viewed November 1, 2010).

fiscal reform; 3) financial reform, 4) state-owned enterprises reform, and 5) a social safety net. The last two mentioned have not been finished yet.[17]

Other stepping-stones were the accessions of Hong Kong and Macau in the following years. Those Special Administrative Regions of China can be also held as laboratories where an experiment with less limited political freedom was carried out. It was successful and was later ex post "legalised" through the above mentioned Property Law as any other successful experiment. The pattern of the change is still clearly visible: economy first, politics and law later.

The international engagement of China has also changed tremendously. China is for the first time a real, full member of international community. This fact has changed a great deal. China has started to be a very active member of all kinds of international organisations, preferably governmental ones. To name the most important: APEC, WTO, ASEAN forums, and namely the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. In addition, China is seeking leading posts in the above-mentioned organisations. So far, probably the highest post occupied in an international organisation by a Chinese national is the post of head of the WHO.[18] China has also become very actively engaged in Africa, Latin America and the Pacific. The benefits for the Chinese economy are probably the main cause of this engagement rather than ideological gains. Due to its economy China is viewed as an alternative to America or the EU in the eyes of third world states.

The importance of gaining or maintaining the face of the leadership was already mentioned and participation in IO is also strengthening China's image. It is very significant that a growing number of internationally important events are being held in the PRC: the EXPO and the Olympic Games, to name but a few.

We can also speak about the growing international self-confidence of China. Reactions of the PRC during 2001 around the Hainan incident and nuclear tests can be viewed as a proof. We can also speak about the never ending effort to be seen as a "good neighbour" – in connection with Russia or India. The Cross Straits Relationship with Taiwan could also be viewed from this perspective, namely the connection and communication between those two is a very impressive achievement.

A comparison of the changes in the PRC and Taiwan is also useful. Prior to 1989 Taiwan had a government based on a coercive social contract of only slightly different type than the PRC. However, it was changed to an agreement one. A similar transition can now be seen in the PRC. Many of the newly elected Taiwanese leaders were lawyers, and so are the expected new leaders of the PRC. Concerning internal changes in the PRC it is necessary to mention also the negative side of

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[17]   http://elsa.berkeley.edu/~yqian/how%20far%20across%20the%20river.pdf (viewed November 1, 2010).
[18]   Margareth Chen (2007).

China's change: the uncontrolled exploitation of natural resources and virtual lack of regulations or binding rules in industrial production have had very a strong, often destructive, impact on the environment (for example water and soil pollution, deforestation etc.); disregard for human rights continues (even though respect for them is formally stipulated in the new constitution); the growth of China's military strength and the sense of the "Chinese threat" persists; but those are not topics of this paper.

So what has changed in the last 21 years? The economic transition has succeeded: China as one of the two socialist states in Asia (the other being Vietnam after the Doi Moi reforms) has undergone qualitative economic change without a corresponding political change. Therefore, the "Chinese road" is very tempting especially for African and other Asian states. That process of change has not ended yet and has ever since been done step by step.

Rule of law is still limited. That area has also changed substantially but nonetheless, from the point of Western-type democracy, it has ended in a blind alley.

International engagement has also changed due to rising self-confidence, economic growth and military power. China has become a full member of the international community.

What has not changed is the position and power of the CPC and the key role of the armed forces in Chinese politics. It cannot be changed without a change in the social contract and all the above mentioned changes are not changes of the position of the CPC and its politics. Hence China has changed tremendously but there is still a long way ahead in its transformation.

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Ambivalent Approaches to Research in the Political Sciences

Adam Gwiazda

Abstract: *The most common error made almost in every research project in the field of political sciences is a highly ambivalent approach to the selection of the facts and relevant data.The other methodological issue is inability of many political scientists to discuss political ideas and problem rigorously and sensibly.On the other hand,there also are some researchers who over-emphasize the role of methodology and offer only the choice of the most sophisticated method which is not appropriate to the subject of inquiry. There is, however, not an »optimal« method which could help both the appropriate data selection and concept formation in political sciences. Each political scientist has his own »prescription« for the more or less successful methodology. Some methods used by the political scientists are more or less appropriate in dealing with a given subject of inquiry depending on the political scientist knowledge of available quantitative and qualitative methods. That knowledge is alas not very high as the majority of political scientists do not get during their advanced studies in political theory a chance to be properly trained in the research methods.*

