Negotiating Radical Change:
Understanding and Extending the Lessons of the Polish Round Table Talks

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This volume can be found on the World Wide Web:
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Preface

It is hard to know when to begin the story of the Polish Round Table of 1989. Some would have us start as far back as 1795, when Poland was partitioned by its three more powerful neighbors, Russia, Prussia, and Austria. For the next 123 years there would be no independent Poland on the map, and the resurrection of the country in 1918 would prove to be painfully brief. Nazi Germany and the USSR conquered the country once again in 1939, and after WWII Poland joined the rest of East-Central Europe within the Soviet Bloc, nominally autonomous but undeniably subordinate to Moscow's wishes. During these many dark years, Polish national consciousness had remained strong, thanks mainly (it is said) to the unwavering leadership of the Catholic Church. The election of Karol Wojtyła in 1978 as Pope John Paul II began a process that ultimately led to the overthrow of communism in 1989, and the restoration of Polish independence.

That's one way to tell the story—a way popular among conservatives and nationalists—but there are many alternative narratives. Another tale begins in 1945, with the liberation of Poland from Nazi rule and the inauguration of a new order. The old, unjust social system, which had been characterized by an enormous gap between a narrow landowning elite and a desperately impoverished peasantry, was at last overthrown. The bold new future promised by the socialist revolution quickly turned sour, however, as the heavy-handed authoritarianism of Soviet-style communism perverted all the ambitions of the early post-war years. The death of Stalin in 1953 and the fall of his Polish minions in 1956 led to new hopes, but these too were soon dashed. By the early 1970's, repeated acts of state-sponsored violence and the deepening economic inefficiencies of the regime helped fuel the growth of both a vocal dissident community and a nascent labor movement. This united front of opposition exploded in 1980 with the birth of Solidarity, an independent trade union with as many as ten million members. Martial law was declared in 1981 in an attempt to quash this display of resistance, but Solidarity just went underground. Finally, in 1989, the regime was compelled to enter into negotiations with the opposition, and the first significant crack in the iron curtain appeared.

And there is yet a third way to tell our story. This one draws a tighter timeline, beginning sometime in the late 1960's or early 1970's. It was evident by then that the communist system could not sustain the dynamic growth of its early decades, and that the inefficiencies and absurdities of the planned economy were leaving Poland (and the

rest of the bloc) far behind the West. In the eyes of economists, both within the communist apparatus and in American universities, two fundamental problems plagued the country: 1) a growing gap between prices and the costs of production, leading to overconsumption and a disastrous balance of trade; and 2) gross inefficiencies in production that led to the waste of scarce resources. Economists and political leaders tried to address these concerns, but every attempt to close an unproductive factory was blocked by some entrenched interest group, and every effort to raise domestic prices was met with social unrest. The deadlock became obvious in 1987, when a referendum on economic reform was soundly defeated. The only option after this was to turn the enactment of needed reforms over to a government that enjoyed popular legitimacy—something the communists clearly did not have by the 1980's. This was accomplished in 1989, when the Round Table negotiations facilitated the rise of power of a new leadership rooted in the Solidarity movement. This new regime promptly enacted what came to be called the "shock therapy" package, an extraordinary leap towards liberal, free-market economics.

These three stories do not exhaust the possible narratives of Poland's modern history, nor do they encompass the many nuances that could be elaborated within each of them. Nonetheless, most Poles will find the general outlines of their favorite version of history in one of the above paragraphs. One of the most striking elements of these stories is that they all culminate with the events of 1989: the Round Table Negotiations, the partially free elections that followed, and the selection of Poland's first non-communist premier since World War II. There are many ways to evaluate 1989, but it is impossible to deny that it was one of the most important dates in modern Polish history. No matter how you map out Poland's recent past, all roads must pass through the Round Table.

By the mid-1980's, it was clear to just about everyone in Poland that the status quo could not hold. Solidarity was gone—or so it seemed—but the regime's legitimacy was gone with it. Back in 1980 and 1981 the country had been shaken to the foundations by the emergence of the largest mass movement the communist bloc had ever seen. Solidarity had many roots: in the intellectual dissent of the 1960's and 1970's, in an anti-communist labor movement that had long been boiling beneath the surface of the Polish People's Republic, and in the Catholic Church. The phenomenon we call Solidarity can't be easily defined or even described, because it encompassed all the voices of protest against the communist regime—and by 1980 those voices had risen to a cacophonous roar. That roar was silenced by a military crackdown in 1981, but force couldn't resolve the problems that had generated so much unrest in the first place. General Wojciech Jaruzelski, the leader of Poland in the 1980's and the mastermind behind the suppression of Solidarity, wanted to find a way to domesticate the popular anger against the communist order and direct it towards some sort of modest reform, while reassuring Moscow that nothing was amiss. The latter task became easier with the rise of

Mikhail Gorbachev as leader of the Soviet Union, but the former remained intractable—and by the mid-1980's Jaruzelski knew it. After the imposition of military rule, no one could believe the vapid slogans of the "workers' state," and no one would lift a finger to help build towards a better future under Jaruzelski's leadership. The economy sank into a morass of bread lines, rationing, and half-empty shops, and the population grew ever more hopeless and apathetic. "Emigration" became the slogan of the decade, either literally (as the lines grew longer outside the US embassy), or figuratively (in the form of "internal emigration," as people withdrew into their private lives and struggled to extract whatever they could from the decaying socio-economic order).

In this environment, the opposition faced almost as many hurdles as did the regime. The anger of 1980 had turned into the cynical despair of 1985. The underground leaders of Solidarity were finding it increasingly difficult to mount any sort of organized protest against anything. This was partially a product of fear, but perhaps even more important was the sense that Solidarity had enjoyed its moment of opportunity, and had failed. Lech Wałęsa, the widely-recognized leader of the opposition, retained a certain amount of respect, but this rarely translated into a willingness to demonstrate or strike against the regime. Millions would turn out for papal visits in 1983 and 1987, but the political content of these events was at best ambiguous. In any case, Wałęsa and the other leaders of the movement were not sure what they could do in the face of armed force. Although student groups and small clusters of political activists continued to play cat-and-mouse with the security police, it was clear to most observers by 1986 or 1987 that a stalemate had been reached.

Thus arose the impetus for negotiation. Early feelers from both the Jaruzelski regime and the Solidarity leadership were sent out quietly in late 1987 and early 1988, but a new sense of urgency came when wildcat strikes broke out in May 1988. These had not been planned by Wałęsa's team of advisors, who saw the strikes as random cries of frustration rather than productive demonstrations of resistance. The local organizers of the protests, in turn, looked upon the Solidarity leadership as overly cautious, and perhaps incapable of addressing the deepening crisis that Poland faced. The strikers tended to be young, and many observers noted that a new generation was emerging—one disinclined to follow blindly the heroes of 1980. Already the fissures within the opposition were becoming clear, although the substantive issues behind these splits remained obscure.

The regime suppressed the strikes of May 1988, but the episode only highlighted the fact that Poland was becoming a tinderbox. Another wave of wildcat strikes in August provided the last push, leading to a series of meetings between Lech Wałęsa and General Czesław Kiszczak, the Minister of the Interior and a close aid to Jaruzelski. These preliminary talks led in turn to the formal convening of the Round Table Negotiations in February 1989. Solidarity entered these talks with one unshakable demand: re-legalization. To their surprise, the government granted this almost

immediately, and the talks quickly took on a momentum of their own. Jaruzelski's negotiators were searching for a way to bring Solidarity into the system, in the hope that doing so would give the regime some legitimacy and bring the social and political deadlock to an end. The Solidarity team was well aware of the danger of co-optation, and tried to ensure that the talks would lead to real, substantive changes in the political order. After a ceremonial opening at which all the leading delegates sat at the eponymous round table, the talks were broken down into a series of "sub-tables" focusing on unions, the media, political institutions, youth, various sectors of the economy, and more. Meanwhile, the voices opposed to the negotiations were starting to make themselves heard. "To Talk With the Commies is Treason," proclaimed banners carried outside the building where the talks were being held. More quietly, Jaruzelski and his supporters were feeling pressure from communist party members who feared that their hold on power was about to be compromised.

Despite these voices of dissent, the Round Table Accords were signed in April 1989. Solidarity was re-legalized; partially free elections were promised for June; freedom of speech and assembly were proclaimed. The formula for the upcoming elections was complicated: two thirds of the seats in the parliament were reserved for the communists and their allies (there had always existed a handful of docile puppet parties, designed to provide a façade of pluralism), but to compensate, a newly-created upper house, the senate, was to be entirely open to a free vote. Few expected Solidarity to do well in the elections. Freshly legalized and still lacking any sort of political apparatus, the movement had to organize a nation-wide campaign almost overnight. But when the vote was taken in June, the impossible happened: Solidarity won all but one of the senate seats, and all of the parliamentary seats that had been open to contestation. Many Poles today point to the elections—not the Round Table negotiations—as the real moment when communism fell in Poland. The drama did have another act, however. The defeat of the communists was undeniable, but technically they still had enough seats to govern (thanks to the provisions of the Round Table Accords). Only after a lengthy process of soul-searching by both the Solidarity delegates and Jaruzelski's supporters did a final compromise emerge: the General became the President of Poland (a new post that had been created by the Round Table just for him), and Tadeusz Mazowiecki, a prominent Catholic intellectual, became Premier.

Told in isolation, this is a dramatic story with a happy ending. But almost immediately, world events overshadowed Poland's accomplishments. Before 1989 was out, the communists would fall (with much less ambiguity) in every other East European country, and the opening of the Berlin Wall on November 9 would remain engrained in the memory of everyone who lived through those incredible months. Poland was left with a compromise that seemed entirely unnecessary, and many Poles felt that their revolution had been incomplete, unfulfilled. Perhaps worst of all, they lacked any evocative moment of liberation to commemorate. The Czechs had the

demonstrations on Wenceslas Square in Prague, the Germans had the Wall, and even the Romanians had the execution of Ceauşescu. All the Poles got was a big table, occupied by the people who would turn out to be the country's new elite. Then again, the whole process had been entirely peaceful—and wasn't that worth something? Didn't it matter that the Poles had blazed the trail out of the communist era? Was the "negotiated revolution" a necessary step on the road to liberation, or a fatal compromise that allowed the communists to retain a prominent role in Polish politics? Perhaps most fundamentally, did the whole process of peaceful change lead to a better Poland? These are among the many questions about the Round Table that are still debated today.

Introduction

Brian Porter

"In 1989, the world as we then knew it came to an end," proclaimed the poster we designed to advertise a conference called "Communism's Negotiated Collapse: The Polish Round Table, Ten Years Later." This event was originally imagined as part of our "Copernicus Lecture" series, which is organized each year by the Polish Studies Program at the University of Michigan. It quickly grew into something much larger, thanks mainly to the millennial sentiment captured in that hyperbolic promotional sentence. If it was indeed true that the world had come to an end—and if that apocalypse had been centered in Poland—then we felt obliged to commemorate this moment with something appropriately grand. And grand it was: we ended up hosting twenty distinguished guests, including the president of Poland and many of the leading government and opposition figures from the 1980's and today. Most of the US-based scholars specializing on Poland came to the conference, with several participating directly as discussants. Our final banquet was attended by Senator Carl Levin, Governor John Engler, and other dignitaries. It certainly seemed to be an event of which we could be proud.

Nonetheless, with time I came to look more critically upon that sentence, "in 1989, the world as we then knew it came to an end." Few would question the drama or the importance of the months between the signing of the Round Table Accords in Poland (April 5) and the execution of Nicolae Ceauşescu in Romania (December 25), and everyone seems to agree that November 9 (the opening of the Berlin Wall) belongs among the red-letter days on our calendar of commemorations. When the USSR finally collapsed two years later, the final verdict was in: as Francis Fukayama so famously put it, we had reached the "end of history." But had we? The liberal-democratic-capitalist hegemony imagined during the 1990's has proven to be, in many cases, only a thin veneer covering everything from "cowboy capitalism" (as East Europeans often call it) to religious fundamentalism. Perhaps, after all, the Hegelian *Geist* has not yet attained full realization of itself. It would seem that divergent world-views will continue to struggle with each other to define the spirit of the next age, as they did in the last one. And where there is struggle, there will always be the potential for violence.

There was virtually no violence in Poland in 1989—so they say. Negotiations between the communists and the opposition led to a peaceful transition from one social, economic, and political system to another. Never in history, many proclaimed, had the world seen such a fundamental transformation without fighting and bloodshed. But, as is so often the case, a closer look is less cheerful. After 1989, Eastern Europe experienced a dramatic increase in the abuse of women, in poverty, in homelessness, and in violent crime. The state has been stripped of much of its frightening power, but this has only revealed the many ways people can be exploited and oppressed in the "private" realm. Are people more "free" than they were a decade ago? In this case the standard scholarly hedge is the only possible answer: it depends on how you define "freedom," and which people you are talking about. For the women who can no longer walk the streets safely, for the families evicted from their apartments, for the workers who have lost all hope of employment, our praise for the nonviolent transition of 1989 seems ironic. Such people have found little peace, and even less justice and prosperity, in the world that remained standing when the Berlin Wall fell.

It is easy to dismiss those who are dissatisfied with the new world order as nostalgic communists who fear the dynamism of opportunity and long for the security of mediocrity. Discounting the views of the dispossessed is made all the easier by the fact that most East Europeans feel generally satisfied with their new lives (though the majority gets smaller the further south and east one travels). But if it is our goal to study the processes and consequences of non-violent change—and the sponsor of this volume, the United States Institute for Peace, has mandated that we do just this—then we need to pay attention to those who are left behind when "negotiated radical change" sweeps over their country. The goal is not to debunk peaceful change, but to explore how the model of the "round table" has worked in specific historical circumstances, and to uncover the sometimes explosive tensions that are concealed—perhaps necessarily— when violence is averted. More fundamentally, we must consider the ways in which violence and non-violence are linked, and sometimes even mutually constitutive. We must approach 1989 not as celebrants, but as critical scholars.

And we must teach our students to do the same. The primary objective of this volume is pedagogical rather than polemical. Neither Michael Kennedy nor I have any clear recipes for how to enact peaceful systemic change, nor do any of those we invited to contribute essays to this collection. Instead, we all have questions to ask—sometimes tough questions with no easy answers. Hopefully, the materials provided below will help readers bring the Polish Round Table of 1989 into their classrooms, and help students use the fall of communism as an entry point to a vigorous discussion of the virtues and limitations of peaceful revolution. The starting point for all this, as suggested above, is the conference we organized in April 1999. Below you will find a few suggestive excerpts from our transcript of that event, along with information about how to obtain the complete text. To help you and your students better follow the

reminiscences and arguments of the Round Table participants, we have included a chronology of events and glossaries of names, institutions, and terminology. Finally, we present a collection of papers written by a group of scholars representing a wide range of disciplines and area specialties: history, sociology, anthropology, political science, and law; Poland, Armenia, South Africa, Hungary, and the US. These prominent academics were given the full transcript of our 1999 conference, and told to prepare an essay explaining the implications of the Polish Round Table in their own area of expertise. How, they were asked, might scholars in your field use the fall of communism more generally, and our conference transcript more specifically, in their own classes? We all met in February 2000, to present and discuss our papers, and what you have before you is the result of that conversation. There is no consensus, nor (given the diversity of this group) could we have expected there to be one. But there is, I think, a shared sense that the Polish Round Table is worth studying and worth teaching. Our modest hope is that we can assist you in doing so—not by offering you any ready-made "lessons" from 1989, but by suggesting some of the provocative questions that one might ask of the events, and of the participants' memories of those events. In approaching the study of non-violent change from a number of divergent disciplinary and regional perspectives, we hope that some of the complexities, contradictions, and ambiguities of peaceful negotiation will emerge. Perhaps one might even heighten student understanding of how violence of many kinds can hide within the accomplishments of peacemakers.

Introduction

Michael D. Kennedy

The world has been shaped profoundly by changes in Eastern Europe. The Cold War began, in part, around the Soviet Union's takeover of Eastern Europe after World War II. Announcements about a "new world order" were inspired by communism's end in Eastern Europe. American scholarship has also been importantly shaped by East European changes. This collection aims to shape that scholarship by reframing the discussion around communism's end in 1989, moving it away from the imagery of collapse toward one of negotiation in producing radical change.

Of course, Eastern Europe already occupies an important place in American scholarship. Comparative sociology, my own field, developed an important dynamic around the contrast between capitalist and socialist systems with Eastern Europe, especially Poland, prominently portrayed in the latter. The collapse of communism also inspired a new wave of scholarship about how markets and democracy are made. In this latter case, this scholarship is clearly implicated in a larger project of intervention. Sometimes the scholarship is designed to help designers of economy and polity develop more effective strategies for implementing change; sometimes it is designed to critique those plans already undertaken. In the former case, the political impulse was a bit removed, but it was also there. Typically, these comparisons of systems were designed to point up the superiority or inferiority of one or the other system. Those politics, however, were more distant than in much sociology today. For my East European colleagues, good scholarship often required distancing communist politics, or risking dissident or opposition status. For my Western colleagues in that period, extended collaboration with East European colleagues seemed to require a disposition of comparatively apolitical objectivity.

Like many of my Western colleagues who studied Eastern Europe before the collapse of communism, I was drawn to the region by a wish to move beyond "either/or" comparisons. I wanted to develop a more critical sociology that took, as its point of departure, Eastern Europe. The formation of the Solidarity movement in 1980-81 in Poland was therefore, one might say, a godsend. Here one had a proletarian movement struggling for social justice, democracy and freedom, but against communist

rule. The Solidarity movement, and its intellectuals, not only helped to lay the groundwork for viewing communism as a mutable system, but they also transformed scholarship in the West. Solidarity, and the other smaller East European movements that developed in Hungary, Czechoslovakia, East Germany and elsewhere, helped to bring civil society back to our analytical and political vision.

This framework of civil society fit very nicely with many existing analytical frameworks. On the one hand, theories of social movements could use it and could help it. After all, movements were one important expression of civil society, but civil society also was an important precondition for the development of social movements. The second economy was also understood as an element of civil society, demonstrating the entrepreneurialism and resolve of many East Europeans in developing life apart from state dependencies, so it was said. Anthropologists, economists and others were vitally important, too, in explaining how social relations and the state enabled this second economy to develop. Literary scholarship and media studies also attended to the development of an underground or independent public sphere, itself helping to articulate that vision of civil society. Western scholars helped to translate, and interpret, that underground sphere's most eloquent spokespersons.

This civil society work was very comfortable analytically and politically. It allowed Western scholars and public intellectuals to identify with certain elements of East European societies without risk, and to identify the problems or constraints in other levels. Communist rule was rarely, if ever, posed neutrally, much less positively, in these depictions of civil society. While the protest movements, underground entrepreneurs and dissident intellectuals may not have always been presented unambiguously as heroes, they were rarely critiqued and held accountable for their actions. While this civil society framework existed beyond its East European expressions, in its general embrace of pluralism, legality and publicity, its politics was clear. It was civil society against the communist state. The Round Table Negotiations of 1989 were, however, something very different. And perhaps, for that reason, they have received scant attention.

Scholarship has many motivations, but one of its most powerful drivers is the burning political question. Once communism was gone, or as it was being buried, the most important analytical issues were to get proper rules for the development of private property and electoral competition in place. Focusing on the means by which communists were removed from power hardly seemed important. But this relative lack of attention, especially in the West, reflects more than urgency. It reflects a messy politics.

Poland was first to develop this roundtable-negotiated end to communism. Although imitated, it was quickly surpassed. Each subsequent negotiation—in Hungary, the German Democratic Republic, Czechoslovakia, and to some extent Bulgaria—took less time and communists retained fewer negotiated privileges in the new system.

Instead of Poland becoming the isolated trailblazer of reform, Poland's political accomplishment, measured in terms of communist weakening, became shameful for many in the Polish opposition. The Round Table, rather than a brilliant political move, was a deal with the devil. Unlike civil society, whose heroes and villains were apparent, the Round Table complicated judgments and split anti-communist forces in Poland, and their friends abroad.

Perhaps that was why I was taken slightly aback when my colleagues Brian Porter and Marysia Ostafin first posed the idea that we develop an entire conference around the Polish Round Table. Normally our annual Copernicus lectures featured relatively uncomplicated heroes of scholarship or politics, much like civil society could focus on the good of society against the evil of the communist state. This would be complicated because we couldn't simply present the Round Table from a single point of view given that it was, after all, a compromise. And that would mean bringing former communists to Michigan.

Of course there was precedent. Janusz Reykowski, one of the most important negotiators for the communists, was a prominent social psychologist and a longtime associate of the University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research. Indeed, he had visited Michigan in 1989 to discuss these negotiations. I remember being struck at that time how important his microsocial expertise was in helping to produce the most macroscopic of social changes. In the nearly ten years that had taken place, however, there was relatively little scholarship undertaken to explain how these negotiations took place. There was especially little that tried to link the narratives of the participants in making radical change with the contingencies of the transformation itself.

While we specialists in Polish culture, history and society could thus justify our interest in the subject, we had to think much more ambitiously about this conference. We already anticipated that commemorations of the tenth anniversary of communism's collapse would become commonplace. Also, why should the Polish Round Table deserve more interest than the fall of the Berlin Wall? The latter image, after all, fits much better with the narrative of collapse than a picture of people talking around a large table.

In the rush to build a new society on the ruins of communism, the imagery of collapse fit very well those who would design, or impose, institutions anew. With communists vanquished, questions of how their exit was made seemed best relegated to the historians, once sufficient time could intervene to allow neutral portraits to be painted. However, as more time intervened, it became clear that communist rule produced a pattern of social relations that made the communist-ruled past an integral part of understanding a capitalist and democratic future. Although that made analytical sense, it still left a powerful political distaste for many, especially when communists could be perceived to have profited from their own exit. The Round Table, it has been said, was a deal that privileged its attendees. There was, however, another way to see

this Round Table, but it required stepping outside the stream of popular Polish history into a world of contingency and comparison. It required thinking about the Round Table as an instance of peaceful, but radical, change.

When we think about radical change, we normally think about violence. Sometimes the very definition of revolution includes violence as a necessary element. This is one reason many commentators at the time sought out new words to describe the radical changes of 1989. Peaceful change across the region, with Romania the exception that proved the rule, soon became one of the distinctive features of "revolution." Although an element of description, it was rarely elaborated, or explained, especially around the Round Table.

For some of the negotiators at the Round Table, violence was a possibility they sought to avoid. Indeed, the struggle to avoid violence could be read as a leitmotif of recollection, but rarely a major theme of analysis. Once violence becomes a possibility in the narrative of communism's collapse, however, its relationship to other features of social transformation becomes critical. And manifold.

We have approached this question of peace and violence in 1989 with a clear recognition that the implications of negotiated but radical change require a variety of scholarly approaches, with grounding in different world regions, to realize its larger analytical potential. Of course, we draw on those who are already associated with Polish studies—a historian, a political scientist, and a sociologist—posing questions about this "peaceful but negotiated change" in light of disciplinary discussions with clear resonance in Poland. We also bring those with principal scholarly grounding in other sites—in the USA, Armenia, Hungary and South Africa—to develop scholarly accounts around conflict resolution, memory, and political and global change with animating questions derived from broader comparative visions.

This collection, therefore, draws on those past comparative ambitions of American scholarship I mentioned earlier, figuring how changes in other parts of the world are similar to, and different from, changes in Poland. But these comparisons are also different from that earlier tradition that contrasted socialist and capitalist systems. These comparisons are not so easily predicated on notions of alternative systems, or even categorically distinct societies. Instead, we find change in Poland, Hungary, Armenia and South Africa implicated in a larger transformation of the world. They also are influenced by each other. In addition, we find important resonance with microprocesses of conflict resolution across various sites of social change. Although we need to attend to comparisons across instances of world historic change, important lessons can be extended from, and to, these dramatic moments by those who think about how conflict resolution works in comparatively mundane settings.

We also find, in this collection, a much more complicated relationship between scholarship and politics. Although Max Weber was himself one of the principal exponents of value-neutral scholarship, he was also quite well aware that the *questions*

animating social and historical scholarship can never be divorced from civilizational concerns in the context shaping inquiry. This is especially clear in this collection, where each of the authors struggles not only to explain how the Round Table articulates with various bodies of scholarship, but also how the questions posed might reframe the normative grounding of academic work in relation to politics, history and social change. A great deal of scholarship, whether on nations or the dispossessed, or on the proletariat or civil society, has identified with the agents of change against the figures of oppression or of the old regime. At the Polish Round Table, this comfortable seating is lost. How enemies become negotiators, how fundamental conflict yields to pragmatic conflict resolution, implies a different scholarly location, an unusual normative grounding, and a changed relationship to the making of history. It suggests a different agenda for thinking about the relationship between politics and scholarship, at least for those who have long been implicated in an academics that has counterposed capitalism and socialism. The lessons of the Polish Round Table go beyond Poland, and rather invite us to think seriously about how visions of systemic alternatives, microprocesses of conflict resolution and the making of history and political alternatives might be remade in light of this peaceful, but fundamental change in Poland, and beyond.