Keywords: *research methods in political sciences, data selection, system thinking and process thinking approach*

Introduction

An increasing number of scholarly publications devoted to the methodologies in the social sciences, and in particular in the political sciences, offer a wide range of various methods and approaches being used by the political scientists (cf. Porta – Keating 2008; Kellsted – Whitter 2008; Marsh – Stoker eds. 1995; Topper 2005; Pennings – Keman – Kleinnijenhuis 2005; Walliman 2006). The question that is still open is which method and approach is the most relevant as regards both the research subject matter and the state of political sciences? And which methodological approach may be the most effective in the process of concept formation, theory creation, selecting the strategies of comparison and the forms of explanation? The main argument of this paper is that many political scientists rest upon, and alas probably perpetuate, highly dubious assumptions about the nature of the social world, the role of the scholar in political analysis, and the relationship between the scholar and the world. They also do not care much about the philosophical premises appropriate to their subject matter as well as to the choice of the appropriate methods. Contemporary political scientists have also a huge problem with selecting the

most essential and important facts, which cannot be explained only by the deluge of data, but rather by their unwillingness to pursue the rigid "road of scientific research". Moreover each political scientist and researcher in other scientific disciplines has his own "prescription" for the successful "methodology". Thus in reality many researchers use the same, traditional approaches, and are not well acquainted with the most representative ones in their field methods of scientific research.

Fact selection and the research method

The most common error made in almost every research project in the field of political science – as well as in other fields – is a highly ambivalent approach to the selection of the appropriate facts. As a famous historian once remarked: "Facts … are like fish swimming about in a vast and sometimes inaccessible ocean; and what the historian catches will depend partly on chance, but mainly on what part of the ocean he chooses to fish in and what tackle he chooses to use – these two factors determined, of course, by the kind of fish he wants to catch. By and large, the historian will get the kinds of facts he wants" (Carr 1962: 16; see also Hall – Bryant eds. 2005). Of course it is not only the historian but also the political scientist and other researchers who try to find out mostly such facts which can be used to support their theory or to falsify another theory which contradicts their other findings. This is highly subjective approach to the selection of facts. The related problems of such an approach are the problems of selection bias and confirmation bias. As some researchers point out, these problems are often serious enough with quantitative research in the social sciences. They become more so in the difficult terrain of qualitative research in the contemporary world; and even more acute when it is the past that one seeks to understand. In other words, the risk of both kinds of bias must be greater in historical research where one is forced to make decisions about which sources (which characters, which platforms) to use, which to discard, as well as which parts of the available material on these sources (which specific utterances, which paragraphs from letters or sentences from personal diaries) deserve more salience than others. That decisions about salience are often conditioned by biased cognitive processes, however unwitting, is well demonstrated in the large literature in Psychology on confirmations bias (cf. Nickerson 1998: 175–220).

To guard against this human tendency, one needs to be clear about what the methods of archival research can and cannot tell us. Certainly they can tell us much about the "physical" facts of history – what happened, when and where and how. But increasingly many researchers, even those who are not trained as historians, are using archival research to get at not so much the when and what and how, as the why. That is, we are trying to infer motives from behaviour: we are trying to get into the minds of people from the past, in the way that social science surveys

try to get into the minds of people in the present (Silverman 2006: 16–17; see also Dencin – Lincoln eds. 2009: 18; Sapsford 2006: 27–28). The unresolved questions here are how far political theories have reasons for being interested in history, and how far the discipline of politics is different as regards its methods, field of activity and interests, from history and the history of political thought. According to some political scientists and historians there are two central ways in which political theory and history intersect. The analysis of what is politically possible (which may or may not include in its scope any part of what we think normatively desirable) is developed through understanding the interaction of individual motivations, political culture, institutions, and structural preconditions, each of which is inflected by the past; and one laboratory for developing and testing such generalisations is the past. However, while a comparative political science with no sense of history is undoubtedly poorer as a result, it is not clear that it is fatally flawed (consider some of the insights of rational choice theorists in political science or economics)" (cf. Philp 2008: 130).