The Fall of Communism in Poland: A Chronology

1918	**November**	*Poland regains its independence after 123 years of foreign occupation*
1926	**May**	*Józef Piłsudski overthrows the parliamentary government in a military coup*
1939	**September**	*Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union invade Poland; the government goes into exile and the "Home Army" (AK) is formed to direct the resistance*
1941	**June**	*Nazi Germany invades the Soviet Union*
1943	**January-May**	*The Jewish Uprising in Warsaw*
1944	**August-October**	*The Polish Uprising in Warsaw*
1945	**January**	*Russian troops enter Warsaw*
	February	*Stalin, Churchill, and Roosevelt meet at Yalta, finalizing plans to divide Europe into separate spheres of influence*
	June	*"The Government of National Unity" is formed in Poland, dominated by communists but including Stanisław Mikołajczyk, the head of the exile government, as a Vice-Premier*
1947	**January**	*The communists win a rigged election*
	October	*Mikołajczyk flees the country*
1948	**December**	*The Polish Socialist Party and The Polish Workers' Party (the communists) merge to form Polish United Workers' Party (PZPR)*
1954	**March**	*Joseph Stalin dies*
1955	**May**	*The Warsaw Pact is signed*
1956	**February**	*Khrushchev gives his "secret speech" denouncing Stalin at the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in Moscow*
	June	*Strike breaks out in Poznań, protesting both working conditions and Soviet domination; fighting breaks out between police and demonstrators; tanks are called in to restore order; at least 74 people die, and several hundred are injured*

	October	*The 8th Plenum of the Central Committee of the PZPR names Władysław Gomułka as the new First Secretary; he is widely hailed as a reformer, with the slogan of "a Polish road to socialism"*
	October-November	*The Hungarian Revolution is crushed by a Soviet invasion*
1964	**October**	*The Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union replaces Nikita Khrushchev with Leonid Brezhnev*
	October	*The Polish Episcopate writes letter to German Episcopate expressing their wish for reconciliation; the famous phrase "we forgive, and we ask for forgiveness" provokes attacks from the regime*
1966		*Throughout the year, the Catholic Church and the regime produce competing commemorations of the 1000th anniversary of the baptism of the first historically documented Polish ruler, Mieszko I*
1968	**March**	*Student protests against censorship are met with police violence and repression; the regime responds with an "anti-Zionist" campaign directed at the protestors (some of whom were Jewish); thousands of Jews are pressured to emigrate*
	August	*Soviet, Polish, Hungarian, Bulgarian and East German forces invade Czechoslovakia, putting an end to the "Prague Spring"*
1970	**December**	*Price hikes lead to strikes in Gdańsk and other cities; police intervention leads to riots; the army is sent in to end the unrest; at least 45 people were killed, and thousands injured; Władysław Gomułka is replaced by Edward Gierek as First Secretary*
1975	**August**	*The Helsinki Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe commits all signatories (including Poland) to show "respect for human rights and basic freedoms, including freedom of thought, conscience, religion and convictions for every individual"*
1976	**June**	*Price hikes lead to strikes in Radom, Warsaw, and elsewhere; police intervention leads to riots*
	September	*KOR (The Committee for the Defense of the Workers) is formed by Adam Michnik, Jacek Kuroń, and others, to aid those repressed in the wake of the June strikes*

1978	**April**	*Lech Wałęsa, Andrzej Gwiazda, and others create the "Committee for Free Trade Unions on the Coast"; later Zbigniew Bujak, Zbigniew Janas, and others create a parallel organization in Warsaw*
	October	*Cardinal Karol Wojtyła is chosen as Pope John Paul II*
1979	**June**	*Pope John Paul II visits Poland*
1980	**July**	*Price hikes lead to strikes throughout the country*
	August	*The "Interfactory Strike Committee" at the Gdańsk shipyards, under the leadership of Lech Wałęsa, emerges as a representative body for the national work-stoppage; the strikes force the government to accept the creation of a free trade union ("Solidarity"), to respect basic civil and human rights, and to raise wages*
	September	*Stanisław Kania replaces Edward Gierek as First Secretary*
1981	**February**	*General Wojciech Jaruzelski is named Premier*
	March	*Talks between Solidarity and the government reach a crisis; Solidarity organizes a four-hour national warning strike to force the regime to continue negotiating*
	April	*Ration cards are introduced for meat*
	May	*Rural Solidarity is legally registered; Primate Stefan Wyszyński dies and is replaced by Józef Glemp*
	October	*Wojciech Jaruzelski replaces Stanisław Kania as First Secretary*
	December	*Declaration of martial law; Solidarity is outlawed; approximately 10,000 people are arrested; 6,000-10,000 people emigrate; violence is limited, but 9 people are killed when police attack striking miners in Silesia*
1982	**April**	*Announcement of the creation of the Provisional Coordination Commission of Solidarity; leaders in hiding include Zbigniew Bujak, Władysław Frasyniuk, and Bogdan Lis*
	August	*On the anniversary of the signing of the Gdańsk Agreement that created Solidarity, demonstrations are held all over Poland; four people are killed, over 5,000 are detained*
	November	*Primate Glemp emphasizes the distance of the Church from the "struggles of social groups" and declares that "the Church will always stand on a position of peace"*
		Solidarity announces an 8-hour warning strike, but their appeal is generally ignored; Leonid Brezhnev dies
	December	*Most internees are released*
1983	**May**	*Grzegorz Przemyk, the 19-year-old son of a KOR activist, is murdered by police*

	June	*John Paul II visits Poland for the second time*
	July	*Martial Law is lifted; amnesty is declared for political crimes*
	October	*Lech Wałęsa is awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace*
1984	**October**	*Father Jerzy Popiełuszko, a Roman Catholic priest and opposition activist, is murdered by officers of the Security Service; the killers are arrested and imprisoned*
1985	**March**	*Mikhail Gorbachev is named as First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*
	July	*Price hikes lead to a strike declaration by Solidarity, but the strikes fail to receive much support*
1986	**June**	*Poland becomes a member of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank*
	September	*A general amnesty is announced*
	December	*A report is released showing that 740,000 people had emigrated since 1980*
1987	**June**	*Pope John Paul II visits Poland for the third time*
	November	*The government holds a referendum on economic reform; the proposal fails to receive enough support to pass*
1988	**April-May**	*Wildcat strikes in several cities throughout Poland; some are broken up by police, others end without any resolution*
	August	*Meetings between Lech Wałęsa and the Minister of the Interior, General Czesław Kiszczak, begin the process of negotiation that will ultimately lead to the round table talks*
	September	*Mieczysław Rakowski becomes Premier*
	November	*Televised debate between Wałęsa and Alfred Miodowicz, leader of state-sponsored trade union group; widely seen as a major victory for Solidarity*
1989	**February**	*The Round Table negotiations begin*
	March	*Slobodan Milošević amends the Yugoslav constitution, rescinding autonomy for Kosovo; violent protests follow*
	April	*The Round Table Accords are signed; Solidarity is re-legalized, and elections are promised for June (with two-thirds of the seats reserved for the communists in the lower house, and all of the seats open for election in the upper house)*
	May	Gazeta Wyborcza *(The Electoral Gazette) is established as the first legal opposition newspaper in the Soviet bloc*

June	*Elections are held; Solidarity candidates win all but one of the senate seats, and all of the parliamentary seats open for contestation*
	On the same day elections are held in Poland, protesters are massacred in Tiananmen Square, China
	The Hungarian round table talks begin
July	*Wojciech Jaruzelski is elected President by the National Assembly*
	Mikhail Gorbachev declares that the USSR will no longer interfere in the internal affairs of Eastern Europe
August	*Tadeusz Mazowiecki, a prominent opposition intellectual, becomes the first non-communist premier in the Soviet bloc*
September	*Hungary opens its border to the West*
October	*Anticommunist protests begin in East Germany*
	A new constitution proclaiming the virtues of democracy is adopted in Hungary
November	*The Berlin Wall is opened*
	Todor Zhivkov, the communist ruler of Bulgaria, is removed from power
	Protests begin in Prague against communist rule
December	*The overthrow of Nicolae Ceauşescu is accompanied by bloodshed*
	Václav Havel is elected President of Czechoslovakia

Communism's Negotiated Collapse:
The Polish Round Table, Ten Years Later

A Conference Held at the University of Michigan
April 7-10, 1999

The following are excerpts from an English translation of the conference presentations. Not only were the complete presentations vastly more rich and complex than these snippets can possibly convey, but as with all excerpts, these reflect the personal interests of those doing the selecting. Readers are therefore strongly encouraged to refer to the complete transcript of the conference, which is available (both in Polish and English), at our website: <www.umich.edu/~iinet/PolishRoundTable>.[1]

PANEL ONE: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE POLISH ROUND TABLE

Adam Michnik

Lifelong activist for human rights, advisor to the Solidarity movement and negotiator for the opposition in the Round Table negotiations, historian and author Adam Michnik (b. 1946) has been Editor-in-Chief of the daily newspaper Gazeta Wyborcza *since its inception in 1989. After being expelled from the University of Warsaw and imprisoned (1968-69) after the March protests of 1968, Michnik completed his degree in history at Adam Mickiewicz University of Poznań in 1975. He was a founding member of the Workers' Defense Committee (KOR) in 1977 and a lecturer in the "Flying University," an organization that brought intellectuals and worker activists together in unofficial seminars. Imprisoned again from 1981 to 1984 and from 1985 to 1986, Michnik continued to advocate democracy and civil society. Following the Round Table*

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[1] All excerpts quoted below were transcribed and translated from Polish to English by Kasia Kietlinska except for those by László Bruszt, Dai Qing, John R. Davis, and Konstanty Gebert. These latter excerpts were transcribed by Margarita Nafpaktitis.

negotiations, he served as a Deputy in the Sejm from 1989 to 1991 for the Civic Parliamentary Club. Michnik is the author of numerous articles, interviews, and books.

Those who favor the peaceful way of resolving conflicts are always faced with similar questions and charges. How can one think about making a pact with an enemy? How can one seek a compromise with someone who should be punished for their crimes? And usually the answers given are similar. You have got to come to terms and seek compromise with the enemy, precisely because he is an enemy. There is no need to negotiate with friends. What is the real choice here? Either a war, easy to provoke, and which can last permanently, or a difficult path towards peace based on compromise. But a compromise always leaves something to be desired. To be able to live in peace and freedom, it is necessary to replace the language of war by the language of peace, and this was the attempt that Poland undertook ten years ago….

I often hear accusations that by having chosen the logic of compromise, I have betrayed my own biography. That's why I want to start commenting about my own case.…The changes in the Soviet Union produced a new situation in which the Round Table became possible. That compromise was, as usual, the result of relative weakness of both partners. The authorities were too weak to trample us, and we were too weak to topple the authorities. And out of those two weaknesses a new chance arose for a new compromise resolution….

We argued a lot. I remember another of my colleagues who explained to me that it's not the communist authorities that will legalize Solidarity, but vice versa, Solidarity will lend legitimacy to the communist authorities. I remember a long conversation with a friend of mine, involved in the underground independent cultural activity, and for her the Round Table simply meant a betrayal of ideals, giving in to censorship, and giving up on true independence. I did not share these views but I understood these friends, because this sort of compromise could discredit us. It could! And it really required some sort of violation to one's self, of one's emotions and one's memory. I remember how hard it was for me to overcome my own internal resistance and fears. I remember how much effort it took me to try to understand the reasons of our yesterday's enemies, who now were to become adversaries and partners….

I remember the inauguration of the Round Table very well, when I was forced by Professor Geremek to put on a suit and a necktie, and when, listening to snide comments of Wałęsa and others, I went to the Viceroy Palace in Warsaw. To get into the debate room, one had to go upstairs, and at the top there were General Kiszczak and Secretary Stanisław Ciosek welcoming the guests. I managed to hide in the bathroom so as not to be seen by anybody to shake hands with the chief of police. I was simply afraid my wife

will kick me out of the house. So I found a hiding place in the bathroom, waited for several minutes there, but as I emerged, Mr. Kiszczak was still there offering his hand in a handshake. You know, lights, cameras…and this was the way I lost my virginity! We had a sense of strangeness of our situation. Only two-and-a-half years before I had been released from prison, and there were my colleagues, friends from the underground…But at the same time, I was aware that some sort of historic shift was taking place which I was unable to define at that time. I understood one thing: the democratic opposition was finally taking a step over the threshold of legality. From that Viceroy's Palace our path could only lead either to the Rakowiecka Street prison or to the end of the communist system….

There were no secret agreements. We went ahead to the elections and we won in a manner that simply frightened us by its scale. We didn't know what to do with our victory, but what matters the most is that in those elections the communist system was rejected by the Polish nation….

The Round Table compromise was possible because on both sides there were people who risked accusations of betrayal by their own communities. And that's a reformer's fate, that they go at a snail's pace and they get banged on the head by their own extremists. But it's only thanks to such reformers that we can trust that the philosophy of agreement has a future and that one can build that future on the conviction that only a Poland shared by those who fought against the People's Republic and those who served the People's Republic can be a truly democratic Poland. If we exclude anybody, we will have to accept discrimination of some sort, which in the final analysis always results in lies and injustice. Thank God Poland has chosen another path.

Mieczysław Rakowski

Prime Minister in the months leading up to the Round Table negotiations, Mieczysław Rakowski (b. 1926) was an officer of the Polish People's Army from 1945 to 1949 and received a doctorate in history from Warsaw's Institute for Social Sciences in 1956. He began his political career in 1946 as a member of the Polish Workers' Party. From 1948 to 1990 he was a member of the Polish United Workers' Party (PZPR), serving on its Central Committee from 1975 to 1990. After serving one year as Assistant Editor, Rakowski became Editor-in-Chief of the weekly magazine Polityka *in 1958, a position he held until 1982. He was Deputy Prime Minister from 1981 to 1985, Deputy Speaker of the Sejm and leader of its Socio-economic Council from 1985 to 1988, and a member of the PZPR's Politburo from 1987 to 1990. From September 1988 to August 1989, Rakowski served as the last communist Prime Minister of Poland; from August 1989 to February 1990, he was the last First Secretary of the PZPR. Since 1990, Rakowski has*

been Editor-in-Chief of Dziś: Przegląd Społeczny. *He is the author of numerous publications on politics.*

…Among those who criticize the Round Table most violently are young right-wing activists who think…that the Round Table was, as Adam Michnik has said, "a transaction between the reds and the pinks." Well, at that time, when the leadership of the opposition, Lech Wałęsa, Mazowiecki, Geremek, Kuroń, Frasyniuk, Michnik of course, Bujak, and others….When these leaders had mustered their courage to trust us, although they had reasons not to do so, well today's young critics of the Round Table were in high school, or they were freshmen at universities. They have nothing in their resumes to prove heroic struggle against the communist regime, so they just write new resumes, trying to make up for that gap. Criticizing the Round Table, they present themselves as the ones who, had they been there then, would have really defeated those "commies" and they would have sent them where they belong, to detention camps somewhere, maybe not in Siberia, but they would have found a place. Well, this group, that is simply writing its own resume, thinks that "the reds" and "the pinks" have created a myth about the great importance of the Round Table negotiations, while the meetings at Magdalenka were actually cannibals' feasts. That's what I heard on one of the TV shows in Poland. Well, it's important to note that sometimes it's frightening to hear such opinions, because they demonstrate a completely ahistorical mode of thinking of some part of the Polish intelligentsia, mostly in the right-wing camp today.

…It is my opinion that during the first period, the communist party authorities, to whom I belonged and that's why I often say "we" and not "they," that regime was not politically or psychologically ready to accept the opposition as something that might exist in the socialist system, and even less ready to share power with it. And accepting trade unions independent of the state administration and really the state as such, no, that was not part of the very concept of socialism….after martial law was imposed, we in the party still believed that we faced a crisis, we were fully aware of that, but we thought we could weather the crisis on our own, without the opposition….

We believed, we were convinced that we could cope without the opposition and this conviction, as a matter of fact, lasted until the mid-1980's, but it was also related to our fear of the Soviet Union. Because the generation of Jaruzelski and, in general, the generation that went through the gulags, Polish communists, or those who later became communists, those who were cutting trees in Siberia, this generation came back to Poland with a sense of helplessness towards power. It wasn't any kind of servility but it was sheer fear and respect for the power east of the Bug river. That was one of the lessons that Jaruzelski learned, and in my opinion, there's no doubt that it had an impact on his attitude toward the opposition in the 1980's….

Now there is an opinion that the collapse of communism began with the fall of the Berlin Wall. I must say that, well, with all my admiration for the Germans, they are cheating us again. They've convinced the world. The Berlin Wall and that's it, the beginning of the fall. No, the Round Table was the beginning and others followed us.

Wiesław Chrzanowski

A Professor of Law at the Catholic University of Lublin, Wiesław Chrzanowski (b. 1923) has long been an active opponent of communism. After serving in the anti-Nazi resistance during the Second World War, Chrzanowski studied law at Jagiellonian University, Warsaw University, and the Warsaw School of Economics. He was arrested in 1948 and sentenced to eight years imprisonment for his involvement in the Union of Christian Youth. Although officially rehabilitated in 1956, Chrzanowski was refused permission to practice law (except in the modest position of "legal advisor"). He founded the "Start" Catholic Discussion Club in 1957 and was a member of Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński's "Information Committee" from 1965. In the 1980's Chrzanowski served as an advisor to Solidarity and as a member of Cardinal Józef Glemp's "Social Advisory Board." He was among the founders of the Christian-National Union in 1989 and served as its President until 1994. Chrzanowski was Minister of Justice in 1991, Marshal of the Sejm from 1991 to 1993, and a Senator since 1997.

…I am totally opposed and my view is negative when it comes to any attempts to build up a legend of the Round Table, in connection with its tenth anniversary. History from ten years back is not yet history; it is history in action, and in this regard, the legend has its own role to play….

The Round Table did not cause decomposition in the imperial structure of the Soviet Union; it was rather the consequence of that decomposition. It wasn't what sealed the collapse of communism as a socio-economic system. The end of the system was already perceived by Prime Minister Rakowski's government, which undertook steps in a new direction. It did accelerate, however, accelerated by a few months only changing the guard of power in Poland, and it did influence significantly, but not decisively, the manner of transferring the power….

Beyond its legend, the Round Table negotiations have been significant in the Polish political arena. Within this scope, undoubtedly, they have significance. However, those negotiations haven't had a universal caliber. It would be an illusion to seek analogies with the Spanish, Portuguese, or Chilean decline of the authoritarian system. In our country, it was a system that was imposed from outside, and it could survive only with outside support. In these other countries, the systems were indigenous and so were their

declines. This is the reason why it's hard to imagine, unfortunately, that our formula could be helpful in solving the tragic events in the former Yugoslavia, that is, the present conflict in Kosovo.

Letter from Pope John Paul II
read to the audience by Michael Kennedy

"His Holiness hopes that this disciplined reflection on the spiritual, cultural and political aspects of Poland's peaceful transition to democracy will highlight their ultimate foundation in a moral imperative arising from the vision of man's innate dignity and his transcendent vocation to freedom in the pursuit of truth. He is confident that the Conference's work will call needed attention to the superiority of patient dialogue over all forms of violence in the resolution of conflicts and the building of a just and humane social order."

PANEL TWO: THE POLITICAL CONTEST, 1986-89

Zbigniew Bujak

Trained as an electrical technician, Zbigniew Bujak (b. 1954) worked for several years at the Ursus tractor factory near Warsaw. He co-organized a strike there in 1980, and became one of the leading figures in the Solidarity movement. From 1981 to 1989 he was head of Solidarity for the Mazowsze region, and until his arrest in 1986 he was the most prominent opposition figure to avoid detention. In 1986, Bujak was awarded the Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights Award. From 1987 to 1989 he was a member of Solidarity's National Executive Committee; from 1990 to 1991 he served as President of the Stefan Batory Foundation. A Deputy in the Sejm from 1991 to 1997, he represented the Democratic Social Movement (1991-93) and the Union of Labor (1993-97). Bujak writes frequently on Polish politics and is currently a leading member of the Freedom Union party.

…We had found out before that any time we went into the streets and through demonstrations tried to force the other side to do something, each time we actually lost. No matter how many times we tried to overcome the other side by armed struggle, it would turn out, and I'm referring here to the post-war period, it turned out that the party apparatus could easily present the opposition as some sort of criminals, armed assailants. And we kept losing. Therefore we figured out that the idea of fighting without violence was the best, and that was our belief, the most successful or effective

tool in the fight for democracy. When this is accepted as a principle that here we are headed towards an agreement ultimately, and it revealed itself during the martial law period, then even while we were calling for street demonstrations and aiming for a general strike, in that very document, we would always refer to the need for coming to terms and agreement, believing that this was the only way to solve the conflict….

I must say that if during martial law someone had contacted me, let's say some general, and said something like, "My division is at your disposal," most likely we would have seriously reflected over this possibility. But nothing of the sort happened….

I would say that we succeeded in maintaining the unity of the Solidarity movement, and, let's say, the overall comprehensibility and unity of the idea that was the guiding light for us. That doesn't mean that there was no diversity in programs. Yes, there were diverse programs, manifold programs. There were new political movements being born and they were formulating their own political programs. And that suited us, because this was what pluralism and democracy in Solidarity were about….

Right now in Poland, there is a debate about the Round Table negotiations, was that necessary, did it make any sense or not? In this conflict, an important argument is the issue of the victims, the issue of whether there is justice, whether justice was served at that time, whether the crimes were punished, whether evil was eliminated. And in a way, those who ask those questions think of the Round Table negotiations as something bad. I'd like to say that this approach, well, shows a lot of deep faith that you can eradicate evil and that justice can prevail one hundred percent. I look at it with detachment, and, well, even with a certain dose of fright, because, well, that's as if someone was trying to correct what God created, to eliminate all evil and achieve one hundred percent justice. That's not the way the world works, and human relations aren't that way, either, and, let me put it this way, within this philosophy, we would like to keep prosecuting and punishing all those who committed various crimes. Within that philosophy, we, the Poles, a religious nation, we go to church and pray for justice. And that's a big part of the Polish Church, the part which you can hear in the media, the part, well, trying to achieve that one hundred percent absolute justice and truth.…How should we do that? In order to do that, one obviously needs to answer the question regarding the significance of the victims' suffering. Well, to me, then, it's clear that those people were not fighting for this one hundred-percent justice and eradication of evil. They were fighting for freedom and democracy. And in that sense, when we participated in the Round Table negotiations which led to freedom and democracy in Poland, in a way we are fulfilling the mission, the mission they had been fighting for and gave their lives for. And I have to say that when I listen to the family members of those people, I think they understand, and they say, our father, my husband was killed

for freedom and democracy. And within that philosophy, we may say, there is another kind of prayer in church. This one is about thankfulness for their sacrifice, and that's another part of the Polish Church. And in that sense, the difference of opinion regarding the Round Table truly exists and will persist for many more months and perhaps for many long years, and it will define these two trends in Polish socio-economic life, but also the two trends in the Polish Church.

Ambassador Stanisław Ciosek

A member of the Polish United Workers' Party (PZPR) from 1959 to 1990, Stanisław Ciosek (b. 1939) has held a variety of administrative posts. He was awarded a degree in oceanic studies from the College of Economics at Sopot in 1961 and served for the next fourteen years in the administration of the Union of Polish Students. From 1972 to 1985 Ciosek was a Deputy to the Sejm, and from 1975 to 1980 he was a regional First Secretary in the PZPR. He was on the PZPR's Central Committee from 1980 to 1981 and 1986 to 1990; from 1980 to 1985 he was a member of the Council of Ministers. In the years leading to the Round Table negotiations (1986-88), he was General Secretary of the PZPR's Central Committee and General Secretary of the National Council of the Patriotic Movement for National Rebirth. From 1989 to 1996, Ciosek was Poland's Ambassador to Moscow.