Both historians and political scientists use similar data in their research. However the problems of obtaining valuable data on attitudes and beliefs of people and their behaviour in the concrete situations are intensified by the enormous abundance of various information which a single researcher cannot simply grasp. Each year the quantity of information in the world is soaring. According to one estimate, "mankind created 150 exabytes (billion gigabytes) of data in 2005. In 2010, it will create 1,200 exabytes. Merely keeping up with this flood, and storing the bits that might be useful, is difficult enough. Analysing it, to spot patterns and extract useful information, is harder still. Even so, the data deluge is already starting to transform business, government, science and everyday life" (Economist 2010: 11). For the individual researcher as well as for the research institutes it is virtually impossible even to quantity the amount of information that exists in his scientific discipline or even in the very narrow field of research. And the information deluge is growing at a terrific rate of 60% yearly. According to a 2008 study by International Data Corp only 5% of the information that is created is "structured", meaning it comes in a standard format of words or numbers that can be read by computers. The rest are things like photos and phone calls which are less easily retrievable and usable. But this is changing as content on the web is increasingly "tagged" and facial-recognition and voice-recognition software can identify people and words in digital fields (Economist 2010: 5). Of course the data deluge cannot be used by the political scientist, as well as by other researchers, as a convenient excuse explaining an ambivalent approach to scientific research. In practice however, this is one of the main factors influencing the process of scientific inquiry. The other one is the ambivalent approach of many, if not the majority, of researchers to the methodology of social research which very often does not provide the appropriate "technique" or language

for discussing political ideas and problems rigorously and sensibly. There also are some researchers, who over-emphasise the role of methodology. Regardless of the subject of inquiry, they are trying to use the most sophisticated method which very often is not appropriate to the chosen subject of inquiry or a given field of political and social research. Such an approach steams, in turn, from the lack of systematic philosophical reflection on the research in the political sciences. As some authors point out just "the absence of philosophical reflection created a vacuum that has been filled by an over-emphasis on methodology" (cf. Kittel 2005: 13–14; see also Gadamer 2002: 41). There is not an "optimal" method which could help both in the appropriate selection of data and in concept formation in political science. The same holds true to the only one paradigm for the political sciences or for science in general. There have been various methods as well as various theories, which still are being used in the process of research in political sciences. Some of them are more and others less appropriate in dealing with a given subject of inquiry depending on the political scientist's choice which in turn is based upon his or her knowledge of available quantitative and qualitative methods. The arbitrary adoption of a given theory and method produce various research results. The question still open is whether such an ambivalent approach to research by a political scientist leads to socially useful research or merely to the production of knowledge of dubious value[9]. It seems that much depends not only on the professional and methodological background of a given political scientist but also on the "promoter" (the government, a public institution, a private company, a non-governmental organisation, etc.) of a given research project. In other words it is also important to know who decides which kind of scientific research – "policy relevant" research or basic research – is socially relevant, i.e. the most needed by society. The majority of political scientists and researchers from other disciplines conduct their research projects for the public institutions or private companies which support such research. Thus the process as well as the final results of such research can be clearly determined well in advance. The question that remains open here is who is responsible for the effects of their research, i.e. the various concepts and theories in the real world? The politicians or the owners of the private companies who support such research projects or the political scientists who conduct the research?

System thinking and process thinking

One of the serious dilemmas facing contemporary society is that we are increasing our rational knowledge rapidly, but we are not gaining the wisdom to use it to the best for all mankind. Who is responsible for that state of affairs? The scientists who produce rational knowledge or politicians, managers and other people who use it? It is hard to blame only scientists, especially the political scientists who try to

present "policy relevant" knowledge and solutions to such political problems, like corruption, lack of participation in the distribution system, and try to find out new instruments conducive to the improvement of foreign, domestic, social and other policies. The political scientist together with the experts on security affairs also produce various theories concerning the wars between countries and nationalities, terrorism, strategic wars for resources, the prerequisites of the global political order or the reasons of political disorder in some states and regions of the world, etc. The research procedure for the inquiry into those and other problems is, in the political sciences, more or less similar to other scientific disciplines (cf. Gwiazda 1983: 233–244). What is needed, however, is the recognition that "the problems we have today cannot be solved by thinking the way we thought when we created them" (Oren 2006; Shapiro – Rogers – Masond eds. 2004: 11–12). This famous statement by Albert Einstein is being used by some authors in order to argue for the systems thinking approach to research in political and other sciences (Capra 1996: 91). The main characteristics of systems thinking according to Fritjof Capra are:

1. The focus is shifted from the parts to the whole. The main reason is that systemic properties are destroyed when a system is dissected into isolated elements; and

2. Systems are nested within other systems. This is important to realise because some properties of a system are only visible, or detectable, on certain system levels (Emblemsvag – Bras 2000: 635–636).

System thinking is particularly important in dealing with political and social problems. It is however not a sufficient approach to the detailed investigation of those problems. Therefore some authors believe that "process thinking" is a better paradigm due to the profound importance of change. They argue that the general requirements for implementing change from a philosophical point of view can therefore be as follows:

1. Science and politics must be process-oriented;

2. Science and politics be cross-functional and multi-objective in nature, and applied by multi-disciplinary teams;

3. The entire life-cycle and value chain must also be considered to avoid sub-optimisation;

4. Science and politics must apply results with wisdom and decisions must be made accordingly (Capra 1996: 63).

It should be noted that there are rather small differences between the systems thinking and process thinking approaches to the inquiry of socio-political problems. However system thinking focuses on systems, where a system is defined by relationships between objects and/or structures comprised of objects. On the other

hand processes are thought of something that the system contains and are liked to each other by relationships. That means that system thinking focuses primarily on the result of the processes. And "process thinking forces one to follow the course of the process – the relationships, which means that categories have no meaning in process thinking unless they represent a boundary for the process. Similarly, systems thinking forces one to investigate all the relationships within the system, and categories only have meaning if they represent the actual system boundary of the relationships" (Emblemsvag – Bras 2000: 649). However both the above briefly described approaches are not the same, although they are very similar in many respects. The best methodological proposal should be to combine those both approaches in order to be able to conduct "cross-functional and multi-objective" research by "multi-disciplinary teams" of political scientists and scholars from other sciences.

Concluding remarks

The basic aim of every political scientist is to create a theory which is better than other theories at explaining phenomena taking place in the real world. Usually theories, not only in the political sciences, offer casual explanations (Emblemsvag – Bras 2000: 651; see also Schutt 2006: 18–20). The function of explanation and the prestige of objectivity affect the attractiveness of theories in politics along with intellectualism, scholarship and knowledge that are commonly attributed to theorising and theorists. However in policy-relevant research, theories are used by policy makers who want to know casual mechanisms that help them devise efficient policies and, perhaps more importantly, to help assure that policy can be accepted as legitimate by the public. By offering casual mechanisms credited with objectivity rather than tainted by partisanship and ideology, theories are a perfect apparatus to fulfill both of these needs (McIntyre 1969: 14). The "creation" of theories or theorising is carried out in the public sphere and as theories are circulated freely, they become highly accessible to the public. This accessibility enables the theories migration to the public sphere and is a major source of rhetorical capital (Shenhav 2005: 75–99). As theories migrate from the academic institutions and journals to the public sphere, they often lose their conditional character and their probabilistic nature. They simply become "law-like statements" (Ish-Shalom 2008: 261–262). Therefore each political theorist as well as other scientist who produces such a "rhetorical capital" should be aware of the fact that his or her theory contains "normative" contents and sometimes can be abused by decision-makers. This aspect of the social responsibility of political science theorists' should be bore in mind not only in policy-relevant research. The fact is that many original theorists who created well-known theories are long past dead and for obvious reasons they