…This is quite a risky thought, but I am going to say it anyway. I believe that allowing such notions as *glasnost'* and perestroika had its source in the situation in Poland, and in the realization that it was impossible to solve conflicts and ensure growth either through force, like in Poland during martial law, or through the existing methods of running the government. Maybe not as clearly as manifested in Poland, those problems occurred in the whole socialist camp. Maybe this is not modest, but I'm fully convinced, after over six years of living in Moscow and after numerous conversations and inquiries, that it was a necessity to face that challenge, the challenge named Poland that engendered the necessity for leaders of Gorbachev's type.

In response to name-calling, when we were being called "red spiders,"…yes, yes, there were times when we were called "red spiders," I used to say to my partners: "Well, what kind of a spider is it that is no longer able to catch flies?"…

I was being perceived as some kind of a funny monster with two heads, since, well, with my biography I was still the ambassador of the new Poland. And for these people that meant a lot as well, that moving into a new system, they didn't need to lose their heads, and I mean literally….

We knew that it was necessary to change, that radical changes were needed, but we did not quite know what exactly needed to change and how to introduce those changes. So we were looking towards Solidarity for ideas. And the way we saw it, it was all a maze of criticism, of dissatisfaction, of different ideas, proposals, that were not clearly crystallized political and economic concepts. We could still remember well the famous consultations about cigarette prices during the Solidarity Congress in Gdańsk. This sounds completely irrational today but that was the truth. So in our eyes, that was not the proper idea for the new Poland, either. Yes, we agreed on one thing, that we needed a change. And with this frame of mind, we were sitting down at the Round Table. This was not a duel of two clearly defined concepts, some doctrinaire socialism with planned economy against democracy and market economy. This was a search, at the beginning full of distrust and suspicion, and yet together we were looking for new ways of changing Poland….

At some point, the Russians asked all the ambassadors accredited in Moscow to put something symbolic from each nation under the cornerstone of the currently rebuilt great Temple of Christ the Savior. So I went to Warsaw and I brought a thick book of the Round Table agreements. That was, well, a very dangerous time in Moscow, with the possible confrontation, and I figured that they could use our agreements as a symbol of dialogue. But then I read the book, after several years, carefully, and decided not to put it there at the cornerstone of the temple. As I have mentioned, those were beautiful promises, wishes, expectations. It was not the free market, it was not capitalism. It resembled utopian socialism, social romanticism with the indexing of wages. Well, to give such visions to neighbors, who were and actually still are facing the brutal choice of tough economic measures, well...I did not dare do it. Despite all the symbolic value of our Round Table, I did not decide to undermine the walls of their new temple with ideas, which were created at a specific time and under specific conditions in Poland….

Let me remind you that in the Round Table pact we agreed that the next elections would be completely free. This period of four years of systemic transformation, we called that, well, a coupling mechanism or rather, the clutch mechanism. You press the clutch in order to switch gears, not to stick to the same one. I stubbornly insist that the good part of my camp had a sense of far-reaching changes. Not everybody was aware that major fundamental change would really occur, but there were many that had not as much a premonition as an understanding that it would occur. That's why…we pressed that clutch pedal…

We pushed for the elections to finally get to know the real truth. We were all afraid that we would destroy the country by the rapid pace of the transformation. That's the origin of all this resistance, all of those institutions, braking and controlling, including the

contractual elections. This whole construction was about this, and not about our hands…,like it's often shown, glued to the trough and turned into stone.

Ambassador John R. Davis

As US Ambassador to Poland, John R. Davis (b. 1927) served as a mediator during the Round Table negotiations. His wife, Helen Davis, acted as convener of informal meetings among Round Table participants at the Ambassador's Residence in Warsaw in the late 1980's. A Foreign Service Officer since 1955, Ambassador Davis holds degrees from UCLA and Harvard University. His diplomatic career has included tours of duty in Washington, Jakarta, and Rome and service as Consul General in Milan and Sydney. He has had four assignments at the US Embassy in Warsaw: Economics Officer (1960-63); Deputy Chief of Mission (1973-76); Charge d'Affaires (1983-88); and Ambassador (1988-90). From 1981 to 1983, he was Director of the Eastern European and Yugoslav Affairs Office in the Department of State. From 1992 to 1994, he was US Ambassador to Romania.

For us in the Embassy in Warsaw, in the period from 1983 until 1990, when I was head of Mission, Poland was an absolute fairyland of political and economic experimentation, and it was a place that achieved, at the end of the Round Table, something that generations of Americans, pundits and experts, declared to be impossible, and that was the peaceful transfer of power in a communist country into the hands of a democratic society….

In my view Solidarity had all the good arguments and had tremendous popular support, from the Church, from society. It couldn't lose, once it got down to the table, and that's exactly the way it worked out. Professor Reykowski will acknowledge, he and Professor Geremek came on television every night, after the sessions of the Round Table, and it was like Thomas Jefferson explaining democracy on television to the American people in 1790. They created the new society, explained that to the people, and by the time they all rose from the table, it was clear that a tremendous moment in Polish history had been achieved, a moment of enormous historical significance….

For the United States, and I think for the whole world, what happened at the Round Table and all of those who participated in it created a situation, which has benefited all mankind. Millions of people may be alive today who would have been dead or suffering if another path had been taken to the end of communism. What was achieved there, although there are those who will now criticize it in retrospect, was at the time unthinkable. In fact, after the Round Table had succeeded, I came back here to talk to analysts in Washington, and half of them didn't believe that it had happened….

The main element that I tried to use to influence the opposition was to persuade them in the period leading up to the Round Table talks that it was in their interest to talk to the government, because I felt that they could get major concessions, that they would get sufficient political concessions, because the final attempt by Premier Rakowski to institute economic reforms in 1988 had failed because of the strikes, that the government was now in a very weak position, and that Solidarity was in a very strong position, and that they were bound to win any negotiation, so…we urged them….

I didn't have instructions from Washington as to what to do. As was often the case, I just did what I thought was best in the interest of the Polish nation.

Bishop Alojzy Orszulik

Bishop of the Diocese of Łowicz since 1982, Alojzy Orszulik (b. 1928) co-organized and participated in the Round Table negotiations as an observer for the Catholic Church. He received his master's degree in canon law from the Catholic University of Lublin in 1961 and was a lecturer in this field until 1989. Bishop Orszulik has held several positions in the Polish Episcopate including Director of the Press Department (1968-93) and Deputy to the Secretary (1989-94). He has served as a member and Secretary of the Joint Commission of the Government and Episcopate of Poland since 1980 and has been a consultant to the Papal Council for Social Media since 1974.

…From the very start, ladies and gentlemen, the Secretariat of the Episcopate, as some of you may know, whether it had its office still in a small building right next to the cathedral, or whether it was already in the new site at Cardinal Wyszyński Square, the Secretariat of the Episcopate would always constitute some kind of safety oasis, some kind of a guarantee of safety. Since the very beginning of martial law, we were demanding access to Mr. Lech (Wałęsa) and to other places of internment. Lots of priests would go to those places, and I don't think that they've ever committed a crime, and neither have I, when they were smuggling some written messages out. And those situations were sometimes ludicrous, because prisoners would put those encoded messages into the priest's robe pocket, and the priests' clothing is sewn in such a way that one can reach both to the pocket and also to the trousers. So sometimes the notes were being placed not really in the pocket but into the other opening, and the message would fall down the trouser leg. The priests were brave, nonetheless, and got those messages out and passed them to the families. Then, the families, in turn, would request help in many different things, were requesting intervention. And we had many interventions of that kind….

The Secretariat of the Episcopate, where I used to work, would support Solidarity leaders, because the Church alone worked for the same values for many decades before. And here I would just like to mention that from the very beginning of the Polish People's Republic, first Cardinal Hlond and then Cardinal Wyszyński would oppose the sovietization of Poland, the construction of a totalitarian system. Actually, at that time he paid for it with three years of imprisonment; at that point, the Church de facto was a political opposition, although it was never its intention, which it expressed many times in public declarations. But the government of the Polish People's Republic would push the Church into the role of political opposition….

The government of the People's Republic of Poland always looked to the Church to become a partner, whom they could easily treat instrumentally, some kind of partner who would be able to moderate the opposition and to calm the tensions in society. Well, we didn't talk only to them; while there was the principle assumed already by Cardinal Wyszyński that we would always talk whenever the authorities wanted to talk, but we also conducted talks with the leadership of the opposition. We would always encourage talks with the society, through elected representatives.

PANEL THREE: EVERYDAY LIFE AND THE POLITICAL CONTEST

Bishop Bronisław Dembowski

Bishop of the Diocese of Włocławek since 1992 and Professor of Philosophy at the Catholic University of Lublin since 1981, Bronisław Dembowski (b. 1927) participated in the Round Table negotiations as an observer for the Catholic Church. He studied philosophy at the University of Warsaw and the Catholic University of Lublin, where he received a Ph.D. in 1961, and at Warsaw's Theological Seminary, where he taught from 1970 to 1992. A member of the International Catholic Council for Charismatic Revival and the Polish Episcopate's Commission for Catholic Education, Missionaries, and Priesthood, Bishop Dembowski has published extensively on religion and philosophy.

…The only thing I can do is give you my own ideas and share my own experience. And I'm going to repeat here again that I've never been, I'm not, and I hope I never will be a political activist. First of all, I have been a professor of philosophy and a pastor, and now only the latter, as a bishop, and as such, I have defined my task: to respond in the Christian way to questions posed by life….

Once in one of my sermons, I said, "We are being accused of opposing the government of the Polish People's Republic. No, I'm not in opposition to the government but the government is in opposition to the society, by using force to introduce atheism."

Zbigniew Janas

Zbigniew Janas (b. 1953) was trained as a transport technician at the Technical School of the Railroad Industry in Warsaw. During the 1970's, he worked for Polish National Railways and the Ursus tractor factory near Warsaw. Active in the Workers' Defense Committee (KOR) from 1978 to 1980, Janas co-organized a strike at the Ursus factory in 1980 and headed the factory's Solidarity local in 1980-81 and 1989. An underground Solidarity activist between 1981 and 1984, he was unemployed for political reasons from 1984 to 1986. From 1985 to 1989, Janas helped organize illegal meetings on the Polish-Czechoslovak border between members of Solidarity and Czech and Slovak civil rights activists. A Deputy in the Sejm since 1989, he has represented the Civic Parliamentary Club, Democratic Union, and Freedom Union.

As research has documented, an average Pole at the end of the 80's focused primarily on organizing his own private life and on material issues. Socio-political problems, such as, for instance, doubts concerning the mismanagement of the country or the economic crisis were, for a majority of Poles, only a marginal issue, remaining in the background of everyday life. Because at that time, when asked the question, "What is crucial right now for your family, what issues would you like to take care of first of all and what are your main goals?," those surveyed would indicate such things as an apartment, over fifty-one percent, family and private life, financial situation, with almost thirty percent of respondents. And it was only the fourth position where the situation in the country was mentioned by merely thirteen percent of respondents….

In the political struggle of the 80's, I can say that, to my knowledge, political demands were to a considerable degree a result of everyday, economic frustrations. The propaganda of success generated by the political authorities gradually contributed to higher and higher material aspirations and expectations in the Polish society. At the same time, the deepening crisis caused the ability of the government to meet those expectations to gradually diminish. And thus, the lack of balance between the material needs and expectations of the society and the life conditions that the system could provide turned out to be one of the main causes of the protests in the 80's. And what pushed people towards struggle were not so much objective material problems as the gap between expectations, aroused by propaganda, and the actual availability of goods.

Gabriel Janowski

Farmer, Solidarity activist responsible for unifying the independent trade union movement in the countryside, and Round Table participant for the opposition, Gabriel Janowski (b. 1947) holds a doctorate in agriculture from the College of Agriculture in Warsaw, where he worked from 1974 to 1988. After his detention from 1981 to 1982, Janowski played a leading role in the Catholic Church's lay ministry among farmers. He was a member of the Citizens' Committee, Vice-Chair (1989-90) and Chair (1990-92) of the National Council of Solidarity of Individual Farmers, and Senator for the Civic Parliamentary Club (1989-91). From 1991 to 1993, Janowski represented the Peasant Alliance as a Deputy to the Sejm and served as Minister of Agriculture. In 1992 he became leader of the Polish Peasant Party-Peasant Alliance. He is currently a Deputy to the Sejm associated with Solidarity Electoral Action.

In 1981, in November, farmers…organized a big protest demonstration at Siedlice, and one of the demands was to allow them to buy rubber shoes, more than two pairs, and lard. Hardly anyone knows about that, but when food was rationed, farmers were not given coupons, in fact. Those things are practically, well, we can't really understand those things today how that group, that class, was being discriminated against throughout all that time….

In the Polish rural areas there was practically…unilateral support for the new order. And great expectations indeed connected with it. I could ask you, ladies and gentlemen, directly, what forced the government side to enter those Round Table negotiations. Just as it happened during previous crises….Of course, I don't want to oversimplify, but I want to show this as a real problem. It was the issue of providing food for the Poles, since every Polish crisis was in fact accompanied by empty store shelves….

During the Round Table negotiations, to us, well, in what is now the Presidential Palace, there were farmers in front of the palace demonstrating, farmers demonstrating, demanding good pay. Ten years later, in February of this year, as you know, Poland was shaken by peasant protests, well, on a scale unheard of for the past seventy years. There is something symbolic about this, since then, there, at the Round Table, we tried, well, unsuccessfully, as it has turned out, but we tried to solve the economic problems, especially those of the farmers. And now, ten years later, the same problem is coming back magnified, and it still remains unsolved. And that's a great challenge that's ahead of us, all those Poles who look seriously at their duties toward the Polish nation. This means that we will have to tackle the problem of the Polish farmers and we'll have to solve it for the good of the farmers, but also for the good of the whole Polish society….

Among parts of the opposition, there was a fear of taking over. Among the rural types like myself…we were used to working on our own, to normal entrepreneurship and so forth. We never lost completely this kind of responsibility, which...not to put down the working class, but they functioned differently. They were supposed to obey orders, you know. They would think less; I'm sorry, you know, I don't mean to put anybody down. In order to survive as individual farmers, we had to think, figure out some tricks, to say informally. Therefore, we were not afraid of running things….

As a man, well, let's call it a hundred percent Solidarity man, I am experiencing personally, and very acutely, the huge problem of the departure from Solidarity of the community I'm representing, and that is the rural community….

It's something incredible that the most powerful, peaceful movement in that part of Europe that has changed the face of contemporary world is unable to find its place in this contemporary world! But I believe, and I am an optimist, that we will find it and we will enter the twenty-first century with a new force, the force that would stem, above all, from Solidarity and from the social teachings of the Church. And these are the two major tasks that we have to carry.

Janina Jankowska

Broadcast journalist Janina Jankowska chaired the Solidarity delegation on the sub-table for public radio and television during the Round Table negotiations. After graduating from the University of Warsaw in Polish philology, Jankowska worked until 1982 for the Radio and Television Commission. In August 1980, Jankowska covered events at the Gdańsk shipyards, becoming a member of the Editorial Board for Solidarity Broadcasting Programs. Interned under martial law in early 1982, she went on to produce radio documentaries for clandestine distribution on audiocassettes, which led to her imprisonment in 1984. Jankowska was responsible for the opposition's radio and television campaigns in the 1989 elections. She has worked as a broadcast journalist in Poland since 1990 and has chaired the Program Council of Polish Radio since 1993.

…Any interviews that had been recorded during the Round Table negotiations, the interviews recorded by regime journalists, as we called them then, were attended by our own journalists who would record everything and then we would check which sections of the interview had been cut out, so, with this breathing on their necks, they had to produce decent, substantive, well done reports. Besides, we also wanted the viewers to know when Zakrzewski, the regime journalist, spoke to a member of the OPZZ (government unions) or a person from Solidarity. And here I have to say immodestly

that this was my idea. We had three folders with the Solidarity logo, so everybody from our side who was being interviewed on television would hold that folder like this. And it became clear, since otherwise nobody would be able to identify that person as a member of Solidarity or the opposition and not a person from OPZZ. That's what this moment was like….

At the Round Table negotiations we didn't even dream that what has happened would happen, that so soon we would have free mass media. One of those colleagues of mine who participated at the press "small table" said, and I won't quote it here exactly, that he hoped that perhaps in two years underground publications would probably become legal. We were simply counting on the end of repression against underground publications. And, of course, the way Polish society behaved during the elections surprised all of us, I mean the election results. And we, journalists, I think owe particularly much to all this because what happened was exactly what we had been fighting for. Thanks to that we have completely free mass media right now and we may write according to our conscience. However, completely new and also quite restrictive conditions arose, but those phenomena are close to the world in which we are here right now. It's a certain commercialism, a certain dependence on centers, perhaps no longer political,…but perhaps to some extent political, but primarily on money….

…One of my male friends from the opposition said to me in a conversation at one point that we should erect a monument dedicated to the women of martial law, because that entire network of conspiracy, all of this rested on the shoulders of the women….

The Solidarity that we were directly involved in and felt so emotional about was a creation of a certain era, a certain time, and perhaps it cannot easily be transferred to today, as reality has demonstrated….

The period of the Round Table was very interesting, very important, also because it allowed us to look at the opponents, at the partners, and get to know them. And this is when the links were created, and they were quite necessary in order to perceive those people differently and try to understand their motivation, their way of thinking. And on the other hand, those Round Table negotiations marked the beginning of a process which brought to an end this period of direct democracy when people still had direct impact on their trade union authorities and on the opposition authorities. And a new period started which, I am afraid, today has resulted in a certain deafness to social protests.

PANEL FOUR: POLITICAL AND ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITY

Aleksander Hall

Former teacher and founder of the Young Poland Movement (1979), Aleksander Hall (b. 1953) participated in the Round Table negotiations as a representative of the opposition. In 1977, he received a degree in history from the University of Gdańsk and became a coordinator of the Movement for the Defense of Human and Civil Rights. A member of the Regional Coordinating Commission for Solidarity from 1980 to 1981, he spent the following three years in hiding. He resumed involvement in the Solidarity movement in 1988 and became a member of the Citizens' Committee. Hall was a government minister responsible for cooperation with political organizations and associations from 1989 to 1990. Co-founder of the Democratic Union, he served as its Co-chairman from 1991 to 1992 and as one of its Deputies in the Sejm from 1991 to 1993. Hall was leader of the Conservative Party from 1992 to 1997, when he co-founded the Peasant-Conservative Party. He is currently a Deputy to the Sejm associated with Solidarity Electoral Action.

Solidarity was certainly a polyphonic major national anticommunist movement that was also a labor movement in favor of civil society. In time, differences surfaced, sometimes quite substantial, among separate strands of that movement, but it was undoubtedly a major national movement that had its own ethos, the movement that has transformed Poland. Its mode of operation was indeed the rejection of violence, and in this rejection of violence, both ideological and pragmatic considerations played a role….

Was it possible to engage in dialogue with the other side? I think that there certainly existed political communities in Poland which believed that it was not, for ideological reasons, simply because one just doesn't talk to the communist authorities. Let's be honest, however, those were marginal communities. Other groups claimed that it wasn't the right moment, or would claim that the side represented by Solidarity and Wałęsa was not fully representative for society and opposition at the time. But I think that a distinct majority of those who were active and involved in the opposition, groups and individuals, believed that it was worthwhile to opt for those talks, not because they trusted in the good intentions of the other side, but for other reasons….

It was also clear that the system was stepping back, not because those in the leadership of the communist party were liberals or reformers, but it was in retreat because of its own weaknesses, because of the various forms of social resistance, and also, I would just say, under the influence of the reality….

Since the Church and the underground Solidarity really demanded, insisted on resuming dialogue, so when the other side finally, under the influence of many factors, had matured to engage in this dialogue, or at least there was a chance that it had matured, it was necessary to take advantage of this opportunity. Taking advantage, of course, meant not having any illusions, or in other words, trying to preserve our own independence, our own identity, and under no circumstances legitimizing the status quo that would signal that a reformed People's Poland was the achievement of what we had been struggling for. Signing an accord that would legitimize the withdrawal of a prospect of democracy and independence for Poland was out of the question. But on this path towards democracy and independence, it was possible to make partial compromises that would bring us closer to that goal. And that appeared to be a decent compromise….

We have to look at the Round Table by, on the one hand, rejecting the sort of black legend that depicts the Round Table as a betrayal. Because that would be a very strange betrayal that pushes Poland's affairs strongly ahead. But we also have to reject the other legend which produces the myth where both sides, Solidarity and the government, are being presented as equally worried, equally concerned with the need for transforming Poland. And under that myth both sides are given equal credit for having brought about democracy in Poland. I have no doubt that such was the intention of Solidarity, but that was not the intention of the communist authorities of the People's Poland….

I had a very distinct feeling that it was very important for the society to emphasize very clearly that two opposite visions of Poland meet, that they also represent different moral stands, and that our delegation approaches this table to reach a certain goal, a goal that would place Poland closer to independence and democracy, and that, to the enemies, because there was absolutely no doubt that these were our enemies, that we need to show them, well, some attitude I would say, an attitude of human respect. Yet, at the same time, we cannot create an impression that these fundamental differences have been blurred and that martial law, with its victims, and the whole balance sheet of the Polish People's Republic have been forgotten….

Of course, the Round Table did not represent the entire opposition, realistic opposition I mean, since there were also groups which generally opposed any direction towards negotiations. Why did that happen? It was not…because of the decision of the government, but it was the decision of Mr. Lech Wałęsa and his advisors, since they were the ones who created the group that participated in the Round Table negotiations. And I think it was not good that important circles and important people were not participating in those negotiations.

Adam Michnik

…During the Round Table negotiations and, actually, at one of the sub-committees, where the most controversial issues were being discussed, a very significant dialogue took place between a representative of the government and a representative of the Church. Namely, the representative of the government, Mr. Stanisław Ciosek, in an attempt to explain to us how important it was, said: "Well, I have a dog and his name is Pikuś. And Pikuś is sick, and my sick Pikuś needs medication, and this Pikuś is Poland, and I know that this medication for Pikuś is democracy, but if we inject too much of this medication into my dog Pikuś, then instead of getting better, he will just kick the bucket." So then the Church representative, Father Orszulik, says: "Well, Mr. Secretary, but your Pikuś gets into convulsions just by looking at the syringe." So in that little anecdote, we can see both the heat and the essence of the discussion but we can also see something that…I would call...perhaps not an ethos, but a certain climate of the Round Table that made it possible for the two worlds, which spoke two different languages, to communicate….

Communists, and those who accepted the communist government for their own benefit, are a component of the Polish nation, which cannot be excluded from Poland, unless one wants to destroy the Polish national community. And this is what I learned at the Round Table….

I have a feeling that at the Round Table, we, as a nation and a society, have managed to leave communism behind in two ways. First, the whole model of a single party dictatorship, supported by censorship, police violence, subordination to Moscow, and ideology, has been broken down and sort of thrown away into the dumping ground of history. But second of all, we have rejected bolshevism also by accepting the fact that our society is pluralistic, with many different interests, different ideas, different forces, and different value systems. And only in those areas where we are able to reach agreement are we capable of defending the interests of our state….

This was an essential conflict, and in this conflict, both sides had good arguments and I don't deny moral points to my adversaries, because in their conviction, they were defending the most important thing for Poland. All I am expecting is reciprocity. I want it to be admitted that defending Solidarity's position so strongly, I was, in my conviction, defending the most important thing for Poland.

Janusz Reykowski

Professor of Psychology at the University of Warsaw since 1972, Janusz Reykowski (b. 1929) participated in the Round Table talks as a negotiator for the government. He was a member of the Polish United Workers' Party from 1949 to 1990 and served on its Central Committee and Politburo from 1988 to 1990. Reykowski earned his master's (1954) and doctoral (1959) degrees from the University of Warsaw. Since 1980, he has directed various psychological institutions, including the Psychology Institute of the Polish Academy of Sciences. Reykowski has been Editor-in-Chief of the journal Studia Psychologiczne *since 1972 and is a member of several Polish and international psychological associations. He is the author of numerous publications on psychological stress and personality.*

I must say that when Professor Michael Kennedy approached me, asking me to participate in this panel, concerning the ethical problems, I felt uneasy. I felt uneasy because I thought that that would lead to an ethical argument with people who, defending their own values and convictions, suffered a huge sacrifice, personal sacrifice. And their ethical attitude, their sacrifice, makes them look like saints. And you can hardly argue with a saint. So, I hesitated, whether or not to take up this discussion. But, eventually, I thought that my respect of the moral attitude of those people and their struggle for a democratic Poland, which they may rightly consider won, should not prevent me from participation but it actually obliges me to present the moral arguments shared by those who saw the situation from a different perspective….

On one hand, there is a set of values Solidarity is struggling for, values such as civil society, national sovereignty, civil rights guarantees. On the other hand, though, there are values represented by the government. Well, it was, above all else, defending that minimal, limited sovereignty which they were able to keep and enlarge. For the West and also for many members of the Polish community abroad who were looking at the socialist camp from a distance, everything looked all the same, but to many Poles living in Poland, the difference between our situation and the situation in the Soviet Union, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, or Romania, was tremendous. Defending, protecting this, we believed, was a very important value for the society. Another issue that we also considered a value was our fear that...or the defense of the basic order within the country, without which no kind of life of the society is possible. Many of us thought that at that time, under those conditions, when the opposition was not ready to take power, there was no possibility for Solidarity to take over safely, that there is a potential danger of a huge de-stabilization. At that time that was mostly theoretical thinking, but the experience many countries went through after 1989 showed what it means when there is a collapse of a system where no other institutions exist….

One aspect of the Solidarity movement was mobilization of the society around the idea of peaceful transformation toward democracy. Another aspect was an explosion of aggressive populism, escalating demands, and traditional Polish nationalism and intolerance. Both elements might be discerned within the Solidarity movement. All that caused us to think that the moral situation was not as obvious as presented by activists on both sides….

We were…convinced that the natural logic of a destructive conflict causes severing of any ties between the struggling sides, causes a growing tendency to demonize the enemy, and invariably results in physical confrontation. This is that tragic logic that moves the sides involved in the Balkan conflict and all others involved in conflicts where blood is shed. And we wanted to counter that kind of logic, so we wanted, at all costs, to try to avoid leading those two separate camps to a precipice. That kind of thinking is often criticized as trying to enter into agreements with the devil. This accusation is put forward not only against those who were collaborating with the regime this way or another, or those, like myself, who agreed to represent one them, but also against the Solidarity participants of the Round Table negotiations. The latter ones, while defending themselves, say that it's worth negotiating with the devil if it ultimately spreads the good and the peaceful transformation that has led to freedom and democracy….

I do not think that people who at that time were in charge of Poland deserved being called devils. First of all, they also acted on behalf of certain values, which are important to the Poles, even though one must admit that those values were defective and limited. …They do not deserve to be called that because they undertook some efforts to limit or to eradicate certain evils which the regime generated. These efforts were limited by the limited vision of those who were in charge at that time, but they were a permanent element of governing the country. Finally, they don't deserve to be called that because they voluntarily undertook actions geared towards fundamental transformation of the system when they fully realized that it's economically unviable and politically unfit for the needs and the aspirations of Polish society….

On the one hand, there was a real conflict, discussion, struggle, argument. There were dangerous and dramatic moments. But above all that, there was a conviction that we share a common goal. And that common goal was starting such reforms, which will enable Poland to pass safely and peacefully to another way of functioning….

On the day the Polish communist party was being dissolved, a young man approached me, reached out his hand and, with a grimace of rage on his face, said, "Well, thank you very much for destroying the party…."

I always had a feeling that…my main concern is the state, the country and not any specific political formation. Political formations come and go, while the concerns of the Polish state and society are above it all. And from that perspective…I've never had any doubts about that….

I look with sadness upon those people who, while they contributed a lot to those negotiations, find themselves attacked unjustly, I think, and that I haven't done anything to maybe even partially protect those people from those attacks. One could say, well, this is the justice of history: when they were in power, they hurt their enemies more than the enemies are hurting them now. But I think that the reason we were trying to change this world, this political world, was to prevent it from becoming a sequence of mutually performed harms, even when some are smaller than others.

Bishop Bronisław Dembowski

In the long run, a correct moral choice always proves to be correct tactically.

PANEL FIVE: CAPACITIES TO NEGOTIATE

Bishop Alojzy Orszulik

I expected what Solidarity was expecting, what the leadership of Solidarity was expecting. And at this early stage, the leaders were expecting the government to…,like I used to say, "stutter" the three words, "Solidarity," "re-legalization," and "trade union pluralism…."

In our conversations, I mean between the government and the Episcopate, we tried to encourage, we tried to convince the other side to start looking for paths to establish contacts. We were also trying to help the government side get rid of that fear of Solidarity and of what could possibly happen….

At the Round Table we were not concerned with the Church itself. Our concern was focused on the nation, the country, changes in the country, improvement of the situation in Poland, the life of the people. That was our concern and not dividing people into those we liked and those we didn't like.

Janusz Reykowski

…Within the political elites and the government circles there was a deep dissatisfaction with the system, disappointment with its ideological value and practical capabilities….

In the 70's and the 80's, there were a lot of people in the government who were educated at the best Polish universities, traveled abroad and compared the situation here and there in the world. And these people were ready for changes. On the one government side, they were the political, or rather the social base for change. The existence of this category of people interested in change was a very important factor….

During the course of the negotiations, it was important that certain principles would be followed. I'd like to mention several of them which were important. One of them was the principle of equality. It was very scrupulously followed in a variety of aspects, beginning with the idea that the number of people on both delegations had to be the same, equal.…Another such condition that was also very important was the principle of not discussing symbolic problems. We were to solve the future, and avoid arguing about the past. We believed, and I think most of us agreed here, that if we started getting into discussions about the past wrongs, we wouldn't accomplish anything. We had to accept the fact that we looked at different things from the past in different ways, and that we had different visions of various symbolic problems….

If Solidarity were blamed for breaking up the talks, it would think that it was a trap all along, that all those talks were meant to compromise…At first I was thinking to myself, there's no other way, but tomorrow, the first thing in the morning, I'm turning in my resignation officially and that's the end of it. And then I had some apocalyptic thoughts run through my head, about what would happen next, with the society's expectations. I'm imagining the Solidarity people's emotions and how they go right into the streets…that's what I was thinking….

And at one point, Ireneusz Sekuła…said this: "I'll tell you an anecdote." I thought he'd gone crazy, an anecdote in this situation! But he went on: "One day, Goethe went along a narrow path in the mountains and he met his fiercest enemy, and his enemy said, 'I never give the right of way to fools.' And Goethe responded, 'And I always do.' And he turned around and left…."

The negotiations met the needs of a society that wanted change but did not want confrontation. It met the needs of the opposition that was pressing for peaceful changes in the country but began to understand that if the situation continued it would not become a player in this arena because new forces were emerging, more radical and of a

different orientation. It also met the needs of the authorities that were becoming aware that it was impossible to continue running the country this way, that it was impossible to implement any reforms, and the alternative of the talks was an escalated policy of repression….

There had been many historical circumstances that had been wasted, but that one did not get wasted. That's…I believe that it's worthwhile to support the myth of the Round Table, because this is a myth of Poles who were capable of taking advantage of the opportunity. And I think that, even if we don't know what will happen in ten years, that myth, that legend, can support us in difficult moments.

Grażyna Staniszewska

A Solidarity activist in Bielsko-Biała during the 1980's, Grażyna Staniszewska (b. 1949) participated in the Round Table negotiations for the opposition. She received a master's degree in Polish philology from Jagiellonian University in 1972. Over the next decade, she worked in a local high school, cultural center, and research center library in Bielsko-Biała. Staniszewska joined Solidarity in 1980; she was detained from 1981 to 1982 and imprisoned in 1983. From 1983 to 1988, she edited the regional newspaper Solidarność Podbeskidzia *and was a member of the Helsinki Committee in Poland. In 1988, she was chosen as a regional representative to Solidarity's National Executive Committee. From 1988 to 1990, she was a member of the Citizens' Committee. A Deputy to the Sejm since 1989, Staniszewska has represented the Civic Parliamentary Club (1989-91), Democratic Union (1991-94), and Freedom Union (1994-present).*

All the way till the very end, it seemed to me that we were being involved in an end game that was not ours. And I was afraid all the time, from the very beginning, that, well you know, great, we chatted, we visited the salons, we saw how people behave in salons, we ate some fancy food, but that finally we would start acting in somebody else's play….

I think that if anybody had thought that the system was being dismantled, the Round Table would not have happened at all….

Only after the first actual meeting of the Round Table, suddenly, like mushrooms after rain, would the local Solidarity committees spring into existence. People started meeting, working on things. When negotiations faltered, when news wasn't good, people would stop coming to meetings, work would freeze. That was clear proof for me

that if we did not continue those talks, those activities would just cease to exist, and people would completely drop out from this activity….

It never occurred to me that it would be the end of communism. I thought that there would be some other kind of thaw period that would last a year or two, maybe three, maybe a little bit longer, and then the situation would get back to the same old, same old. Yet it seemed worthwhile to live and see this breath of freedom; it seemed worthwhile to create some sort of network for this….

I thought that there were some real gangsters sitting on the other side of the table, that they certainly wanted to trap us, but we had to balance on this rope and play this game, like we had been with the secret police, when we knew that our conversations were tapped and we were being followed while we had some illegal publications on us….

We knew that we had to go for it and just try to outsmart them. Did my perception of the other side change during negotiations? No,…not much! Not during negotiations….

We all had a sense that we were really transforming Poland. Well, maybe this is a huge word, but this…patriotic atmosphere, this selfless atmosphere that dominated the tenth Sejm is unfortunately gone today. I'm sorry but it's gone….

PANEL SIX: CONSTITUENCIES OF NEGOTIATION

Mieczysław Rakowski

…So what is weighing so heavily on my heart? Well, it's the fact that I have a swallowing problem. I cannot keep on swallowing those opinions that are being uttered here today and that were uttered here yesterday. And those opinions that state that our intentions—when I say "our" I'm going to be referring to the government camp at that time—from all those opinions, it's clear that our intentions were evil, and they were all evil. And we are being denied any kind of goodwill and reason….

I've also heard that we are generously granted the right to live, because I quote, "independently of their biographies," at the Round Table, "they still did something for Poland." So we are still allowed to breathe and to take an exam on our attachment to democracy….

Nobody will be surprised when I say that not once and not twice within the past ten years I've gone through a critical reckoning of my life, analyzed my attitudes, my life, my judgments and opinions, and so on. I've done it of my own will, and also based on some accusations that were being brought up against the People's Republic of Poland and the people who played key roles in that system. I admit it's not easy to talk about myself but there are some circumstances that allow us to work through our natural reservations. You know, I don't think that somebody who's not biased, somebody who is not dressing up in the armor of a saint fighting a dragon would count me among the hard-liners, the "party concrete." I'm classifying myself into the reformist wing of PZPR and I'm not sure how development of Poland would have gone without the wing that I represent. The reformist wing, I believe, deserves to be analyzed in a factual and friendly way, and not to be treated like a dog's fifth leg….

It's not the most important issue that reformers constituted a minority. The most important thing is that we could not afford to say no openly and to organize ourselves within the party. Why? Well, why couldn't we afford that? Because for many years we had been prisoners of a few dogmas defining our behaviors and attitudes. There was a dogma about the detriment of fragmentation, and from that dogma another one stemmed, the one about party's unity as an absolutely crucial thing. And I have to admit that such unity did not exist. The Polish communist party gathered all kinds of attitudes from the national democrats to some really hard-headed fundamentalists. We were also prisoners of the leading role of the party dogma, the unquestioned role of the leader dogma, and finally the dogma of an absolute superiority of the socialist economy over the capitalist one. And finally, we, the members of the party who were keen on reforms, were also prisoners of that dogma that preached the absolute detriment of any criticism of the Soviet Union….

Once I spoke to one of the leaders in the opposition, a man whom I respect a lot, who had been imprisoned for nine years, and I asked him, "Listen, who was right? You or I?" And he said, "We were both needed…."

"…I do not consider myself a loser; I'm a guy who was representing a party that in the first round of the '89 elections received four million four hundred fifty thousand votes, and that is twenty-eight percent, and Solidarity received thirty-eight percent. For the sake of comparison, in the last election AWS (Solidarity Electoral Action) received four million four hundred twenty-seven and a half thousand votes. Well, I don't believe, I'm not expecting a fair judgment, yet I believe that it would be good to perceive Polish reality of that time as a multi-colored, multi-faceted, complicated reality, and that we were not mere puppets moved by strings pulled by somebody who was standing on the outside…."

I'd like to say that I treated the Round Table as a beginning of an evolutionary change of the system. I believed that economic reforms, regardless of their range, would bring about stratification within the material sphere, and that stratification would cause emergence of political parties with diverse interests….

I simply did not accept at the time, and I still don't accept today the conclusion that we should have just chopped out everything down to the roots, the entire People's Poland system, and then we would just have a wonderful, democratic country. It seems to me that anybody who gives up on revolution and bloodshed must be in favor of more evolutionary changes.

Jan Lityński

A participant in the Round Table negotiations for the opposition and a mathematician, Jan Lityński (b. 1946) has served as a Deputy in the Sejm since 1989. Lityński was expelled from the University of Warsaw and imprisoned in 1968 for his participation in student demonstrations. Nine years later he became a founding member of the Workers' Defense Committee (KOR) and edited Biuletyn Informacyjny *and* Robotnik. *As a result of his membership in Solidarity, he was imprisoned from 1981 to 1983 and forced into hiding from 1983 to 1986. Since 1989, Lityński has represented the Civic Parliamentary Club, Democratic Union, and Freedom Union in the Sejm; since 1994, he has been a member of the National Council for Freedom.*

As for the question of representativeness, at the Round Table, the representation was relatively limited. It was limited to that trend, which was not in itself uniform, the trend putting a high stake on that solution, on the negotiation solution….

I was to some extent a beneficiary of communism, because thanks to communism I've had a very interesting life, I've had a number of close friendships, I've had a sense of some common bond. Without communism, I probably wouldn't have had it. And also what I do now I owe to the fact that communism was around once upon a time. So I wouldn't overdo the victim part. When it comes to joining the Round Table, I would say that some dual responsibility was our driving force. Above all, it was responsibility for those who had been actually persecuted, who actually lost something after martial law because of their Solidarity activities. It was quite different from us. In 1989, we were pretty well fixed, we knew how to live in this system, but there were others who didn't. They really were persecuted; they lost their jobs and had no chance in life. This was one thing and the other was that thanks to communism I may have been set up pretty well, but Poland wasn't. And it was necessary to look for ways out of communism. So the

Round Table seemed at that time to be the only way. And what's more, and I've mentioned this before, nobody had formulated another way.

Ambassador Stanisław Ciosek

Well, I'd like to report to you that Pikuś has died, and not because of seeing the syringe, and not because of an overdose of the drug, but simply because of old age. The system that we've been talking about here has died for that reason. Pikuś lived too long; he was very old indeed. And I'd like to tell you that we have a new dog. It's a multi-racial dog, incredibly pluralistic, and he's doing well….

We were not afraid so much of Solidarity itself as that Solidarity would not be able to put the genie back in the bottle….

The Polish Church was very important in reaching the compromise. It's a great, honorable page in its history, and I'm sure future generations will acknowledge it when the distance is further from that time and evaluations may be more rational. A centrally run structure, which was the party, better understood and trusted another strong structure than an unbridled Solidarity which was only in the state of emerging.…The Church achieved a very important, formal position in the country, one that's binding till today. Because Solidarity also turned to the Church for protection and help, it naturally became the mediator between the government and the opposition. I believe it was more than just passive mediation. The Church has actively shaped the Polish compromise….

I must say definitely that the fundamental thing was the will to change and reach compromise. General Wojciech Jaruzelski had that will. He had the real power and things in Poland did not have to go the way they went. Well, it was possible to maneuver, delay, ignore the election plebiscite of the June '89 elections. We heard such advice. Jaruzelski, however, accepted the challenge and, I think, with full awareness of its potential consequences. Also Lech Wałęsa and his colleagues from the Solidarity leadership had enough imagination and courage. In retrospect, we can clearly say that both sides acted in good will, and the negotiations were conducted by the book….

The logic of events shows that things were intermingled, borders were liquid, and there was no black-or-white picture…The way of framing the issue, I believe, in terms of opposing camps, is methodologically problematic, I'm sorry to say.

Lech Kaczyński

A Round Table participant for the opposition, Lech Kaczyński (b. 1949) graduated from the University of Warsaw's Faculty of Law in 1971 and later completed doctoral studies in law at the University of Gdańsk. In the early 1980's Kaczyński directed the Bureau for Intervention of the Workers' Defense Committee (KOR) and advised striking workers in the Lenin Shipyards in Gdańsk in 1980. From 1982 to 1989, he was a member of the Helsinki Committee in Poland. He was Secretary of Solidarity's Provisional Coordinating Commission (1986-87) and National Executive Committee (1987-89), and a member of the Citizens' Committee (1988-91). Kaczyński became a Senator representing the Civic Parliamentary Club (1989-91) and First Vice-President of the National Commission for Solidarity (1990-91). In 1991, he was elected to the Sejm for the Center Alliance and served as a presidential advisor on issues of national security. Kaczyński was President of the Chief Inspectorate from 1992 to 1995. A docent of law, he is currently Professor of Law at the Catholic Theological Academy in Warsaw.

What was the important source of that power struggle, about at least a partial control over the union? Well, in my opinion, the crux of the matter here was a sizable difference in political concepts. In short, it's possible to simplify it as a debate whether Solidarity as a social movement is to have one political heir in the form of some Solidarity political party, Solidarity movement, whatever the name, and by the way, I believe the concept was constantly evolving, or whether Solidarity should have many political heirs….

I was deeply, deeply convinced that the new balance created by the Round Table, that new balance that was all about removing the party's leadership in the society but at the same time maintaining some kind of political power, that is control over the country, by the party would have to be temporary and would not be able to survive four years, as it was practically decided at the Round Table. Yet, in May before the election, I wasn't sure that it would only last a few months, but we simply believed that these contacts were worth having, because in the overall context of changes they could turn out very useful….

Within the nation at that time, the feeling was that economically we were poorly off, and that the cause of this economic misery was the communist system. And there was the great hope, incredibly dangerous, by the way, that the very change of this situation would cause improvement in people's economic situation. In general, during the entire election campaign that was the very first question: when will things get better?

PANEL SEVEN: GLOBAL CHANGE AND THE ROUND TABLE

László Bruszt

Co-founder and National Secretary of the Democratic League of Independent Trade Unions from 1988 to 1992, László Bruszt (b. 1953) represented the unions in the Hungarian Opposition Round Table (EKA) and at the negotiations between the EKA and the communist government. Bruszt holds a master's degree in sociology from Budapest University and a doctorate in sociology from the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Associate Professor in the Department of Political Science at Central European University (CEU) in Budapest since 1993, he has been CEU's Vice-Rector of Academic Affairs since 1995 and served as its Acting Rector and President in 1996-97. During 1998-99, he was a Research Fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences in Stanford, CA. Bruszt has published several books and articles on the political transformation of East Central Europe.

In the second half of the 80's, Eastern Europe was seen, briefly, as one of the most hopeless regions of the world. According to the official US analyses done in the mid-80's, Eastern Europe was seen as the second biggest potential crisis region of the world, just nearly, or a little after, the Middle East….

The Poles played an extremely important role, basically until the end of August '89. They signaled, or they created events which signaled for the citizens and rulers of the region, what is possible, how far they can go, what is tolerated and what are the strategies of creating such events….

To enter into compromise negotiations, and as such a type of democratization, presupposed to speak in the name of society. That slowly emerged in Poland, by the end of '88, and it didn't come about, the Hungarian opposition was never able, never felt that it can speak in the name of society, even when the negotiations started, they very clearly contrasted their position to the Polish Solidarity. They could afford to enter into compromise; we cannot do that, because we cannot speak, we don't have that type of mandate….

The Polish peaceful negotiations had an impact not only on the Hungarian or the other negotiations, but this compromise had an impact also on regime changes like the Czech or the German, where the mobilization of masses was so high that political leaders of the opposition could have easily led the masses against the party headquarters and started violent regime change. And the reason they didn't do that, the most important reason they didn't do that was that they were led by the same ethos, which led the Polish negotiators and the Polish democratic opposition, that you cannot get, establish rule of

law…in an unruly way—that human rights should be respected and the peaceful and non-violent nature of the negotiations is extremely important and a value in itself.

Dai Qing

Trained as a missile engineer, Dai Qing (b. 1941) is a prominent Chinese journalist and writer. Dai's investigative reports about dissident figures persecuted by the Chinese Communist Party in the 1940's and 1950's were published during the 1980's. She co-organized China's first environmental lobby in 1989 in opposition to construction of the Three Gorges Dam Project on the Yangtze River. Although banned after several printings in China, her 1989 collection of essays by prominent Chinese intellectuals critical of the hydroelectric project, Yangtze! Yangtze!*, was largely responsible for the government's decision to temporarily postpone construction of the dam. After publicly denouncing the June 4, 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre and quitting the Chinese Communist Party on June 5, Dai was jailed for ten months and is no longer able to publish in China. Currently a Scholar in Residence at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, she has been honored with several international fellowships and awards.*

Compared with the Round Table negotiations in Poland, what happened in Beijing ten years ago was not a great democratic movement, as it was widely perceived to have been, but a serious setback for democracy, a tragedy….

There are lots of experiences that Poland can pass on to China, but the first one is that democracy can only come through the reconciliation and agreement between the state and the society. Achieving it can only be gained through an untiring effort, through threats and counter-threats, through competition, dialogue and negotiation.

María de los Angeles Torres

María de los Angeles Torres, Associate Professor of Political Science at DePaul University in Chicago, holds a doctorate in political science from the University of Michigan. Active in community service in Chicago for several years, Torres was Executive Director of the Mayor's Advisory Commission on Latino Affairs from 1983 to 1987. She has served on the Board of Directors of the Cuban American Committee Research and Education Fund (1979-94) and on the Board of Advisors of Catedra de Cultura Cubana of the Pablo Milanes Foundation in Havana (1993-95). A member of the American Political Science Association's President's Task Force on the Status of Latinos from 1991 to 1994, she has been Coordinator of the Latin American Studies Association's Research Working Group on the Cuban American Community since 1990 and its

Task Force on Scholarly Relations with Cuba since 1992. Torres is the author of numerous publications on contemporary political and social relations between Cuba and the US and Latino immigration and communities in the US.

Michael wanted me to talk about the applicability of the experience of the Polish Round Table to Cuba. And in a certain sense, that would be a very quick talk up here, because I really think it's not applicable. What I'd like to talk about, though, is why I think it's not applicable, looking at maybe some of the political and institutional actors that in the Polish case, from what I have come to understand, were so critical to the Round Table, and why they are different in Cuba….The Cuban government, regardless of what it has become, was a government that emerged out of a popular, radical, nationalist revolution. And as such, still lays certain claims of legitimacy to that particular project. Secondly, the United States, unlike the help that it has given democracy in Poland, has not necessarily been a friend of democracies in Latin America, specifically not Cuba….The Church itself is a very different, very, very different situation in Cuba. They say that Cubans are Catholic on Sundays and that's it, and I would say probably less than that….There's a long history of the Church really being part of the colonial power, and as such was not there when the Cuban nation was formed.

Konstanty Gebert

Author, Editor-in-Chief of Midrasz, *and Moderator for panel on "Global Change and the Round Table."*

Regardless of what we thought about "them" in Poland, and what "they" thought about us, there was no denying that we were all Poles. Now, we certainly thought that "they" were bad Poles, and they certainly thought that we were bad Poles, but Poles all the same. Phrases were bandied about, "jak Polak z Polakiem," "Pole to Pole," the way of negotiating, of doing business. This was not only rhetoric, what it meant was, that there was a conceivable community to which we all belonged, and a conceivable common project to which we all wanted to contribute….

I just regret that this room isn't packed full with Polish opponents of the Round Table. Those who say it was a crime, or treason, or at least a mistake, so that they could hear María, Dai Qing, telling us how they would love such a crime, treason, mistake to happen in their countries, and many more such mistakes.

PANEL EIGHT: THE POLISH ROUND TABLE REVISITED
THE ART OF NEGOTIATION

Adam Michnik

The Round Table initiated a new phase of dismantling dictatorships through negotiations. This was perhaps the most important invention of the twentieth century, the century of totalitarian dictatorships, the century of Auschwitz and the Holocaust, the century of Stalinism, Katyń, and the gulag….

An amnesty, yes, amnesia, no. We should know how to reconcile and live together, but we must not forget what had been. We have to keep penetrating it, be inquisitive about it, at least for one reason, that it never happens again….

I remember times when even before one entered a courtroom, one was already tried and punished. And I was one of them. I was sentenced to years of imprisonment according to those procedures, in an atmosphere of hysteria where judges were too scared to pronounce a just sentence. So I promised to myself that never ever in my life in free Poland would I imitate those people who at a certain square in Jerusalem would scream, "Put him on the cross, put him on the cross."