bear no responsibility for the uses or abuses of their theories. However many theories are the collection of joint products and are improved during long periods of time. Sometimes they are refuted or brushed-up. Some theories may be unconvincing by the arguments they presents at their "initial stage" and in the case of politics they are improved or falsified by new generations of political theorists. Both the "improvers" of old theories and the "creators" of the new ones should be aware of the fact that an ambivalent approach to the research in the political sciences brings about poor results which cannot be used as the "law-like-statements" by decision makers and the public, not to mention the fact that such results do not contribute to the increase of the "rhetorical capital" and the prestige of objectivity. Therefore political theorists should not be silent on questions of method and approach. They should devote more time and energy addressing the questions of "how" and "why" to investigate the political problems of real world. In reality, however, political theorists often disagree not so much about what should be done, but about "why" and "how". They prefer to drive straight into the analysis of existing political systems or the meaning and value of particular key concepts such as liberty, justice, human rights, the various types of democracy, etc. Very rarely do political theorists include in their books and articles much explicit reflections on method, even though such reflection is a standard expectation in other scientific disciplines. There is no place to discuss the reasons for such reluctance from political theorists, who do not want to debate about methodology. It is odd, however, that at the same time many of them are convinced of their "high" analytical rigour and their ability to challenge widely held assumptions. This stems from the fact that the majority of political scientists in many countries of the world including the United States, Great Britain and Poland do not get, during their advanced studies and research in political theory, a chance to be properly trained in research methods. No wonder then that the majority of political theorists do not pay much attention to properly adopted research methods in their own research work and very often carry on their research in the political sciences unreflectively.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Ľubomír Lupták[1]

Grenzgebiet als Forschungsfeld. Aspekte der ethnografischen un kulturhistorischen Forschung des Grenzlandes

Research of frontier areas, spaces defined by their immediate proximity to the various borders and boundaries structuring social, political or economic life has a longstanding tradition within the social sciences. From a common-sense view, these spaces on the margin of whatever wholes we may deem significant often seem to be the places where the most important distinctions, based upon immutable givens, are drawn. These distinctions serve to confine the wholes created by these givens within a set of boundaries both protecting and distinguishing them from others. In this way, liminal spaces provide an important service for the reproduction of systems and of the meaningful regulating by 'natural' order of these wholes, reducing the unbearable complexity of our life-worlds and imposing the pervading dichotomies of Inside/Outside or Us/Them that seem to '[*serve*] *as the limit of the political imagination and the source of its coherence*' (Bigo 2008: 16; cf. Walker 1993 or Neumann 1999). Boundaries that might otherwise have seemed fluid, arbitrary or historically contingent (e.g. the border between Slovakia and the Czech Republic or the ethnic boundary between Czechs and Slovaks), thus become firm and self-evident principles structuring and arbitrating our perceptions of and attitudes toward various spaces. As the most significant units involved in structuring our perception of space in the last few hundred years seem to belong to the category of the 'state', research of the areas around state borders provides valuable insights into how the current social orders are performed, reproduced, negotiated and resisted, as well as into the power/knowledge underlying these orders.

On the one hand, the people inhabiting these liminal spaces may be perceived as the guardians of the accepted givens that structure different social orders. On the other hand, they may seem to stand somewhere between two distinct planes of being, somewhere on the continuum between 'Us' and 'Them'; a kind of 'our Others', already contaminated by physical proximity to 'Them', but not quite 'Them' yet. The everyday life-worlds of the people living in such spaces may however be quite far from any of these (centre-centric) perceptions, either ignoring the all-important borders and distinctions altogether or living them quite differently. The complex relations between space and culture out of which these perceptions stem,

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both in the 'centres' as well as in liminal spaces, have been drawing the attention of several generations of anthropologists, historians, geographers, philosophers, political scientists or sociologists, providing the basis for many significant conceptual developments. The reviewed volume edited by Petr Lozoviuk may be considered a continuation of this immensely rich tradition – and it by no means falls short of any expectations that a reader accustomed to this richness might have. Stretching from sociocultural anthropology/ethnology through sociology and sociocultural history to geography/critical geopolitics, and with an underlying deep focus on the political significance of the phenomena under scrutiny, the volume presents a colourful and disciplinary as well as, of course, a national boundary-crossing mosaic of approaches to the research of past and present meanings attributed to spatial boundaries, of their creation, maintenance and transgression, as well as of their place and function in various sociocultural systems. Due perhaps to the excellent editorial work by Petr Lozoviuk, the volume as a whole is permeated by an unusual sense of coherence, accompanied by a seemingly paradoxical feeling of diversity of conceptual, methodological and subject-matter.

Because of the insurmountable boundaries of a review, I will only deal with individual texts briefly, though I will attempt to point at the ones that appear to constitute the core of the volume and produce the feeling of coherence, as well as highlight the subjects that seem to be common for most of the texts. '*Grenzgebiet als Forschungsfeld*' consists of 15 articles written by a team of German, Czech and Hungarian researchers and is divided into four main chapters providing the basic structure of the book. Most, though not all of the texts draw upon research of the German frontier, with a special focus on the areas around the Czech-German border. Nevertheless, some of the most interesting contributions to this volume deal with the discourses and practices of producing borders and negotiating boundaries in Hungary (Róbert Keményfi, József Liszka) or attempt to transcend the frame of state borders to point the reader in a different explanatory direction (Marek Jakoubek and Lenka Budilová or József Liszka). Besides the obvious importance of state borders for structuring modern perceptions of space, some of the authors deal extensively with its transformations in the last decades. After the fall of the Iron Curtain, which brought the (formal) dissolution of some of the borders of interest (especially the border between East and West Germany), produced some new (among others, the previously mentioned borders between the Czech Republic and Slovakia), and changed the ways in which state borders impact social interaction not only in the border-areas, there seems to be a decent amount of change concerning the relations of polities towards the previously paramount and jealously guarded territory (cf. Williams 2007: 39–41). Another important motive present in the volume is the political instrumentalisation of ethnic, cultural or spatial imaginaries in the struggles for control over space (Róbert Keményfi, Jenni Boie or Mateusz

J. Hartwich), in the legitimisation or delegitimisation of territorial claims. A similar logic informs other problems dealt with in the volume, namely the asymmetry in the relations between territorially proximate areas on opposite sides of a state border (Ilona Scherm), or the problems concerning the role that frontier areas are supposed to play in the order bestowed by state policy (Adrian von Arburg).

The first chapter of the volume deals with the genesis of the construction of border-areas as an object of social-scientific inquiry, beginning with an exhaustive overview (authored by the editor) of Czech and German academic ventures into frontiers. Lozoviuk's article is followed by a short outline of the place of borderland research in the discourse of German sociocultural anthropology written by Daniel Drascek and the chapter concludes with a brilliant survey of continental concepts and approaches serving to decipher the complex relational dynamics of bounded spaces, cultures and social orders (Manfred Seifert). A deeply felt connection both in style, conclusions, as well as in the non-essentialist conceptual apparatus especially (but not only) between the first and third articles produces a sense of added value in the consistence of the whole chapter, and, considering the importance of the introductory parts, for the whole book.

The second chapter focuses on the analysis of various questions connected with past practices and discourses concerning the creation and transgression, legitimisation and delegitimisation of borders. The chapter starts with a sweeping account of Hungarian interwar and post-Trianon geopolitical theories, their liaisons with the German organicist conceptions of relations between geography, culture, nation and state, and its deep embeddedness in the contemporary structures of scientific thought as well as in dominant political programmes. Róbert Keményfi's article easily reaches the heights of the seminal genealogies of geopolitical thought done by Gearóid Ó Tuathail, Klaus Doddsor and other 'critical geopoliticians' (cf. esp. Tuathail 1992, 1996, Dodds – Atkinson 2000) in both its originality and analytic depth. Róbert Keményfi's narration about the establishment of the Hungarian 'science of space' as a 'science of [Hungarian] destiny', (*Schicksalwissenschaft*, p.58) demonstrated (mainly) via the work of Gyula Prinz, represents an illuminating analysis of the process of creation of (geo)political mythology legitimised by the framework of scientific knowledge and strengthened by resentment towards a specific shape of post-war international order. The next text by József Liszka sends the reader in a wholly different direction, towards the language boundaries and their crossing within the institution of 'exchange of children' (*Kinderaustausch*). Liszka's article attempts to evaluate the different varieties of this phenomenon from the point of view of the acquisition of cultural capital in the form of second language skills and the other group's specific outlooks, attitudes and everyday practices, as well as from the point of view of the impact of this acquisition upon understanding