Lech Kaczyński

To make one thing clear, however, these changes, although at this point the new structures could not simply have been created completely from scratch, since that was really unrealistic, were still too shallow, I believe. In other words, the old state, involved in a lot of different interests, still remained the basic tool of carrying out social and national tasks. What was the impact of this factor on social restructuring? I deeply believe that the impact was this: struggling for a new place in our society after 1989, people involved in the old system got a head start in the race….

And if the independence of Poland and its democracy is good, then the Round Table was a crucial step towards that goal. That goes without saying. And there are no doubts that this is Solidarity's contribution, but also a contribution of these representatives of the other side of the table, whose active participation in negotiations I witnessed myself. But the Round Table became something that could be defined as a certain prefiguration of phenomena that later ended up bringing negative results. So, as everything in this

world, the Round Table has some unanimously positive sides but it has negative consequences, as well.

Grażyna Staniszewska

The Round Table, for us, Solidarity activists of that time, was an enormous risk. While sitting down at the Round Table, we were aware that if the thing failed, we might have lost the only good that we had, our own good name, that is, and that was the only capital that we had at the time, the only asset. And we sat down without any awareness that we were about to dismantle the system. We treated those sessions, those deliberations, as just another stage in our struggle for a little bit of freedom. That's what we thought at that time….

I will be honest here and say that I sincerely regret that this atmosphere, when we felt that we were creating a new Poland, where every person had a right to a fresh start, lasted such a short time….

Aleksander Kwaśniewski

President of Poland since 1995, Aleksander Kwaśniewski (b. 1954) helped to initiate the Round Table negotiations. Along with Tadeusz Mazowiecki, he co-chaired the union pluralism sub-table. Kwaśniewski studied international business at the University of Gdańsk. A member of the Polish United Workers' Party from 1977 to 1990, he was active in youth movements, serving as a leader of the Union of Polish Socialist Students and editor of the student weekly Itd *and daily* Sztandar Młodych. *He was Minister for Youth Affairs from 1985 to 1987 and Chair of the Committee for Youth and Physical Fitness from 1987 to 1990. Kwaśniewski was a Deputy to the Sejm for the Democratic Left Alliance and leader of Social Democracy of the Polish Republic until his election as President in 1995.*

The Round Table was indeed a paradoxical event in a certain sense. On the one hand, it was caused by weakness. The party was weak, the government was weak, and Solidarity was weak. And the Soviet Union was weak, too. Everybody was weak. On the other hand, it resulted from the strength of the people who thought that a breakthrough was possible and that it could be done. Adam Michnik mentioned Mr. Wałęsa and Wojciech Jaruzelski. And I think that we owe our respect to these two people, since at that particular moment, when there were so many unknown factors and unclear spots, they undertook the effort whose results neither they themselves nor any of us who participated in the Round Table could foresee….

Making History and Silencing Memory

Brian Porter

Little did we imagine, when we first started planning a conference to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the Polish Round Table, that we would receive more than five hundred letters of protest, that we would find ourselves vilified in several Polish and Polish-American publications, or that some of our invited guests might fear the political consequences of participating in the event. We historians frequently complain that our work receives little attention from the general public, and we agonize over the balance between scholarly sophistication on the one hand and accessibility (or even relevance) on the other. I assumed that any gathering including the likes of Adam Michnik and President Aleksander Kwaśniewski would break through to a non-academic audience, but I never anticipated the sort of recognition I and my fellow organizers would receive. Indeed, I never imagined that anything I would ever do in my professional career would provoke enough emotion to generate hate-mail. The conference on "Communism's Negotiated Collapse," however, did just this.

The Polish Round Table of 1989 is a fascinating topic, with important lessons about the processes of political transformation, the dynamics of negotiation, and the relationship between causation and contingency. But the University of Michigan's Round Table Commemoration of 1999 is equally fascinating, because it casts light on the very nature of history—its personal and public remembrance, its professional (usually professorial) representation, and its political significance. In his introductory remarks on the first day of the conference, Michael Kennedy said, "Academics are not the only interpreters of history, and most especially they're not the ones that make history. The people we have invited to this conference have made history."[1] But upon further

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[1] *Communism's Negotiated Collapse: The Polish Round Table, Ten Years Later. A Conference at the University of Michigan. April 7-10, 1999. English Transcript of the Conference Proceedings*, trans. by Kasia Kietlinska, ed. by Donna Parmelee (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Center for Russian and East European Studies, 1999), 2. My citations are all from the full printed version of the English translation of the conference transcript. Not all the passages referred to here have been included in the excerpts reprinted above. For the full text, see <www.umich.edu/~iinet/ PolishRoundTable/frame.html>.

consideration, this distinction between the conference organizers and the guests breaks down, because we scholars are in fact the ones who *make history*, in the sense that we legitimate a specific story about the late 1980's in Poland, and silence any memories that might challenge our interpretations. We literally set the stage for debate over 1989, and in doing so we forced some voices to speak from offstage and others to be silenced altogether. This may not have been a bad thing—maybe the excluded ones deserved their fate—but we cannot deny that our organizational and commemorative efforts played an important role in shaping the discussion of 1989 in 1999. From our authoritative position as international "experts" on Poland, and as the organizers of the largest and most visible public reconsideration of the Round Table (in Poland or abroad), we helped establish the issues to be debated, the questions to be posed, the time-frame for telling stories, and (perhaps most important) the people who would be allowed to speak. At the time, we diligently and sincerely strove for objectivity and distance: we were the impartial outsiders, the disengaged (though obviously not disinterested) scholars. But precisely *because* we were acting as historians, we were necessarily constructing boundary posts around the past, drawing lines between the visible and the invisible, the vocal and the silent.

One vital lesson of the Round Table Conference of 1999 (independent, in this sense, of the Round Table Negotiations of 1989) is that history is *always* political, whether we like it or not. This is the same lesson learned by the American historians who tried to collaborate with the Smithsonian Museum to create an exhibit on the Enola Gay; it is the lesson learned by those who tried (and failed) to formulate a set of historical standards for American high school students. At the time of both controversies, many complained that historical truth and objectivity had to be sacrificed when scholars enter the public arena, but this reaction was inappropriate. Instead, we should interpret our effort to commemorate 1989, along with these earlier disputes, as unusually dramatic examples of how history is *always* made, challenged, and remade. This experience should help teach us—and help us teach our students—that history itself is not an object to be discovered and learned, but a fluid discursive space in which we all argue about the past, present, and future.

The story of our conference began in late 1997, in the hallway of Michigan's Center for Russian and East European Studies (CREES). I was chatting casually with Marysia Ostafin, the chief administrator for our Polish studies program, about what to do for the 1998/99 Copernicus Lecture, an event we hold each year to promote Polish studies. One of us mentioned that 1999 would be the tenth anniversary of the fall of communism, so it made sense to do something to commemorate this moment. "But who should we invite?" Marysia asked. Which single individual could possibly capture all the complexity and magnitude of that event? Without really thinking, I responded, "Let's invite them all!" Marysia groaned as she considered the amount of work that

would be involved in such a project, but the idea to re-create the Round Table of 1989 had been born.

Our first organizational dilemma came when we realized that the Round Table talks included too many people. Not only did the actual table have 56 chairs—far more than we could hope to invite to Ann Arbor—but many additional people participated in the various sub-tables, and more still influenced the process from outside the negotiating halls (some by protesting their exclusion from those halls, others by denying the legitimacy of the talks themselves). During the very first meeting of our organizational committee, we decided to limit our invitations to those who actually took part in the talks. Our goal would be to pose questions about the *process* of negotiation, without directly addressing the value or wisdom of the talks themselves. We would organize sessions around questions like "what were the conditions that made it possible to enter into dialogue," "what was the relationship between the participants and their constituencies," and "what specific lessons from the Polish Round Table can be applied to conflicts elsewhere"? As it turned out, in our futile attempt to avoid the most contentious issues, we began the process of setting boundaries around our topic—a process that would become extraordinarily contentious.

Another issue arose at that first meeting: should we invite General Wojciech Jaruzelski? In 1970, as Minister for Defense, he had been responsible (directly or indirectly) for the massacre of protesting workers in Gdańsk, and as head of state in 1981 he had attempted to crush the Solidarity movement by declaring martial law. Because of this background, some on our committee were uncomfortable inviting him to speak, but most of us felt that his role in the negotiations of 1989 was too important to overlook. Since we also intended to invite a strong contingent from the Solidarity side—including Lech Wałęsa himself—it seemed clear (to me, at least) that we were offering no endorsement of General Jaruzelski. We would soon learn that such an endorsement would be assumed, regardless of our intentions.

From the start we received criticism from many different directions. One of my colleagues told me that such a conference would be of no interest to students or faculty outside the Polish studies program, because our guests were limited to "a bunch of obscure male politicians." Another dismissed it as a publicity event with little intellectual content. Although we were able to obtain enthusiastic support—and money—from the university administration, I would continue to perceive the apathy of my fellow faculty members. Evidently we were striding dangerously close to the line between the scholarly and the popular. Of much greater concern was the aggressive opposition that arose outside the university. In October 1998, Michael Kennedy (then Director of CREES) visited Poland to extend personal invitations to those we hoped to bring to Ann Arbor. Apparently this visit brought our plans to the attention of those who had long opposed the Round Table and the compromises it had entailed. The right-wing newspaper *Głos* ran an article urging readers to protest our plans to provide a

forum for communist "criminals."[2] This appeal, and others like it in Polish-American publications and on Polish e-mail lists, provoked an avalanche of letters to CREES and to the University of Michigan's president, Lee Bollinger. As one of our opponents put it, "what is the POINT of the conference? Why is it not being held in POLAND? Are these scholarly bleeding hearts unaware that some of the invitees have blood on their hands?…Is history being whitewashed again for the sake of some scholarly papers?"[3] One bitter Polish-American, Mirosław M. Krupiński, even sent us a poem, in which he complained about the "traitors" who "ten years later, fat and arrogant / well fed from profits, and victorious / without any disputes, any disagreements / once again raise a toast—in Michigan."[4]

Another critic, Tadeusz Witkowski, composed an article for a Polish-American journal called *Periphery*, in which he complained because we had limited our invitations to "individuals representing the left, the center, and the very moderate right." By focusing on those who actually played a role in the negotiations of 1989, we had overlooked the many Poles who had opposed the talks. What most disturbed Witkowski, though, were "the political ideas behind the conference"—that is, our own alleged agenda. "Some American academics," he wrote, "apparently try to measure the welfare of Polish society only in terms of what benefits today's political establishment and the new Polish business class." Here Witkowski was plugging into a common (albeit minority) conviction that the Round Table did not mark the end of communism, but was instead a negotiated settlement allowing the communists to retain their wealth and influence under new circumstances. As Witkowski put it,

> for Americans who do not understand the Polish political scene, the Round Table might be something that "opened a new era for Eastern Europe and the entire world" [this is a quotation from our own pre-conference literature]. For many Poles it is only one more fraud and act of power division. Many would prefer to leave the "opening of a new era" to others and in Poland settle accounts with those responsible for the crimes of the communist era….At the Round Table, new elites emerged that absorbed the old ones.

For Witkowski, the Round Table is responsible for "a nihilism affecting young Poles as a result of their sense of the impunity of evil committed by the communists and a devaluation of the patriotic slogans used by some representatives of the opposition who

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[2] News of this article came to us thanks to David Ost, in an e-mail message from November 3, 1998. Unfortunately, I have not been able to track down the original article.

[3] E-mail from Maryann Poniecka to Don Benkowski, March 2, 1999. My thanks to Mr. Benkowski for forwarding this to me.

[4] Mr. Krupiński sent us an e-mail expressing his concerns on April 5. His poem can be found at <worf.albanyis.com.au/~matuzal/PG29.htm>.

subsequently exchanged them for money."[5] Such opinions are by no means limited to émigrés like Witkowski. On the occasion of the Round Table's anniversary in 1998, a right-wing political party issued a statement declaring that "nine years ago the communists came to an agreement with the pink leadership of Solidarity, dividing Poland like a cake….All of them thought only about themselves, leaving only meager remains for society."[6]

It was easy to dismiss the conspiracy theories regarding the Round Table, particularly when they accused us of involvement in a mysterious plot to retain the "pinks and the reds" in power, and simultaneously to buttress the interests of the American business elite. In the heat of the moment, I reacted with anger to the charge that I was pursuing a political agenda. Writing in the Polish newspaper *Gazeta Wyborcza* in February 1999, I attempted to respond to these critics.

> We were well aware that the memory of 1989 remains controversial, and we realized that it would be inappropriate for an American institution to put its stamp of approval on any particular interpretation of Poland's past. But whether one considers of the details of the April accords good or bad, it cannot be denied that the *process* of negotiation merits further study. We wanted to learn something about the Round Table, not just glorify it. Above all, we wanted to understand how Poles came to the realization that they could change the course of history. Even those who opposed the talks believed that they were making decisions that mattered, so we wanted to hear from them, too.[7]

Michael Kennedy was similarly insistent about our distance and objectivity. In his opening remarks at the conference he said, "I want to emphasize that our ambition here is not to celebrate or heap blame on those who made the Round Table; our ambition rather is to understand better the conditions, contingencies, and consequences of the political choices that led to the Round Table and negotiated collapse of communism."[8] Both of us were sincere—but we both missed the point. Because the charges leveled against us seemed so spurious and inflammatory, and because the authors of these complaints discredited themselves with their own conspiracy theories, I failed to consider more seriously the way we were, in fact, reinforcing a specific reading of the history of the 1980's. Our values and our understanding of communism's collapse were reflected in each aspect of the conference, from its planning to the way we staged the

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[5] Tadeusz Witkowski, "A Legitimate Concern," *Periphery* 4-5 (February 1999). Text available online at <www-personal.engin.umich.edu/~zbigniew/Periphery/No4-5/editorial01.html>.

[6] This text, from Federacja Młodych ROP, was originally posted at <friko5.onet.pl/wa/fmrop>, although it was subsequently removed from the party's site.

[7] Brian Porter, "Ucieczka z więzienia historii," *Gazeta Wyborcza* 29 (4 February 1999): 19.

[8] *Communism's Negotiated Collapse*, 7.

sessions themselves. Ironically, our critics were right; their only mistake was to imagine that things could have been otherwise.

If there was a single theme that united all the presentations at our conference, it was the desire for "truth," and the conviction that we had provided an opportunity to present this truth. Adam Michnik opened the conference with an accusation that "for short-term gains, there is some tendency to falsify contemporary Polish history. Such insinuations make dialogue impossible. They help to create an image of a traitor and enemy, rather than of a polemicist and critic.…I claim that this kind of false historiography engenders false policies."[9] To remedy this, Michnik cited documents and evoked his own memories in search of a "true" picture of the events of 1989. Mieczysław Rakowski later responded to some of his critics with the cry, "This is a historical lie!" He, too, insisted that the truth should be allowed to prevail (although his truth was not the same as Michnik's truth).[10] Stanisław Ciosek tackled this issue directly, when he cautioned us against the tendency to rely on written documents from the 1980's. "The documents that remained from those years," he said, "…were not written for history, but only to present some order, but in reality, decisions were made in circles which would leave no trace. Minor notes here and there have perhaps survived, but I think that the best proof is the testimony of witnesses….So I would like to caution you not to take papers as the only evidence, because they won't always tell the truth."[11] Here, as elsewhere, the "truth" resided in the oral testimony of those who experienced the fall of communism, it resided in memory, not in the documentary foundations of historical writing.

But at our conference, memory was hemmed in on many sides by history. History is usually—and the exceptions are rare indeed—a narrative genre.[12] Its telling is

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[9] Ibid., 9.

[10] Ibid., 22.

[11] Ibid., 40.

[12] It has been almost thirty years since Hayden White first made this observation, and explored its implications, in his seminal book, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973). Today nearly every history graduate student reads this classic text, which is widely seen as the spark that ignited a thorough reconsideration of the theoretical foundations of history. A sampling of some of the best work that arose subsequently would include: Joyce Appleby, Lynn Hunt and Margaret Jacob, *Telling the Truth about History* (New York: Norton, 1994); Robert F. Berkhofer, *Beyond the Great Story: History as Text and Discourse* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995); Victoria E. Bonnell and Lynn Hunt, *Beyond the Cultural Turn: New Directions in the Study of Society and Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); Alex Callinicos, *Theories and Narratives: Reflections on the Philosophy of History* (Durham: Duke, 1995); Michel de Certeau, *The Writing of History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988); Roger Chartier, *Cultural History: Between Practices and Representations* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1988); Nicholas B. Dirks, Geoff Eley, and Sherry B. Ortner, eds., *Culture/Power/History: A Reader in Contemporary Social Theory* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994); Jacques Le Goff, *History and Memory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992); David Couzens Hoy, *The Critical Circle: Literature, History, and Philosophical Hermeneutics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982); Patrick H. Hutton, *History as an Art*

rooted in two points: the past before our story, and the present. Virtually every history text begins with some discussion of the "background" or "context" of the material to follow. The historian must set the stage, and in doing so he or she delineates what will be deemed "relevant" and what will be dismissed as "trivial." Such choices, as we will see in the case of the Round Table Conference, can never be entirely innocent. It is somewhat less compulsory, though still nearly universal, for historical writing to point towards some concern of the present day. This may come as an explicit assertion of relevance, as in the classic *magistra vitae* formula, or as an evocation of some current historiographical debate. When the present is ignored altogether, when the controversies of the discipline today are avoided in favor of a detailed reconstruction of some past moment, with no nods whatsoever towards the present, we criticize such works as "antiquarian," and denigrate their authors as mere "history buffs" (rather than "true scholars"). Thus straddling the past and the present—and striving to connect them—historical prose is drawn almost invariably towards a narrative form, in which the irreducible confusion of the past is placed within the confines of a story with a beginning and end, with a plot, with featured characters, and with a wide variety of rhetorical conventions particular to storytelling.

An example of this can be seen in a few paragraphs of publicity material I composed for the Round Table conference in early 1998.

> On April 5, 1989, the world as we then knew it began to unravel. On that momentous day, the "Round Table Talks," a two-month-long process of negotiations between the Polish communist party and the opposition, came to a stunning conclusion. The "Solidarity" movement, outlawed for almost a decade, was re-legalized, and the first multi-party elections in post-war Poland were scheduled. When that vote was held two months later, the communists lost virtually every contested parliamentary seat. In the coming months, communist regimes would fall in East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, and finally in the Soviet Union itself. Although the collapse of the Berlin Wall in November, 1989, provided the world with a visual metaphor for the political transformations of that momentous year, the peaceful, negotiated transfer of power in Poland seven months earlier opened a new era for Eastern Europe and the entire world….From April 7-10, 1999, the Center for Russian and East European Studies will gather in Ann Arbor the leading actors—politicians,

of Memory (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1993); Keith Jenkins, ed., *The Postmodern History Reader* (New York: Routledge, 1997); Dominick LaCapra and Steven L. Kaplan, *Modern European Intellectual History: Reappraisals and New Perspectives* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982); Peter Novick, *That Noble Dream: The 'Objectivity Question' and the American Historical Profession* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988); Bryan D. Palmer, *Descent into Discourse: The Reification of Language and the Writing of Social History* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990); Mark Poster, *Cultural History and Postmodernity: Disciplinary Readings and Challenges* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997); David D. Roberts, *Nothing but History: Reconstruction and Extremity after Metaphysics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995); Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995).

Church leaders, and prominent intellectuals—from all the groups which participated in the unprecedented events of 1989. Our goals will be to recreate the atmosphere of the Round Table and to put this era of "negotiated revolutions" into historical and global perspective.

The thrust of this paragraph positions the Round Table within a specific story about the fall of communism. Even if we set aside the explicitly evaluative terms like "momentous" (twice!) and "stunning," we are still left with that most powerful of persuasive tools, the narrative. We start with act one, where we find Solidarity "outlawed for almost a decade" by an implicitly undesirable communist regime. Then comes act two, the "negotiated revolution" that began the process of "unraveling the world as we then knew it." For the final act we get a happy ending, in which the example of Poland "opens a new era for Eastern Europe and the entire world." At the conference we intended to focus on the process of negotiated change, to narrow our lens to an almost technical question: how does one move from conflict to dialogue in situations of political and social polarization. But from the start we positioned this scholarly inquiry within a grand narrative that valorized the Round Table Talks, accepted the alleged virtues of the post-communist socio-economic order, and closed off alternative readings of 1989. This is not because we were dupes in the hands of Poland's current elite, nor is it a result of any deliberate effort to "spin" the story of 1989 in any particular direction. It is, instead, an example of how history—*all* history—is made.

Michael Kennedy, a sociologist by training, was perhaps less drawn to the narrative form, but his focus on the sociological present drew him to the genre in spite of himself. The tension in his commentary during the conference is eloquent: "NATO's expansion on the one hand, and Southeastern Europe's disintegration on the other, might properly be seen as the contemporary background for some of the questions we discuss in this conference. Certainly, our conference is premised on the idea that radical transformations can be accomplished not only through violence, but also peacefully. But I must emphasize that this is not a conference about contemporary politics in Poland or Yugoslavia. It is about the contingencies of 1989."[13] All of us would repeat this line throughout the conference: this was not to be a discussion of today's political squabbles; it was not to be cast against the backdrop of Yugoslavia (not excessively, at least); it was not to be "presentist" (to use the most beloved historian's invective). The historian is perpetually torn between the desire to be relevant, and the fear of being anachronistic. This is not a resolvable tension: it is the fundamental contradiction at the heart of our discipline, and the impetus behind the narrative form itself.

But memory does not share this contradiction, and memory need not be cast as a narrative (although it sometimes is). Stanisław Ciosek made this point effectively when he protested the straightjacket placed upon him by the theme of his panel ("The Political

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[13] *Communism's Negotiated Collapse*, 4.

Contest, 1986-1988"). "History cannot be divided into pieces," he argued. "That is against the natural tendencies of historians who would like everything in order, would like the maximum number of facts gathered. The situation in Poland, on the other hand, and this topic that we are discussing, cannot be put into the brackets of the period of the two or three years we're focusing on here." If Ciosek explicitly challenged the narrative discipline we had imposed upon him, Bishop Alojzy Orszulik implicitly rejected it. His talk offered snippets of insight and recollection stripped of both chronological progression and logical structure.[14] His was, so to speak, memory in the raw, unmediated by the desire to make history, with its necessary narrative form. To a greater or lesser degree, many of the conference presentations shared this characteristic. Several of our participants spoke without notes, as they allowed their memories (and sometimes their passions, as with the dramatic tears brought forth by Bishop Dembowski's recollections[15]) to flow over and through them. If we attempted to publish the conference transcript without extensive editing and annotation, most readers would reject them as confusing, randomly organized claims about the past. Few would accept this as a contribution to any sort of historical literature, because it seems to lack the narrative form we expect from such writing.

Indeed, this is *not* yet history. Whether used as a classroom assignment or a piece of data in a scholarly project, this is "primary material," a "source" from which the historian applies his or her craft. We are called upon to make sense of the obscure references and allusions, to provide the necessary background to place these comments into some context, and above all to configure the whole thing as a narrative. History must be a story. We might strive to suppress our own biases, to be as objective as possible, to describe things as they really were, but we cannot escape the fact that we ask questions of the events, we draw the background scenery, we populate that scenery with the characters we select (leaving others aside, for reasons both good and bad), and we decide what those characters will say and do. On the most basic level of all, we decide when the story will begin and when it will end. We might do all this with a specific agenda in mind, tactically selecting the best elements to support our particular point of view. Or, as in the case of our Round Table conference, we might try to draw our boundaries so as to avoid areas of troublesome dispute, so as to make the conference as scholarly as possible (as if scholarship could ever *not* be political and contested). But in either case, the result is the same: a historical (re)construction that says nearly as much about our desires, goals, and ideas as it does about that amorphous thing called "the past."

In our specific case, we made a number of decisions that angered our opponents and gave the conference its spin. First, the topic itself was problematic, more so than we initially realized. Wiesław Chrzanowski first pointed this out when he opened his

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[14] Ibid., 52-59.
[15] Ibid., 74.

presentation by declaring, "I am totally opposed…to any attempts to build up a legend of the Round Table, in connection with its tenth anniversary."[16] Chrzanowski argued that the Round Table merely "accelerated by a few months the changing of the guard of power in Poland," and in doing so "provided measurable, although at the time not fully predictable, advantages to the participating partners." These advantages came from the fact that the communists selected their negotiating partners from those who themselves had once been party members, even if they had later become dissidents. "For the leftist opposition," said Chrzanowski, "…[the Round Table] was an opportunity to eliminate or limit the influence of the right wing of the opposition." If the Round Table itself was a mere political maneuver, much more significant were the elections held on June 4. At that time, argued Chrzanowski, the public repudiated the Round Table Accords by voting overwhelmingly for Solidarity, thus rendering pointless earlier agreements about the party's preservation of power.[17] The basic flaw in our conference, then, was its focus on the negotiations of February to April, 1989: by establishing these chronological boundaries we were sure to misrepresent the real dynamics of communism's collapse.

Similarly, our temporal barriers determined the sorts of issues we could raise, closing off alternative ways of viewing Poland's past and present. Chrzanowski wanted to push our boundaries far to the past: "Ten years ago, the communist camp was closer…to the position of the occupiers of Poland during the [nineteenth century] than to the government side in the democratic country, even though this camp was composed of Poles….The actions of many members of the government camp were driven by ideological causes, but they were international rather than Polish causes."[18] Only by using a wide-angle lens could Chrzanowski attack the communists with such harsh moral condemnation. The historical story told by the right is one in which Poland must always fight against domination by Germany and Russia, and the events of the past 200 years make sense to them within this framework. The struggle is constant; only the players change. Within this historical vision, the communists—with their undeniable ties to Moscow—can only be perceived as agents. This story can't be told if one limits oneself to the period between 1986-1989, as we mandated for our conference. In those years the ties between Warsaw and Moscow were particularly (Chrzanowski would say unusually and temporarily) weak, and it may well have been the case that Jaruzelski was more influential on Gorbachev than the other way around. But if we start our story in 1795 (the third partition of Poland) or even in 1945, the anti-national villainy of communism can be more easily described. From an entirely different perspective, both Stanisław Ciosek and Mieczysław Rakowski complained that our chosen dates made it impossible to appreciate the magnitude of the change within the communist party, or the fact that the leadership had actually been pursuing reform for many years, if not

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[16] Ibid., 25.
[17] Ibid., 25-29.
[18] Ibid., 25.

decades. Rakowski pointed to the rise of "national communism" in the 1960's as the first step in moving Poland away from the Soviet model, and then argued that those who traveled to the West in the 1970's "were not prisoners of one ideology any more, because they had an opportunity to confront the ideology that was being fed to them with the reality in the West."[19] Ciosek was even more insistent, claiming that "after the Stalinist period, the Polish party tried many times to better the system, to loosen up its doctrine and to reach economic growth. And we got some results, against the backdrop of more dogmatic surroundings…."[20]

So whether one was coming from a nationalist or a communist perspective, the time-frame of 1986-1989 made it impossible to tell the story. As I've argued at length elsewhere, the way one casts historical time is one of the most important elements of any world-view.[21] Whether time is configured as progressive, uniform, decadent, or circular strongly determines how one is going to approach the central questions of political philosophy or social theory. Similarly, whether one expands or contracts the chronological field will fundamentally alter one's perception of any issue. Consider the difference between telling the story of Polish Stalinism within a history of twentieth-century political violence, or (alternatively) within a post-WWII history of Poland. In the former case, the relatively short period from the communist take-over to the death of Stalin will appear as an incident of little importance, when set alongside the monstrous horrors of the Holocaust and Soviet Stalinism. In the latter case, however, the violence with which communism came to power in Poland will stand out in stark relief. In planning our conference we quite sincerely told ourselves that we had to draw *some* boundaries in order to keep the discussion focused, and the dates 1986-1989 seemed reasonable. But like it or not, such a decision was loaded with substantive implications.

Our guests could challenge our time-frame, but some of the other constraints we imposed were so powerful that they silenced all dispute. Rakowski exemplified how narrow the field of possible disagreement was when he said, "Yes, [communism] would undoubtedly have gone to its grave, but nobody knows when. It was not carved in stone that that had to happen in the late 1980's."[22] Zbigniew Bujak only appeared to be arguing for indeterminacy when he said, "I claim that perhaps, if we had been somewhat incautious at that time and lost control, a completely different situation would have emerged in our country."[23] In fact, the position articulated (perhaps ruefully) by Rakowski was universally shared by every speaker at our conference: communism was doomed, and the only question was how it would exit the stage of history. Embedded in this consensus is a liberal world-view that has penetrated to the

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[19] Ibid., 20.

[20] Ibid., 40.

[21] Brian Porter, *When Nationalism Began to Hate: Imagining Modern Politics in Nineteenth-Century Poland* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

[22] *Communism's Negotiated Collapse*, 19.

[23] Ibid., 39.

very core of public discourse in Poland and in the US. Communism was referred to during the conference as an "experiment" and a "dream," but it was always contrasted (as Rakowski, of all people, suggested) with the "reality" of life in the West.[24] Capitalism has clearly become naturalized, to the degree that even the leaders of the alternative system that existed for four decades in Eastern Europe can only speak of their earlier lives as ephemeral, transient, and (it literally goes without saying) flawed. My point here is not to argue that they are wrong, but to point out the impossibility of even suggesting that they might be. The historians' boundary posts are firmly in place in this instance: we have defined the years between World War II and 1989 as an error, a foolish experiment, or perhaps even an extended reign of terror. This makes it difficult to think seriously about the decline of living standards in Poland during the 1990's, or to understand the waves of social protest that have been plaguing the country in recent years. The questions posed at our conference reinforced this hegemony. The most common query was some variation on the theme, "when did you realize that you had to negotiate a surrender of power?" All our guests had some sort of answer, even as they disagreed about a wide variety of interpretations and memories within the bounds of this question. But missing at the table (because of the way we initially defined the conference's topic) were any of former members of the communist party who believed that socialism was still worth a try. In today's environment, anyone who would even articulate such a position would be seen as quaint, if not mad.

As it was, madness was in abundant supply at our conference, and among those who protested but stayed away. We had to contend with a great number of psychologically troubled individuals, from the conspiracy theorists cited above to the obviously disturbed gentleman who came bedecked with military regalia to push his claim (loudly) that the Germans were secretly conquering Poland. When a group of protestors issued a poster calling for a counter-demonstration against the "Solidarity Commemoration" at "Michigan State University," and subsequently showed up in East Lansing on the day of the conference, we all got a good laugh (although those of us with Polish ancestry asked why our opponents had to generate these real-life Polish jokes). It was easy for us to take comfort in the fact that most criticism was limited to marginalized émigré intellectuals or small-circulation right-wing papers in Poland. We received words of praise from *Rzeczpospolita* and *Gazeta Wyborcza* (the two largest newspapers in the country); we had representatives from all the major political parties and the Church among our guests; we had financial support from major corporations and from our own university administration. So we could say that anyone who wanted to offer a different story about 1989 was isolated (if not crazy), and thus unimportant. One might also argue, however, that the narrative of conflict resolution and peaceful revolution so succinctly summarized in our promotional literature has become so hegemonic that one would *have* to be crazy to challenge it. Indeed, as Foucault has

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[24] Ibid., 20.

suggested, this might be the lesson that madness has to teach us.[25] Anyone with any sense would work within the framework of the dominant discourse—just as we did in organizing our conference.

The lesson to be learned from the Round Table Conference of 1999 is that history is always political, whether we like it or not. Choosing a chronological framework, determining which voices will be heard and which will be silenced, identifying what is important and what is trivial: all these decisions can be cast as necessary, for every historical story has to have some limits lest it degenerate into a chaotic account of indiscriminately selected events. But the way we draw these limits is important— indeed, it might be far more important than our explicit arguments. One can disagree with an argument, but it is extraordinarily difficult to challenge the accepted boundaries of a topic, once these have been widely accepted. By identifying the Round Table as the key point to remember from 1989, we helped construct the debate about that anniversary in both the US and Poland. Those who would have highlighted alternative moments, and those who would have marked the anniversary as tragedy rather than triumph, had difficulty making themselves heard. But that is what history *always* does: it not only gives narrative form to memory, but silences those who might remember differently.

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[25] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison,* trans. by Alan Sheridan (New York: Pantheon Books, 1977).

Power, Privilege and Ideology
in Communism's Negotiated Collapse

Michael D. Kennedy

"Who gets what and why?" The American sociologist Gerhard Lenski framed this most succinct question in the study of social stratification.[1] He argued that, over the course of history, there have been two basic answers. The conservative thesis, defending the status quo, explains "the existing distribution of rewards as just, equitable, and frequently also inevitable." The radical antithesis is critical, "denouncing the distributive system as basically unjust and unnecessary".[2] Lenski himself offers a synthesis of these two viewpoints in the explanation of inequality in human societies over the course of their existence.

The Polish Round Table negotiations of 1989 suggest a different synthesis. While only a few months in a single country, these talks nevertheless altered the course of human history by providing a model for the radical, but peaceful, negotiation of fundamental differences in the collapse of communism. The making of communism's negotiated collapse depended on communists and liberals coming together to articulate, along with leaders of the Catholic Church, a common need to compromise and develop a more open and pluralist, if more unequal, Poland. It also depended, however, on the loss of power across the board.

In this essay, I shall draw on various reflections on the Polish Round Table talks of 1989, most especially a conference my colleagues and I organized at the University of Michigan on April 7-10, 1999 for some of the principal participants in these talks that ended communism.[3] I shall begin, however, with additional reflections on the

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[1] Gerhard Lenski, *Power and Privilege: A Theory of Social Stratification* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1984 [1966]), 2. Lenski cautioned that this should be thought of less as a question of structure, and more a question of the distributive process.

[2] Ibid., 5.

[3] "Communism's Negotiated Collapse: The Polish Round Table, Ten Years After" took place at the University of Michigan, April 7-10, 1999. Conversations with participants in that conference, and my fellow conference organizers—Brian Porter, Marysia Ostafin, Piotr Michałowski, Ewa Junczyk-Ziomecka and Zbigniew Bujak—have been invaluable to this paper. I

relationship between ideology and inequality, for we cannot understand power, privilege and the Round Table without understanding how ideology functions in shaping inequality.

Ideology and Inequality

The conservative position on inequality represented in Lenski's writing is hardly apparent in American sociology today, but at the time, American sociology had an important functionalist perspective. The functionalists portrayed social inequality as "an unconsciously evolved device by which societies insure that the most important positions are conscientiously filled by the most qualified persons."[4] Talcott Parsons put values to the center of his functionalist approach and argued that those most rewarded in a society held qualities that were a reflection of that society's values.[5] Marxist social theory was only beginning to assert itself in mid-1960's American sociology, but C. Wright Mills and others around him articulated a similarly radical perspective. This "conflict" school argued that inequality was the result of the "struggle for valued goods and services in short supply."[6]

These differences between functionalist and conflict paradigms rested, in turn, on other more fundamental assumptions about human societies. Lenski identified eight such differences.[7]

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[4] Lenski draws upon Kingsly Davis, *Human Society* (New York: MacMillan, 1949), 367.

[5] Talcott Parsons, "A Revised Analytical Approach to the Theory of Social Stratification," in Reinhard Bendix and S.M. Lipset, eds., *Class, Status and Power: A Reader in Social Stratification* (New York: Free Press, 1953), 92-128.

[6] Lenski, 16.

[7] Ibid., 22-23.

1) Conservatives distrust human nature and believe that institutions should constrain that disposition, while radicals distrust those institutions and are optimistic about human nature;
2) Conservatives think that societies have needs, while radicals think about society as a setting in which struggles take place;
3) Conservatives find a small role for coercion in explaining inequality, while radicals emphasize it;
4) Conservatives minimize the role of inequality in generating conflict, and radicals emphasize it;
5) Conservatives see legitimate means as the source of privilege, while radicals emphasize the illegitimate;
6) Conservatives see inequality as inevitable, while radicals see it as something that might be changed.
7) Conservatives view the state and the law as a means to the common good, while radicals see them as instruments of oppression.
8) Conservatives think of class as a heuristic device to describe, while radicals see class as real social groups.

Lenski developed a synthesis of these views. Based on a wide-ranging review of the history of inequality in human societies, he argued that there were elements of truth to both perspectives. He found the conservative perspective most convincing in its assessment of human nature, but the more radical perspective was more reasonable in its approach to the nature of society, especially at more advanced technological levels. As technological developments create greater societal surpluses, the distribution of power within the society is more likely to shape the distribution of privilege in that society. Those who rule get the most, and those who successfully struggle within that system get more than those who don't. By contrast, in less technologically advanced societies, where people are more interdependent, more conservative functional arguments make sense. The needs of society might appear more prominent in the allocation of goods and services where people are more beholden to one another, and coercion is less effective.

Like Lenski, Polish sociologist Stanisław Ossowski explained variations in the conception of inequality, distinguishing dichotomous from gradational and both from functional approaches. He did not, however, offer a synthetic theory of social inequality in human societies. Instead, he emphasized the significance of ideology in inequality's interpretation. He wrote, "The choice of a scheme of class structure in a particular instance is symptomatic either of the problems which interest those who apply the scheme or of their views on the reality which they are describing."[8] For instance, Ossowski noted that dichotomous visions, simply distinguishing rulers from ruled, are

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[8] Ibid., 176.

rarely adequate in describing the complexity of inequality, especially in modern industrial societies. However, they become quite important when they help to produce useful visions in the mobilization of social conflicts.[9]

Lenski also notes the importance of ideology, and even the personalities of leaders, for understanding the distribution of privilege in human societies, especially those with more sophisticated technologies.[10] While both Lenski and Ossowski note the importance of ideology in the pattern of inequality, Ossowski's view is grounded in a sociology of knowledge that elevates not only the interpretations of political leaders, but also the interpretations of class analysts, whether they are academic or political in their mission. Ultimately, he argues, the interpretation of class structure becomes social facts, which in turn influence societies and the practical policies that shape them.[11] If one argues that inequality is based on gradational differences, for instance, one helps to atomize groups organized around inequality; if, on the other hand, one paints a dichotomous portrait with fundamental differences between two classes in a society, then one helps to create conditions for their conflict.

The Polish Round Table of 1989 offers a terrific opportunity to extend the insights of both of these theorists of status and power. To be sure, the meaning of the Round Table, and its relationship to inequality in Polish society, is not empirically self-evident. Ossowski's argument about the importance of perspective and interpretation certainly needs to be applied here. At the same time, Lenski's synthetic ambition is appealing, but its application to the Round Table requires a certain twist. While Lenski drew on the entire history of human societies, this essay focuses on a single moment in history, within a single country. However, this "critical moment"[12] in human history shows how the association with power and privilege might be refashioned to develop a new possibility in human history. Not only should this "negotiated revolution" [13] alter the ways in which we think about radical social change,[14] and the meanings of

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[9] Stanisław Ossowski, *Class Structure in the Social Consciousness* (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1963), 33-34.

[10] Ibid., 437-38.

[11] Ibid., 172, 174.

[12] Anthony Giddens describes a "critical moment" in *The Constitution of Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

[13] For my approach to this revolution, see Michael D. Kennedy, "Contingencies and the Alternatives of 1989: Toward a Theory and Practice of Negotiating Revolution," *East European Politics and Society* 13:1(1999): 301-10. I am not the only one to suggest such an approach, of course. Among the most useful examples of this kind of analysis are Rudolf Tokes, *Hungary's Negotiated Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); David Stark and László Bruszt, "Remaking the Political Field: Strategic Interactions and Contingent Choices," in *Postsocialist Pathways* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 15-48; Andrzej Paczkowski, "Polska 1986-1989: od kooptacji do negocjacji: Kilka uwag o wchodzeniu w proces zmiany systemowej," Instytut Studiów Politycznych Polskiej Akademii Nauk, Warszawa, 1997.

[14] See, for example, Andrew Arato, "Revolution, Restoration and Legitimation: Ideological Problems of the Transition from State Socialism", in Michael D. Kennedy, ed.,

conservatism and radicalism. It also might lead us to think differently about the ways in which the association between power and privilege ought to be viewed in the making of radical, but peaceful, change.

The Making of the Polish Round Table

Nobody who knows Poland can begin the story of the Round Table in 1988 or 1989. For the opposition, the story must go back at least to August 31, 1980, when the Solidarity movement was born. For nearly fifteen months, an independent trade union and social movement of over nine million men and women transformed Poland and promised to alter communism itself. On December 13, 1981, martial law was declared and most of Solidarity's leadership was interned. That period and its culmination in martial law helped to make a "dichotomous" class structure in Polish society: a view of society of "us" and "them."[15]

With that dichotomous view embedded in political contest, the relationship between the authorities and society could not be settled. International conditions helped maintain that instability. Awarding Lech Wałęsa the Nobel Peace Prize in 1983 put an international stamp of approval on Solidarity, and awarded Wałęsa and the movement for which he stood a measure of prestige and esteem that opposed the system of values around which communist Poland was organized. The American government itself used its resources in both international politics and trade to isolate Poland and pressure the authorities to negotiate with the union. This American influence within the Polish class system was apparent even in everyday life, when American Ambassador John Davis and his wife Helen Davis entertained leaders of the opposition at their private residence.

On the other side, the Soviet Union's leaders would speak of a Polish virus and the need to stop it at all costs. The constant threat of Soviet intervention bolstered, in an odd way, the status of Polish leaders. These leaders could point to how bad it was in other countries, and argue to their citizens that this Polish communist leadership offers the best of all possible worlds, in a world divided.[16] Although it is hotly contested, the man who imposed martial law in Poland, General Wojciech Jaruzelski, argues that he had to impose martial law to prevent Soviet invasion. Using the imagery of Solidarity

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Envisioning Eastern Europe: Postcommunist Cultural Studies (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994), 180-246.

[15] Teresa Torańska's books, *Them* (New York: Harper and Row, 1987; first published in Polish as *Oni*), based on interviews with former communist leaders, and *My* (English translation: "Us") (Warsaw: Most, 1994), with Solidarity's leaders, exemplifies this. For a review of class approaches to this original Solidarity period, see Chapter 5 of Michael D. Kennedy, *Professionals, Power and Solidarity in Poland: A Critical Sociology of Soviet-type Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

[16] See, for instance Mieczysław Rakowski's comments, *Communism's Negotiated Collapse*, 21-22, and Janusz Reykowski, Ibid., 111.

leader Jacek Kuroń, General Jaruzelski said that Solidarity in 1981 was like a train without a conductor accelerating ever faster. The General said he imposed martial law not to destroy the union but rather to "freeze it," so that negotiations might be held later, when the international conditions were right.[17]

It is of course difficult to imagine that Generals Jaruzelski and Kiszczak would imagine in 1981 that five or six years later the Soviet Union could support the generals in their search to negotiate with Solidarity. Polish society was itself skeptical of such overtures, seeing in referenda and other offers to dialogue efforts to co-opt and divide the opposition.[18] As late as February 1988, one of Solidarity's principal public intellectuals, Adam Michnik, said this in response to a question about Jaruzelski's "peace initiative":

> Talk of Jaruzelski's peace initiative is a joke—as misplaced as if it had come from General Pinochet or the South African president. General Jaruzelski could make a genuine peace by seeking a peaceful rapprochement with his own nation. But so far he hasn't done so.…The important question for me is whether or not General Jaruzelski intends to abolish our apartheid system by fostering equality among our citizens. This would require the destruction of the power of the *nomenklatura*, which is comparable to the white population in South Africa. So far, Jaruzelski shows no signs of wanting to abolish our form of apartheid. Everything he does preserves the power of the ruling group called *nomenklatura*.[19]

Nevertheless, negotiations were officially begun on February 6, 1989 and lasted for two months. Over 400 people participated in the various talks. There were three main tables—on political reform, economic reform and on organizational pluralism—which concerned primarily the legalization of Solidarity. There also were eleven sub-tables devoted to questions of the media, health care, mining, youth and other issues. Negotiations were surprisingly easy on the question of Solidarity's legalization; but they were especially difficult in the political realm, for both sides recognized that they were negotiating the future political architecture of Poland. In addition to public meetings, private meetings among the top negotiators were held at Magdalenka, a resort outside

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[17] Interview with Wojciech Jaruzelski, October 1998. This interview and several others cited in this paper were conducted with support from a contract from the National Council for Eurasian and East European Research (NCEEER), under the authority of a Title VIII grant from the US Department of State, for the project, "Negotiating Revolution in Poland: Conversion and Opportunity in 1989." Neither NCEEER nor the US Government is responsible for the views expressed here. See also the comments of Stanisław Ciosek in *Communism's Negotiated Collapse*, 41.

[18] See Paczkowski.

[19] Adam Michnik, "Towards a Civil Society: Hopes for Polish Democracy," in *Letters from Freedom: Post-Cold War Realities and Perspectives* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 98-99.

of Warsaw. In these entirely unrecorded meetings, the most profound obstacles were overcome. Compromises were finally reached, but the outcomes of those negotiations were not as most expected.

The opposition was frankly surprised by how much was accomplished in the negotiations. Beyond Solidarity's legalization, completely competitive elections were arranged to be held on June 4, 1989 for a new Senate; thirty-five percent of the seats in the lower house of Parliament, the Sejm, would also be contested. The rest were allocated to the governing alliance. The Parliament was assigned responsibility to elect the President. With communists and their allies assured most of the seats, the negotiators assumed that Parliament would elect General Jaruzelski as President with relatively unspecified powers.

The election results surprised everyone. The authorities anticipated that Solidarity would at the most win forty percent of the seats in the Senate, and not 99 out of 100 as they ultimately did. They did not expect that so few communists and their allies would get the minimum number of votes necessary to enter parliament in the first round of elections. They were shocked at how little support they won.[20] With the votes cast, and tanks rolling into Tiananmen Square in China, Poles waited to see whether the election results would be honored. Even some of those who negotiated for the communists were worried that the election results could be annulled.[21] Instead, the electoral results were honored and the communists struggled to form a government.

With this terrific vote of opposition from society, even those formerly allied with the communists began to rethink their allegiances. The movement of Peasant Party and Democratic Party legislators away from the Communists toward Solidarity, in fact, made the election of General Jaruzelski as President seem especially uncertain. Had several Solidarity delegates not absented themselves from voting, General Jaruzelski would not have been elected president. Had he not been elected, some fear that the chances for peaceful change could have been lost.[22]

Finally, President Jaruzelski asked General Kiszczak to form the first government, but Kiszczak could not; Solidarity delegates explained to him that they could not take charge of the economic portfolios in his government, and he could not form a government without them. The society voted for change, and to form a government with the old ruling alliance would be impossible. Turning to those magic words provided by Adam Michnik on July 3, 1989 in his newspaper *Gazeta Wyborcza*,

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[20] In fact, part of their problem was that the communists chose a particular kind of electoral system—majority runoff rather than a single transferable vote system—that magnified the communist defeat. See Marek Kamiński, "Jak Komuniści Mogli Zachować Władze po Okrągłym Stole: Rzecz o (nie)Kontrolowanej Odwilży, Sondażach Opinii Publicznej i Ordynacji Wyborczej," *Studia Socjologiczne* 145:2(1997): 5-34.

[21] Interview with Janusz Reykowski, April 10, 1999. See also *Communism's Negotiated Collapse*, 112.

[22] Interview with Andrzej Gdula, October 10, 1998.

General Jaruzelski ("your president") finally asked Tadeusz Mazowiecki ("our prime minister") to form the government on August 24.[23] That dichotomous view of status and power nevertheless yielded a government based on a grand coalition of all leading political forces.

The Round Table laid the foundation for this peaceful translation of dichotomy into a provisional national and democratic unity. The Round Table also provided a model for the transformation of other communist-led countries. Its lessons do not end there, of course. My colleagues and I organized a major conference assembling those from around the Polish Round Table at the University of Michigan in 1999 to reflect on the meaning of 1989.[24] One question that inspired our interest was how a society, whose political contest was grounded in a dichotomous view of society, between "us" and "them," could have peacefully negotiated an end to the system. After all, most sociologists who study radical social change, especially with lenses that emphasize dichotomous portraits of social inequality, tend to view the polarization of society, and the collapse of the state, as critical for making radical change. The negotiated collapse of communism was different. But that is also a matter of perspective, as Ossowski would remind us.

Radical Conservatives and Conservative Leftists

One of the most important differences in opinion around the "negotiated revolution" lies in the assessment of system breakdown. One of the conference speakers, Wiesław Chrzanowski, an early Solidarity advisor, one of the founders of the Christian National Union and a former Marshall of the Sejm, argued that the Round Table was a consequence of the system's collapse, not a cause of the system's decomposition. After all, he notes, "several months after the Round Table, together with the fall of the Berlin Wall, other communist regimes in Central Europe, except for Romania, collapsed peacefully."[25] This Round Table was not, in his opinion, a means to end communism, but rather a way for some groups to improve their position in communism's collapse.