of the different (language) groups and/or social classes. Adrian von Arburg's article concerning the place of the Czech frontier areas in party/state policy in the tumultuous period following World War II and including the establishment of the Communist regime in 1948. Von Arburg traces the different functions for the frontier envisioned by Communist elites, willing to shape it at their will and according to a wider strategic plan. The vision of the frontier as a space where a novel form of organisation and practice may be tested to 'lead the way' towards a bright(er) future is in perfect harmony with the unique symbolic function attributed to (some) borderlines in the Communist social system, which is the subject of interest of the next article by Kateřina Lozoviuková. Adrian von Arburg's and Kateřina Lozoviuková's articles thus constitute a kind of a unity not dissimilar to the relation of the texts present in the first chapter and certainly contribute to the sense of coherence/diversity of the volume as a whole. 'Grenzüberschreitungen und Sanktion' deals with the periods in Czechoslovak history in which the unauthorised crossing of the border, viewed as a border between states as well as between ideological systems, was considered to belong to the most significant transgressions against the social order and was jealously guarded by the judicial and repressive apparatuses.

The third chapter, focusing on the everyday practices of the inhabitants of the border-areas, presents three related texts concerned with Czech-German and Czech-Austrian border-areas. Concentrating on two basic forms of asymmetry (the economic situation and mentality) in the mutual perceptions of the inhabitants of the Saxon Bärenstein and the north-western Vejprty regions in the Czech Republic, the first article of this chapter (Ilona Scherm) presents an analysis of the possible impact of these perceptions on interpersonal relations and points at possible ways of overcoming them. The following text by Jana Berthold, who is operating in the same frontier region, adopts a Weberian perspective to concentrate on the possible consequences of the non-institutionalised friendly relations between the former East-German and Czechoslovak border-areas for today's cross-border relations. Mapping the academic discourse concerning this problem as well as drawing from interviews conducted in her own research, Berthold comes to a rather complex set of conclusions concerning the key categories of cross-border interpersonal relations, the dynamics of the relations after the recent change of status of both territories, and the production of meaning and knowledge concerning these questions. Jana Nosková's article, shifting the focus south to the Czech-Austrian border, attempts to answer a similar question concerning the way in which the recent political/systemic changes have influenced those cross-border relations. Her conclusions point to the persistence of the border in everyday social worlds; even decades after the changes and despite the permeable character of the border, and with only a limited and slow advance towards its demise.

The fourth chapter concentrates on the complex questions concerning the relation of border-areas to the process of construction of ethnic identifications. The first article by Matthias J. Hartwich presents a very colourful analysis of the interconnected processes of ideological/ethnic and economic entrepreneurship in a triple-border area between Poland, Germany and the Czech Republic. In the next article, centered on the negotiation of ethnic identification on the part of the (few remaining) members of the German minority in the Czech Chomutov region, Sandra Kreisslová attempts to point out the factors influencing the dynamic of this process several generations after the forced expulsion of the Germans from Czechoslovakia. In what might be arguably considered one of the highlights of the volume, Marek Jakoubek and Lenka J. Budilová shift the readers' attention in a different direction and present an original analysis of how the newly established, though very porous borders between Slovakia and the Czech Republic do not seem to have any impact upon the lives of members of the Roma (*Romové*) minority. Studying their migration and subsequent (non)intermarriage patterns, they point at a different principle of social organization that seems to govern the worlds of their research subjects. Although the Roma are usually conceived in ethnic/national/racial terms, their social identification seems to be structured along the lines of kinship and therefore is largely untouched by political changes leading to the establishment of a new state border. The concluding two texts by Tobias Weger and Jenni Boie return to a historical perspective and concentrate on the problems of ethnic minorities and of the different roles they played in political movements or as instruments of expansionist state policy.

To summarise, the reviewed volume presents an exceptionally diverse, though very coherent ensemble of texts, some of which arguably belong to the best in Central-European social-scientific scholarly output. Ranging from sociocultural anthropology through cultural history to critical geopolitics, the volume does much more than just to assemble various perspectives on the research of border-areas. Its boundary-crossing character and the wealth of assembled material – in disciplinary and methodological terms as well as in terms of the various research problems raised and tackled by the individual authors – shows, in accordance with its venerable tradition, that border-area research still belongs to the most fruitful avenues of social-scientific inquiry.

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