The movement in opposition to communism, he argued, was the more important thing causing that system's fall, alongside a weakening of support from the Soviet Union. The communist authorities developed this idea of the Round Table to co-opt that opposition and smooth their anticipated fall from power. The authorities thus tried to shape their partners in negotiation, so that they could get the best deal. The opposition itself saw this as an opportunity, too. To be sure, these negotiations would lead to some

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[23] "Your President, Our Prime Minister" is reprinted on pp. 129-31 of *Letters from Freedom*.

[24] The website with the transcript from that conference is <www.umich.edu/~iinet/PolishRoundTable/frame.html>.

[25] *Communism's Negotiated Collapse*, 28.

of the goals they held: "broadening the margin of freedom, restoration of legal Solidarity and…preventing some sort of frontal collision."[26] Chrzanowski also saw, however, that this was an opportunity for the "leftist opposition," which did not include Chrzanowski, to "eliminate or limit the influence of the right wing of the opposition," by which he meant nationalist or Christian Democratic elements.[27] Alongside this political advantage comes some privilege, some "advantages,"[28] what Chrzanowski later in the conference called "frosting"[29]:

> …as a result of the discussed agreement (the Round Table), the pre-June government camp (the communists), instead of capitulation and punishment for the past, found its place smoothly within the new order of parliamentary democracy and retained its material and organizational assets. The accepted formula of state law often serves as a cover from punishing lawlessness. Among gains of the other partner was the ability to make personnel decisions regarding the negotiated one-third of the 1989 Sejm seats…As for taking over important mass media, it's enough to mention *Gazeta Wyborcza*, presently Mr. Michnik's paper, the publication of which was a concession from the government to Solidarity arranged at the Round Table.[30]

Although Chrzanowski is a conservative lawyer and political leader, his account draws quite clearly on a "radical" portrait of society in its linkage of power and privilege. He very clearly identifies a dichotomous view of society, which of course was hardly limited to the right-wing opposition. But his assessment of the Round Table is more specific to the right wing and akin to radical pictures of inequality in their direct linkage between power and privilege. Radicals tend to believe those in power whom they oppose act in a fashion that produces selfish benefits. Chrzanowski quite clearly attributes this motive to the communists' Round Table participation, but he also implies that his former, lefter, colleagues in Solidarity had some of the same ambition.[31]

Adam Michnik, however, was quite disturbed by Chrzanowski's charge. Michnik countered that Chrzanowski was creating a "black legend" associated with the Round Table, by arguing that this agreement was made for the profit of those who negotiated, rather than for the good of Poland. It is true that Michnik's newspaper is one of the most successful papers in Poland, and in Eastern Europe broadly, but Michnik's witty reply to Chrzanowski suggests one reason for its success: "You worry that I have 'frosting' from *Gazeta* and I'm happy that Poland has a good newspaper. And I'm happy

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[26] Ibid., 27.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid., 28.

[29] Ibid., 123.

[30] Ibid., 29.

[31] Although he acknowledges that these subsequent advantages were not "foreseen" at the time. See *Communism's Negotiated Collapse,* 123.

that no other post-communist country has a good paper like that. And I wish you and your political friends could make another such daily and we will have two best newspapers."[32]

Wittiness aside, this exchange cuts to the heart of one of the most politically delegitimating issues with the Round Table. Was this a "secret deal" cut between communists and certain parts of the Solidarity opposition to produce advantage for all of the negotiators? Even the Bishop who was most closely associated with the negotiations of the Round Table, Alojzy Orszulik, could express disappointment with the Round Table's allocation of privilege ten years after. After all, he said, the transformations of the last ten years have hurt the workers and the peasants the most. They are the victims, they are the poor, of this transformation. And in contrast,

> Some people from the (communist regime), well even a lot of them, have remained well off, in a good situation, not just because they kept their apartments, but also because of their salaries and opportunities to get employed in some other lucrative work. I remember when Mr. Sekuła (a former leading communist) was leaving, immediately the Japanese offered him the position of an expert, I think one hundred fifty thousand złotys a month. Today, I'm looking at myself in retrospect, and as a seventy-seven year old, having been formally employed at the Secretariat of the Episcopate for thirty-three years, I have a pension of, I think, about four hundred and thirty złotys before taxes, and after taxes three hundred and ninety-six złotys. So, that's some act of injustice too.[33]

Those who adopt a "radical" perspective on the Round Table negotiations, and examine the link between the interests of the powerful and the process of change, and the link between power and privilege, are likely therefore to find something less than heroic about the Round Table. But it is important to try to distinguish between the results of the Round Table, and the making of that negotiated revolution.

Another conference participant, Lech Kaczyński, spoke about the Round Table in similar terms as Bishop Orszulik. Both the Bishop and the politician would agree that the Round Table was a very positive means to develop, peacefully, an independent and democratic Poland. It legalized Solidarity and it opened the way to democratic elections. On that foundation, Solidarity succeeded and won the elections. They even took advantage of that victory and managed to form a government, led by Tadeusz Mazowiecki. But after communism collapsed in the rest of the region, Kaczyński believes that the Solidarity government should have moved quickly to deepen changes, to privatize industry more rapidly, to introduce civil liberties and democratic procedures more quickly, to build a new state, and to restructure society more fundamentally. Kaczyński argues that after the collapse of communism throughout the

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[32] *Communism's Negotiated Collapse*, 126.
[33] Ibid., 259.

region there should have been a more aggressive move to establish justice, to punish those who committed gross crimes under communist rule and certainly to end their privileges.[34]

This perspective might be identified with Chrzanowski's radicalism, but Kaczyński clearly sees this Round Table compromise as "necessary." With communism's collapse throughout the region, however, that compromise should be lifted and those who were privileged in the old system should not receive privilege in the new. In this sense, Kaczyński is rather more like Lenski than Chrzanowski, for he argues that we must view the conditions in which power and privilege are distributed. Sometimes inequality might be for the good of the society, but in other times, it is the result of injustice. Compromise with communists was good when it was unclear whether communism could return; once it was dead and gone, those deals should be rendered invalid.

The man against whom most of these conservative and moderate figures argue is Adam Michnik, whom Ira Katznelson has called "Eastern Europe's emblematic democratic intellectual."[35] While he is often pointed out as a man of the left, he resembles much more a conservative, in Lenski's sense of the term. He paints the Round Table as a political device that served the values of Poland, not of any one particular group. And embedded within its method of transformation lay an alternative model of society that was worth emulating.

Of course Michnik believes that each side had a strategic goal. The communists "sought to gain a new legitimacy for communist rule in Poland and abroad, and allowing some form of legalized opposition was to be the price for that. The strategic goal for the Solidarity opposition, on the other hand, was the legalization of Solidarity and launching the process of democratic transformation."[36] There were no secret deals, much as Lech Kaczyński and others also affirmed, but it *was* a compromise. And as Michnik noted, all compromises produce subsequent accusations of betrayal by "extremists."[37]

Michnik believes that while this Round Table negotiation didn't produce an ethos, it was embedded in a different kind of climate "that made it possible for the two worlds, which spoke two different languages, to communicate."[38] Indeed, he learned in that context that while this communist viewpoint was certainly reprehensible in some ways, it was also far more influential than he or his colleagues would have admitted. These communists, he argued, even those who

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[34] Ibid., 238-39.

[35] Ira Katznelson, *Liberalism's Crooked Circle: Letters to Adam Michnik* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 11.

[36] *Communism's Negotiated Collapse*, 10.

[37] Ibid., 16.

[38] Ibid., 108.

accepted the communist government for their own benefit are a component of the Polish nation, which cannot be excluded from Poland, unless one wants to destroy the Polish national community. And this is what I learned at the Round Table. There are two philosophies. Today, we can either say to those people, who used to be my enemies then, and who used to lock me up in jail…we can say, 'You have an opportunity either to become friends of democratic independent Poland, a Poland which is oriented toward the West and has a free market economy, or you can make a conscious choice and opt for the status of an enemy of the new Poland.' In other words, there are two philosophies faced by any group reaching out to participate in the government after the times of the communist, totalitarian or paratotalitarian dictatorship. Two logics. The logic of re-conquest and the logic of reconciliation…re-conquering the country is a deeply anti-democratic logic in the sense that it really undermines the pluralistic character of our society.[39]

In this sense, Michnik seeks to elevate a certain value that he learned at the Round Table and a different way of thinking, a different identity for the Polish state.[40] This identity, based on a philosophy of agreement, presumes that "those who fought against the People's Republic and those who served the People's Republic" are both part of a democratic future.[41]

This "defense" of the status quo produced by the Round Table is certainly conservative. Moreover, it produces a kind of radical resentment not only of the privilege associated with some of those who sat around the Round Table but equally for the fact that this Round Table is now being made into a heroic legend. If this is pluralism, it is also injustice. Radicals on the right, and those in the center, argue that Michnik is imposing a vision of Poland that is in fact one born at the Round Table, in the deal made between the "reds and the pinks." And here is the irony. The conservatives in Polish politics are most closely associated with the "radical" tradition in Lenski's terms, while the functionalists are painted as pinks. But truth be told, the old reds look even more conservative.

Conservative Post-Communists

At this conference, Mieczysław Rakowski offered the most familiar of conservative arguments defending the relationship between power and privilege. He didn't return just to the Round Table, but went back to 1945, and especially 1956, to recast the rule of communists and their service to the Polish nation. Polish communist authorities sent nine and one-half thousand graduates of Polish universities, most of whom were Party

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[39] Ibid., 109.
[40] Ibid., 234.
[41] Ibid., 16.

members, to the West to study, and on their return, they created a new atmosphere, one much more open-minded.[42] The Polish communists also defended private farming after 1956, enabling Poland to be the only country under direct Soviet rule to have such a "parking orbit"[43] for the entrepreneurial spirit.[44] Gomułka, Poland's leader between 1956 and 1970, was especially concerned about preserving Poland's sovereignty against a new agreement between the Germans and Russians, and did what he could to preserve it.[45] Even that most anti-Semitic of Poland's communists, Mieczysław Moczar, helped to build up the national factor of Polish communists.[46] In short, Rakowski argued, the communists, for all their negative factors, did what they could to enhance freedom within Poland and defend its sovereignty. One should not think of their Round Table participation, therefore, as anything strange, but rather consistent with doing what they could to extend freedom and sovereignty and rationalize the economy. And it was this relatively gentle rule by communists that enabled the opposition itself to form.[47] Of course most Party leaders believed that they could, and should, do without the opposition even up through the end of 1988. But Rakowski argues that it was the communists who, in the end, *enabled* this change to take place, and in fact, it was the change in attitudes of Polish communists that led to communism's own end. Stanisław Ciosek, another former communist leading figure, who subsequently became Ambassador to Russia, offered another argument along the same theme: the communist authorities' principal concern was to avoid civil war.

> The system could have been crumbling for a long time, and in quite a bloody way. It's a cliché, but before something really ends, it can go many different ways. History is not always going forward. Poland was not doomed to compromise.…Everything that happened in Poland was really illogical. It was contrary to conclusions drawn from previous experiences. It really had no right to happen, yet it happened anyway…Maybe this was Divine Providence…that was watching over our moves. According to common sense, and according to conclusions drawn from the history of the system, this should have led to bloody confrontation. It would have been enough for other options to have won in the Soviet Union and in Poland, and then without excessive imagination, we can assume attempts at reforming the economy without any changes in the political

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[42] Ibid., 19-20.

[43] Ivan Szelenyi et al., *Socialist Entrepreneurs* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988), uses this term to describe those social spaces that allow the preservation of the entrepreneurial spirit under communist rule.

[44] *Communism's Negotiated Collapse*, 20.

[45] Ibid., 20.

[46] Ibid., 20.

[47] Note as well how Janusz Reykowski invokes this comparison to defend the positive role of liberal communists (*Communism's Negotiated Collapse,* 111).

system, even including a possibility of passing through this Tiananmen Square…in China….This was real, this fear of civil war; it really motivated us.[48]

To be sure, there were bloody confrontations between Polish communist authorities and workers and others in the past. Polish communists have a hard time convincing many of their former victims that this kind of confrontation was inconsistent with their values. Indeed, it is likely the case that this was consistent with at least some communist values. Many communists resisted the idea of compromise, recognizing in it the end to their power and privilege. For example, Janusz Reykowski, one of Poland's communist negotiators, described that sense of betrayal he himself faced. On the day the Polish communist party was dissolved, "a young man approached me, reached out his hand and, with a grimace of rage on his face, said, 'Well thank you very much for destroying the party.'"[49] For Reykowski, on the other hand, his principal loyalty, he argued, was to "the state, the country, and not any specific political formation."[50]

With a radical view of power and privilege in communist-ruled societies, it is difficult to entertain the idea that any communist would see their affiliation with the powerful and privileged as a matter of loyalty to the nation or the country. Radicals cannot imagine that those in power use their influence for the societal good. Even those who emphasize the religious inspiration to love one's enemy, like Bishop Bronisław Dembowski, have strong reasons to distrust communist claims to legitimacy. As he recalled his own life, he offered one particularly moving moment, when as a

> (m)ember of the "Grey Ranks" (Szare Szeregi), a private in the seventy-second regiment of the Home Army Radom Region, oath of allegiance in 1943, at the age of sixteen, a participant of the Action Storm from August to November 1944. In April of 1945, in Radom, I saw posters, "Away with the Home Army bandits," and "the drooling reactionary dwarf." And that was the reward.…I have tears in my eyes now…this was the reward for the boy who was ready to die for Poland…"The drooling reactionary dwarf?" I apologize, well, can you see how it's still alive, it's all coming back?[51]

For those who suffered so horribly at the hands of communist authorities, the radical view, that dichotomous view of "us vs. them," comes easily. One might argue that contrary to conditions where radicalism is a minority view and conservative ideas are hegemonic, in Poland radicalism was dominant, and that radicalism, that "anticommunist culture," is what articulates the view of justice in the allocation of power and privilege. One cannot allow very easily that communists would act on behalf

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[48] *Communism's Negotiated Collapse*, 42.
[49] Ibid., 119.
[50] Ibid.
[51] Ibid., 74.

of the nation. The claims of people like Mieczysław Rakowski or Stanisław Ciosek are not easily accepted because they don't fit with the culture of revolution, unless, however, this is a different kind of revolution, based on a different sense of power.

Powering Peaceful Revolution

The "radical conservative" view of communism's collapse fits most easily with most conventional theories of revolution. On the one hand, the system was weakening through its own internal contradictions, and on the other, the opposition was growing stronger and stronger. It is, however, important to note how this movement was trying to grow stronger.

Zbigniew Bujak, a leader of the underground resistance from 1981 through his capture in 1986, described the movement's strategy. It was not interested in street confrontations and demonstrations. Each time they tried to "overcome the other side with armed struggle," they would lose. Hence, they decided that "fighting without violence was best." Of course there were other possibilities.

> …in the very first days of martial law, some young people decided to get arms. They tried to take arms away from a policeman, a shot rang, and that policeman was dead. The uniform police was not our opponent and we didn't really fight against them. Our real rival was the secret police. So that was a dramatic and unnecessary death. However, of course, the young people who were active in the underground structures were in fact getting armed. They were simply buying weapons, buying grenades…We did succeed, however, to persuade those young people that that wasn't the right way to follow. If we entered that path, we would lose. Because the other side really wanted this. And we also know that this provocation to push us into the terrorist position had been prepared. But we managed to defend ourselves from this, and I'm going to be honest about it, it took a real effort. These weapons I've mentioned were actually sunk in the Vistula River and it was all thanks to the people who were at the head of those underground structures understood our strategy.…[52]

Bujak identified Mahatma Ghandi and Martin Luther King, Jr. as the movement's models.[53] Of course they also had their national religious inspiration.

Not everyone was Roman Catholic in the Polish opposition, but the Roman Catholic Church was clearly supporting Solidarity in its peaceful struggle. The Church served as a "witness" to the negotiations, but everyone knew whom the Church supported. Pope John Paul II even supported Solidarity over and above an attempt to introduce unions expressly affiliated with the Church, recognizing that the communists

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[52] Ibid., 37.
[53] Ibid., 39.

sought to divide and thereby weaken the opposition.[54] Before they would go to Magdalenka to negotiate in private, the opposition, both of Catholic and non-Catholic orientations, would assemble at the Episcopate. Bishop Orszulik recalled, "one time, there we go, we go downstairs, myself, Bishop Gocłowski, all the others. We are almost approaching the door and Mazowiecki says, 'Listen, but we have to go to the chapel first to pray.' And all of us turned back, all of us knelt down, and all of us prayed. And that was unity. One team, one squad."[55] This was more than a ritual. Solidarity, as a value, meant something profound. As Orszulik described it,

> There was only one value for us, Solidarity. And within Solidarity, there was everybody, people of various political orientations. Therefore, we took great pains during the early encounters with the government side, when there were attempts to exclude Mr. Michnik and Mr. Kuroń, to…we were against that, just as Wałęsa was at that time, believing that there was need to create a broader societal spectrum, background, so that the success of those talks would be more real. So, nobody painted the left as Trotskyites, dangerous for the Church, and by the way, at the Round Table we were not concerned with the Church itself. Our concern was focused on the nation, the country, changes in the country, improvement of the situation in Poland, the life of the people. That was our concern and not dividing people into those we liked and those we didn't like.[56]

This was solidarity. Not only the collective organization necessary to advance the cause of the powerless against the powerful, but also a moral value, an ethical principle animating peaceful struggle. Bishop Dembowski illustrated some of that ethic in his recollection on the meaning of "enemies" for the Church. He was quite impressed by the words appearing at the beginning of one of John Paul II's pontificates: "The Church has no enemies, even though there are many people who consider the Church their enemy." The Bishop painted the communist authorities likewise: they were not his enemy, but "the authorities placed themselves in opposition to society by imposing a socio-economic system and atheism."[57] In this sense, a vision of solidarity was generated that was open to those who would repent and join society. In this sensibility, born of St. Paul and reproduced by Father Józef Tischner, solidarity is to "bear one another's burden."[58] It is difficult to imagine bearing that burden belonging to communists, but perhaps it is imaginable in terms of bearing the burden of compromise, and of dialogue.

I asked Janusz Reykowski to serve on a panel that addressed ethics. This world-renowned social psychologist initially resisted the idea, thinking that his contribution would be negated by the fact that he negotiated for the communists. Those who suffered

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[54] Ibid., 38.
[55] Ibid., 155.
[56] Ibid., 148-49.
[57] Ibid., 114.
[58] Ibid., 115.

most, and who look more like saints than he, could hardly give him ground to be ethical, he feared. He was, furthermore, one of increasingly few liberals in the communist party who believed in dialogue. When the authorities imposed martial law in 1981, many reformers left the Party. He did not, and there were quite a few communists who opposed this compromise with the enemy. This view has even survived and gained some strength with the last ten years. One prominent figure from the communist regime told him about the reason for the Round Table.

> "The wrong people were in power. Had we removed them on time, had we got rid of Jaruzelski, Rakowski and Ciosek, and replaced them with real socialists and real patriots, then the whole Round Table would not have been necessary. Look," he said, "what has happened, how many people have been pushed into poverty now, and how many fortunes have been made by stealing state property, both by the former *nomenklatura* and the new *nomenklatura*."…there was a moment, that was between the sixth and eighth of June, when people who were thinking along those lines mobilized and flooded the Politburo and the Secretariat with their demands to annul the election results, when they prepared an experts' report that the only solution was to annul elections. And there was a dramatic struggle caused by that report, and an effort to neutralize that kind of thinking. If you say, ladies and gentlemen, as Marshal Chrzanowski has said, that the army would not have supported that kind of demands, I will say, well, it's better that we didn't have to check that out.[59]

This view of the Round Table as treachery, of betrayal, can thus be found on both the communist and conservative side. Both of them believe in the rightness of struggle, and the importance of avoiding compromise with the enemy. In confrontation with one another, they could produce the very violence that motivated Reykowski to struggle for negotiation and Bujak to throw the weapons in the river. Although Bujak and Reykowski were on the opposite sides of the table, they did share at least one value: the peaceful resolution of their fundamental differences. How does this value of dialogue fit, however, with the picture of power and privilege painted in most works on class analysis? It sounds, after all, like a conservative justification for the status quo, where power is exercised for the good of society.

Power, Privilege and Negotiation

Aleksander Kwaśniewski, President of Poland and a former negotiator for the communist side, offered an intriguing thesis for the relationship between power and negotiation. The Round Table was

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[59] Ibid., 112.

caused by weakness. The Party was weak, the government was weak, and Solidarity was weak. And the Soviet Union was weak, too. Everybody was weak. On the other hand, it resulted from the strength of the people who thought that a breakthrough was possible and that it could be done. Adam Michnik mentioned Mr. Wałęsa and Wojciech Jaruzelski. And I think we owe our respect to these two people, since at that particular moment, when there were so many unknown factors and unclear spots, they undertook the effort whose results neither they themselves nor any of us, who participated in the Round Table, could foresee. But that showed the strength, the strength which I would say was the result of the Polish experience…So on the one hand, the weakness, and on the other hand, the strength to make a decision of historic caliber, as we now can see.[60]

The argument is critical. Neither side could "force" its own solution on the other, and considerable portions of Polish society "distrusted" the others. Even Lech Wałęsa was distrusted by more than forty percent of the Polish public, and those from the Solidarity underground who once organized the Ursus factory, like Zbigniew Janas, could no longer mobilize a strike there.[61]

This "weakness" does not mean, of course, that they were obliged to negotiate. Provocations were possible, and violent confrontation was, of course, one way out of the impasse. In both cases, however, Jaruzelski and Wałęsa were able to exercise enough leadership over their own forces to prevent a violent encounter in the late 1980's. This case might suggest, then, that this negotiated revolution depended on a condition of dual power within a country, with each side having a clear and undisputed leader, but with each having the disposition to negotiate a compromise, rather than impose a victory. And this bears directly on Lenski's argument about the conditions when "functionalist" arguments make sense in talking about power and privilege.

In hunting and gathering societies, Lenski argues, the measure of inequality is small because there is limited "surplus" in the society. There are thus limited means with which any one group or individual can exercise power over others. In these societies, the distribution of goods and services tend to be distributed on the basis of need.[62] In other societies, an argument from power reigns. One might, however, extend this argument to say that in those conditions where power is widely distributed, and no single hierarchy of power reigns, the contest among powers might lead to compromise that serves a broader interest. Where everyone is weak, or shall we say interdependent, the chance that societal needs will reign over group needs increases.

Certainly this suggestion needs to be augmented by ideology in two ways. First, without an ideology that motivates compromise on behalf of all, the "compromise" might only work on behalf of those groups directly negotiating for power. In order for the compromise to be in a broader interest, that compromise must be embedded in an

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[60] Ibid., 246.
[61] Ibid., 76.
[62] Lenski, 46-47.

ideology with broader value and social consequence. The ethos of solidarity, to bear the burden of others, may have been that very value, but the outcome of the last ten years, and its measure of inequality, suggests that the Round Table might have been the vehicle to the enrichment of some, and the impoverishment of most. The ethos of solidarity, while effective for resisting communists, might not be enough to compensate for building capitalism.

Although the Round Table was motivated by social concerns, it operated quite autonomously from classes and their conflict. It was, for the most part, an argument among intellectuals.[63] There was certainly little attention to any conception of gender inequality. Grażyna Staniszewska, for instance, noticed no discrimination in these negotiations (even though her region felt a bit ashamed that a woman represented them!).[64] Janina Jankowska was more critical of this dimension of inequality, and agreed that women were "invisible" in the transformations, even though the entire network of conspiracy "rested on women's shoulders."[65] The rural sector was also not prominent in the negotiations. According to one of its leading figures, Gabriel Janowski, the peasants stood outside the building in which the Round Table was being negotiated, protesting and demanding good pay, and ten years later, they are doing the same thing.[66] The working class was more prominent in the negotiations, especially those in the mining sector. They had their own round table, whose differences were never resolved completely.

In general, however, while support for Solidarity and change was motivated by dismay with the social conditions of life, neither the leaders of Solidarity nor of the communists had an economic plan that would extend the ethos of solidarity into capitalism. And the workers, peasants and marginalized women left it to the experts to figure that out. As Grażyna Staniszewska suggested, the rank and file thought this to be more of an experts' game, a negotiation for the elites and leading intellectuals, one that would "establish some beachheads that would enable us to function later on."[67] To legitimate union pluralism was, at that time, a big step ahead, and a chance to defeat the communists through electoral means was the foundation for Solidarity's extraordinary support in the June 4 elections.

Both pluralism and anti-communism animated the Round Table and its consequences. There was little in the Round Table about equality per se. There was, however, a great deal of concern in that Round Table about how to assure a peaceful process toward democratic change. Solidarity was thought of only in political terms, not in social terms, and that is one powerful basis for the Round Table's critique today. The

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[63] For elaboration of this argument, see Michael D. Kennedy, *Cultural Formations of Postcommunism* (forthcoming, University of Minnesota Press).

[64] *Communism's Negotiated Collapse*, 152.

[65] Ibid., 88.

[66] Ibid., 82.

[67] Ibid., 153.

radical conservatives, and the many fewer radical communists, can argue that the Round Table has destroyed the social basis of solidarity with the magnification of inequality.

Some dozen years after the publication of *Power and Privilege*, Gerhard Lenski argued that with inequality's durability in advanced societies, any attempt to reduce economic inequality will tend to increase political inequality.[68] In one more extension of Lenski's thesis, one might consider here that the chance to level the political playing field with democratic reform required that kind of neglect of economic inequalities. That, at least, was the ideological unity that brought together communist reformers and Solidarity, in opposition to the official trade union which tried to destroy the Round Table accords by making more radical demands in the indexation of wages.[69] In short, this equalization of the political field was accompanied by a magnification of inequality in the social field. It is difficult to say whether this was sociologically necessary. It was, however, ideologically necessary.

The peaceful negotiated revolution may have succeeded because the negotiators were losing their power in society overall, becoming weaker and weaker, and more and more dependent on one another for generating a new basis for power. Their legitimacy could not easily depend on their old constituencies, especially as the logic of negotiation and compromise produced a new constituency for both sides: one another. The power of the negotiators ultimately came to depend on supporting the legitimacy and value of the compromise.

One might argue, therefore, that the Round Table provided a new "value" on which those who would negotiate could draw status. This new value, part of a new Poland, was one based on compromise with their enemy and the right of everyone to figure out their own place in a more open, and perhaps more unequal, society. This new value could also differentiate the negotiators from those who would insist on a complete victory for one side over the other and the illegitimacy of this new inequality. While it might appear that the negotiators valued society less, and thought about themselves more, one might also note that those who emphasized inequality's illegitimacy and the importance of complete victory also think little about the conditions of *peaceful* change. And here we come to the significance of interpretation and the challenge of power and privilege.

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[68] Gerhard Lenski, "Marxist Experiments in Destratification: An Appraisal," *Social Forces* 57 (1978): 364-83.

[69] Alfred Miodowicz, the leader of the OPZZ, or All Polish Trade Union, saw the negotiations between communists and Solidarity as a threat to his own position, and was one of the most serious opponents to this accord among the communist authorities.

Conclusions: Radicalism, Conservatism, Power and Privilege

The study of inequality in introductory sociology is still organized around discussions of conservatism and radicalism, of functionalist and conflict theories. These alternative portraits were primarily made in capitalist societies, and when they were extended to communist-ruled societies,[70] the distinctions were still sensible. The ruling class tended to discuss inequality in conservative terms, and those who would identify oppression would use terms from the conflict school. When we think about power and privilege during times of radical change, however, the relationship between power, privilege and justice is not so clear, especially when those changes are associated with communism's negotiated collapse.

Radicals rarely imagine that power and privilege can be organized around a compromise with former rulers, based on values for the whole of society. The Round Table, however, depended on that imagery. Those negotiating had to conceive of their role as one for the whole of Poland, for their constituencies doubted that dealing with the enemy could ever produce anything other than betrayal. One might argue, therefore, that a more conservative view of power and privilege, one in which its distribution serves a societal good rather than a group's interest, is necessary for peaceful change to take place. Radicalism is critical for organizing resistance to injustice, but more conservative views that emphasize common values might be critical to imagining legitimate negotiations.

The success of these negotiations might in turn depend on a radical reconstruction of the "real" empirical conditions of inequality. Both sides must recognize that their power in relation to one another, and to their more fundamentalist opponents, is decreasing and that the only way in which they can increase their power is to draw on a new resource: their opponent. When that happens, a new value is introduced to the discussion of power and privilege: the question of peace.

This in turn, however, requires the generation of a different set of core values, one that finds something in their former enemy more valuable than what their enemy's previous demonization might have served for the mobilization of core constituencies. How can one imagine an enemy as an opponent, or even a partner, in the making of a new order? The Round Table suggests that answer.

On the one hand, the communists had to elevate one of their identities, as the maximizers of the *nation's* good, not the Party's well being. That required that they recognize Solidarity's potential for producing a peaceful change. On the other, Solidarity had to adopt a vision of solidarity that could be linked to the Pope's vision, one where the good don't make enemies, but rather, evil makes enemies of others. Both sides could therefore recognize in the other the potential for good faith negotiations, where in order

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[70] Note Alvin Gouldner's portrait in *The Coming Crisis of Western Sociology* (New York: Basic Books, 1970), as well as Ossowski's discussion.

to realize their ethical mission, they needed the other to serve the nation, or to serve a higher order.

This new core value based, as Michnik has said, on a democratic nation including "those who fought against the People's Republic and those who served the People's Republic"[71] can be attacked by linking this emphasis on pluralism and mutual recognition to an unjust allocation of privilege. To point to the wealth of former communists, or to the success of Michnik's paper, is a method for undermining the negotiators' claims of national devotion and ethical solidarity. It is striking, of course, that in this very charge one must ignore the risk of violence.

The Round Table is therefore the object of very different interpretations, and Ossowski's reminder to attend to ideology in the assessment of inequality is important. Critics on both the right and the left can articulate a radical critique by linking the negotiation to subsequent unjust privileges, while the Round Table's defenders instead emphasize the values it produced for the nation as a whole. Lenski's approach to radicalism and conservatism and his search for their synthesis remains, however, a useful guide for thinking about how to judge this debate. One might look to see just how much the negotiators have benefited from this deal in order to decide whether a conservative or radical viewpoint is most useful for interpreting the Round Table. Alternatively, one might also ask something else. How great was the risk of violence? Or what should be the price of peace? Do the values of the Round Table contribute to the possibility of a society based on the peaceful negotiation of important differences? If so, functionalist thinking might deserve more attention in the making of radical, but peaceful, change, and the ideology attending class analysis might address not only the value of equality, but the ways in which its portrait of society contributes to a peaceful approach to the negotiation of difference.

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[71] *Communism's Negotiated Collapse*, 16.

The Polish Round Table of 1989:
The Cultural Dimension(s) of the Negotiated Regime Change

Jan Kubik

1. Introduction. Modeling the Round Table (RT) process as a political-cultural phenomenon.

In this essay, I will look at the Polish Round Table (RT) from a "political culture" perspective. There is no room here to present a complete and exhaustive picture of this perspective and its place in the most recent theorizing on culture. I summarize the main assumptions of my approach in Appendix 1; it is strongly influenced by Sewell's recent synthesizing article.[1] As for political culture, I adopt a useful definition offered by Gamson: "A nonredundant concept of political culture refers to the meaning systems that are culturally available for talking, writing, and thinking about political objects: the myths and metaphors, the language and idea elements, the frames, ideologies, values, and condensing symbols."[2] I focus, therefore, on the "meaning systems" (or "webs of significance") that were developed and used by various participants of the Round Table negotiations to visualize, conceptualize, analyze, criticize, evaluate and propagate strategies of (political) action they and their adversaries were employing.

Specifically, the theoretical frame of this essay is based on:

> 1. An approach to the study of the relationship between culture and politics, informed by (a) the Geertzian definition of culture as a "web of significance" and (b) Swidler's idea to construe "culture's causal significance not in defining ends

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[1] William H. Sewell, Jr., "The Concept(s) of Culture," in Victoria E. Bonnell and Lynn Hunt, eds., *Beyond The Cultural Turn: New Direction in the Study of Society and Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999).

[2] William A. Gamson, "Political Discourse and Collective Action," in Bert Klandermans, Hanspeter Kriesi, and Sidney Tarrow, eds., *International Social Movement Research*, Vol. 1, *From Structure to Action: Comparing Social Movement Research Across Cultures* (Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, 1988), 220.

of action, but in providing *cultural components that are used to construct strategies of action.*"[3]

2. Conceptualizations of social processes that explicitly problematize the dialectics between social action and textualization of social reality (narrativization, emplotment). Here I borrow heavily from cultural anthropology (particularly Geertz and Victor Turner) and sociology of culture.[4]

3. Cross-cultural studies on conflict resolution.[5]

Victor Turner's concept of social drama will serve as the main organizing device for this paper:

> At its simplest, the drama consists of a four-stage model, proceeding from breach of some relationship regarded as crucial in the relevant social group, which provides not only its setting but many of its goals, through a phase of rapidly mounting crisis in the direction of the group's major dichotomous cleavage, to the application of legal or ritual means of redress or reconciliation between the conflicting parties which compose the action set. The final stage is either the public and symbolic expression of reconciliation or else of irremediable schism.[6]

To this sequence of four phases, Breach, Crisis, Redress, Reconciliation/Schism, I will add one more: Pre-redress. This is a period in the development of social drama when the earliest modifications in the actors' cultural schemas occur and when the preliminary contacts between adversaries are established. But, the whole process at this point is easily reversible, there is no firm commitment to the redress action, and an institutional

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[3] Ann Swidler, "Culture in Action: Symbols and Strategies" *American Sociological Review* 51 (April 1986): 272.

[4] Nicholas B. Dirks, Geoff Eley, and Sherry B. Ortner, "Introduction," in Nicholas Dirks, Geoff Eley, and Sherry B. Ortner, eds., *Culture/Power/History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 3-45; Victoria E. Bonnell and Lynn Hunt, eds., *Beyond The Cultural Turn. New Direction in the Study of Society and Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); Claudia Strauss and Naomi Quinn, *A Cognitive Theory of Cultural Meaning* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Victoria E. Bonnell, *Iconography of Power. Soviet Political Posters under Lenin and Stalin* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997); Michael D. Kennedy, *Cultural Formations of Postcommunism: Emancipation, Transition, Nation and War* (book manuscript, 1999); Mabel Berezin, *Making The Fascist Self. The Political Culture of Interwar Italy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997).

[5] Kevin Avruch, Peter W. Black and Joseph A. Scimecca, eds., *Conflict Resolution. Cross-Cultural Perspectives* (Westport: Praeger, 1991).

[6] Victor Turner, *Dramas, Fields, Metaphors. Symbolic Action in Human Society* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1974), 79.

setup for redress is not yet created. For the sake of simplification, I merge Breach and Crisis and thus isolate in the RT process, conceptualized as a social drama, *four* phases:

(1) The pre-RT period (1980-1986). It begins with the *Breach* in the socialist status quo, that is the creation of Solidarity in 1980. Next, a long phase of *Crisis* follows (with the Martial Law period being its essential part).

(2) The Amnesty of September 11, 1986 (all Solidarity activists are released from prison) opens the *Pre-Redress* phase. In this section I emphasize the specificity of the Polish resistance to communism.

(3) The RT process per se (February 6, 1989 - August 24, 1989 [formation of the Mazowiecki cabinet]), constituting the *Redress* phase. Here I focus on two pairs of contradictions/tensions: confrontation versus compromise and exclusion versus inclusion.

(4) The post-RT period: *Schism or Reconciliation*? Analytical emphasis is placed on the conflict between various interpretations of the RT and their political relevance.

The empirical base of the project includes:

1. Documentation produced within the Michigan project, including: (a) the transcript of the conference and (b) transcripts of the interviews with several key participants of the RT negotiations[7];

2. My own memories of and notes on informal conversations and debates I had with several participants in Ann Arbor (April 1999) and elsewhere;

3. Several existing historical and sociological accounts and analyses of the Round Table (RT);[8]

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[7] Interviews were conducted with several participants in the April 1999 conference while they were in Ann Arbor. Interview audiotapes were subsequently transcribed under the auspices of a contract from the National Council for Eurasian and East European Research (NCEEER), under authority of a Title VIII grant from the US Department of State, for the project, "Negotiating Revolution in Poland: Conversion and Opportunity in 1989." (This contract, awarded to Michael D. Kennedy and Brian Porter, has also supported additional interviews in Poland with both participants in, and opponents of, the RT negotiations.) Neither NCEEER nor the US Government is responsible for the views expressed within this text.

[8] Andrzej Paczkowski, *Od sfałszowanego zwycięstwa do prawdziwej klęski* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1999); Marjorie Castle, *Changing Arenas, Changing Players: Regime and Opposition in Poland's Transition from Communist Rule* (book manuscript, no date); John Elster, ed.,

4. Documentation produced by Polish participants.[9]

In order to trace the dynamic of the RT process, for each phase I will try to determine the following set of features:

1. The dominant symbolic vision(s) of the polity

2. The dominant relationship between the elite and followers in Solidarity

3. The dominant relationship between the elite and followers in the party-state

4. The dominant mode of interaction between the main adversaries.

Additionally, in order to suggest possible generalizations and lessons to be learned from the Polish experience, I will also:

5. Identify the main feature of each phase

6. Offer a few simple theoretical points learned from or relevant for each phase

2. The Pre-RT Period: Breach and Crisis.

When Polish communists granted their full legal recognition to Solidarity in the fall of 1980, they suspended the rules of the political game the Soviets had imposed on Eastern Europe after WWII. A massive organization, fully autonomous and free from their control, was formed. But, at that time, the breach proved to be too radical, and with the imposition of Martial Law and delegalization of Solidarity on December 13, 1981, state socialism attempted to re-assert itself. The process, known as "normalization," did not work, however. The Solidarity movement was too massive and too deeply entrenched in the society to be crashed. The country entered a five-year period of simmering crisis. During this crisis a cultural-political polarization of the polity intensified.

The Roundtable Talks and the Breakdown of Communism (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

[9] Bronisław Geremek (with Jacek Żakowski), *Geremek Opowiada, Żakowski Pyta. Rok 1989* (Warsaw: Plejada, 1990); Krzysztof Dubiński, *Okrągły Stół* (Warsaw: KAP, 1990); Krzysztof Dubiński, *Magdalenka: Transakcja Epoki* (Warsaw: Sylvia, 1990).

2.1. Dominant Vision of the Polity: Bi-Polar Cleavage: Solidarity Versus the Communists.

As I demonstrated elsewhere,[10] the Polish anticommunist "revolution" was a cultural-political phenomenon of massive proportions, by comparison with other East European countries. During the 1970's and early 1980's, a substantial number of people engaged in the formulation, development and defense of a counter-hegemonic vision, which served to de-legitimize the state-socialist system and, simultaneously, allowed these people to constitute themselves as an "oppositional" cultural-class of Solidarity. Put another way, Solidarity was never simply a trade union or a movement, but a cultural class *in statu nascendi*, never fully "consolidated," subjected to the tremendous internal centrifugal tensions which operated together with the centripetal forces of symbolic unification. By 1991, the centrifugal political (both programmatic and personal) tensions destroyed Solidarity (as a specific "cultural" class), but throughout the 1980's a substantial portion of the Polish populace "belonged" to it, either actively, by engaging in various clandestine activities; or passively, by giving it their "moral support." The cultural frame which held this class together was built as a polar vision of "we/the people/Solidarity" versus "them/authorities/communists."

    Several students of the 1981-1989 period in Poland concluded that the cultural vitality and political significance of this polar frame during these years not only did not decline, but seems to have increased. Anna Uhlig, author of an excellent study of political symbolism during the 1980's, wrote: "after December 13, 1981 the opposition's drive to make a distinction between 'our Poland' (the Solidarity Republic) from 'their Poland' (Polish People's Republic) intensifies."[11] The events that helped the "opposition" to construct this hegemonic polar cleavage included two papal visits, the murder of Father Jerzy Popiełuszko and the immediate emergence of his cult, and countless street demonstrations and clashes with the police as well as large industrial strikes in 1988. Not everybody, of course, participated in this ongoing, political and symbolic confrontation with the regime, and not everybody accepted the polar vision of the conflict. In fact, the actual numbers of those who supported Solidarity kept declining throughout the 1980's and rebounded only after Solidarity's spectacular electoral victory in 1989.[12] Yet the perception of the hegemonic conflict between "us" and "them" continued to be the most characteristic feature of Polish popular political culture. Jasiewicz and Adamski summarized a longitudinal study of Polish attitudes in the following fashion: "Spontaneous answers show that in 1988 somewhat fewer respondents than in 1984 perceive the presence of conflict in Polish society, which is,

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[10] Jan Kubik, *The Power of Symbols Against the Symbols of Power. The Rise of Solidarity and the Fall of State Socialism in Poland* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994).

[11] Anna Uhlig, *W kręgu symbolu. O polskiej kulturze politycznej lat osiemdziesiątych* (Warsaw: Uniwersytet Warszawski, Instytut Nauk Politycznych, 1989), 61.

[12] Krzysztof Jasiewicz, "Polish Politics on the Eve of the 1993 Elections: Towards Fragmentation or Pluralism?" *Communist and Postcommunist Studies* 26 (4) (1993): 110-12.

however, perceived by almost half the respondents. The great majority of those who perceive conflict define it as between the authorities and society."[13]

It is therefore clear that during the waning years of state socialism in Poland (1976-1989), an extreme, *bi-polar* conceptualization of the public space ("we" versus "them") was formed and became a crucial weapon in the "society's" struggle against the unwanted regime. This bi-polar conceptualization ((di)vision) was not shared by everybody, yet it served as a mobilizing frame for the most active individuals and groups.

2.2. Solidarity: Dominant Relationship Between the Elite and Followers.

During that phase, Solidarity was highly unified and most followers felt that they were "well represented" by the underground structures; a sense of *inclusion* was clearly dominant in the movement. It is important to remember, however, that the numbers of followers were dwindling and the Solidarity activists had to resort to various symbolic strategies exaggerating the actual strength and the degree of unity of the movement.[14]

2.3. Party-State: Dominant Relationship Between the Elite and Followers.

During this phase, the party-state seems to have been strongly united behind its leader, General Wojciech Jaruzelski. The sense of *inclusion* among the party apparatus (*nomenklatura*) at various levels must have been high.[15]

2.4. Dominant Mode of Interaction Between the Main Adversaries.

The party-state and Solidarity were engaged in an intense, multi-level confrontation. As Solidarity developed massive underground structures and from time to time engaged the security forces in frequently violent *confrontations*, the state relied on repressive

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[13] Krzysztof Jasiewicz and Władysław Adamski, "Evolution of the oppositional consciousness," in Władysław W. Adamski, ed., *Societal Conflict and Systemic Change. The Case of Poland 1980-1992* (Warsaw: IFiS Publishers, 1993), 55.

[14] Grażyna Staniszewska, conversations in Ann Arbor, April 1999 and in *Communism's Negotiated Collapse: The Polish Round Table, Ten Years Later. A Conference at the University of Michigan. April 7-10, 1999. English Transcript of the Conference Proceedings*, trans. by Kasia Kietlinska, ed. by Donna Parmelee (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Center for Russian and East European Studies, 1999). References to the Round Table transcript correspond to the original printed version of the transcript. They may not correspond to the transcript currently available on the web or to subsequent printed versions.

[15] The tentativeness of this assessment is justified by the scarcity of empirical data.

techniques. Due to the authoritarian political structure and the lack of contacts between both sides, the repertoire of political contestation was limited to street protests and infrequent strikes.

2.5. The Dominant Feature of This Phase Was the Symbolic Bi-Polarization *of the Polity and Society.*

2.6. Theoretical Points.

> A. Under the conditions of strong symbolic polarization and a stable and "hostile" external political context, conflict becomes intractable. Yet:

> B. Researchers should focus on the way the symbolic politics is being played (the contest of cultural hegemony versus counter-hegemony) and try to identify possible openings for a dialogue. In this case, the ***"exhaustion"*** of the existing system's potential for economic growth was becoming increasingly clear to certain "reformers" within the ruling elite.[16] At the same time, some Solidarity activists were realizing that eventual dialogue and compromise was inevitable; other strategies (such as violent confrontation and overthrow) were increasingly untenable.[17]

> C. Kriesberg's brief article on the transition from intractable to tractable conflicts is very useful. His description of the tractable conflict fits perfectly the Pre-redress and Redress phases of the Polish conflict: "The minimal benchmarks of tractable conflicts include the following three features. First, the adversary parties recognize considerable mutual interests and shared identity, and not only incompatible interests of distinct, exclusive identities. Second, significant members of each adversary side acknowledge minimal rights of the other and the propriety of the other's claims. Third, the adversaries agree to rely on nonviolent means of pursuing their conflict and procedures to settle specific issues in contention between them."[18]

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[16] Rakowski, *Interview Transcript*; Gdula, *Interview Transcript*.
[17] Kaczyński, *Interview Transcript*; Bujak, *Communism's Negotiated Collapse*, 37.
[18] Louis Kreisberg, "Intractable Conflicts," in Weiner, Eugene, ed., *The Handbook of Interethnic Coexistence* (New York: Continuum, 1998), 337.

3. Pre-Redress Phase (September 11, 1986 - February 6, 1989).

This phase began with the full amnesty ordered on September 11, 1986. According to several interviewees, this was a truly significant breakthrough point. It signaled the regimes' readiness to switch from confrontation to dialogue with the opposition.[19] What factors caused this change? A minimal list should include the following:

> 1. External political factors: A change in the political opportunity structure (POS) and its framing, caused by Gorbachev's reforms in the Soviet Union.[20]

> 2. Internal political and economic factors: an increasingly acute political stalemate between Solidarity and the party-state. The May and August 1988 strikes demonstrated Solidarity's staying power (however weakened). Equally importantly, during the second half of the decade some key members of the ruling elite came to the conclusion that state socialism reached a state of systemic "exhaustion," particularly in the domain of economy.[21]

3.1. The dominant symbolic vision(s) of the polity.

During this phase the cultural/symbolic maneuvers are particularly important, for many actors are beginning to reconsider their own and their enemies' identities. A gradual process of dismantling prior stereotypes begins. In Poland, this phase was still dominated by symbolic bi-polarization (Solidarity versus the communists), and the symbolic unity of Solidarity was perceived by its key activists as a necessary pre-condition of eventual success. Michnik noted: "I thought that the only method to dismantle communism is a strong social identity, and this was provided by Solidarity and Wałęsa."[22] Yet, a slow reconceptualization of the socio-political map was beginning. In that process some "enemies" were re-defined as "adversaries one can talk to" and a search for a common platform was initiated. Kaczyński noted the paradoxical nature of this phase: "there existed certain confusion between treating communists as enemies and the necessity of eventual negotiations with them."[23] Geremek succinctly

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[19] Kaczyński, *Interview Transcript*; Rakowski, *Interview Transcript*; Michnik, conversation (April 1999).

[20] Paczkowski, 165. For example, on January 4, 1989 Rakowski informed the Episcopate: "we are now completely free to re-furnish our house."

[21] Paczkowski, 171; Rakowski, *Interview Transcript*; Reykowski, *Interview Transcript*.

[22] *Interview Transcript*.

[23] Kaczyński, *Interview Transcript*, 5.

summarized the whole problem as a difficulty of moving from "an ethos of the struggle and hostility to an ethos of civilized political game."[24]

Undoubtedly, this gradual rapprochement was triggered by the real and perceived changes in the political opportunity structure, noted above. But, while some members of both elites began drifting toward a dialogue, others cultivated their unwavering hostility toward the other side. Which factors help to explain this increasing divergence in political behavior, predicated, it seems, on an ability to learn new cultural scenarios?

People's ability to engage in such "strategic learning" varies.[25] Most, if not all, participants of the RT process demonstrated some flexibility and readiness for such learning. A minimal motivation to enter negotiations came from a conviction that there were no other viable alternatives.[26] But there existed other mechanisms as well. While reading through the interview transcripts and various statements, I identified three such mechanisms:

> A. ***"Dialogic" personalities***. Michnik described in detail how his personal background ("a communist family") predisposed him to see in communists human beings. Additionally, he was able to see a difference between the communist doctrine (that he was always ready to fight) and communist functionaries, fellow human beings capable of errors and change, and potential partners for a dialogue.

> B. ***Philosophical affinities***. Some RT participants emphasized philosophical affinity with some members of the "other side." This affinity was based on subscribing to loosely understood tenets of left-leaning liberalism.[27] Adherents of this philosophical creed could be found among the younger members of the "communist camp."[28] This observation underscores the significance of the generational change.

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[24] Geremek, 146

[25] During strategic learning people "revise their perceptions of what is feasible, possible and indeed desirable in the light of their assessment of their own ability to realize prior goals (and that of others), as they assimilate new 'information' [Colin Hay and Daniel Wincott, "Interrogating Institutionalism, Interrogating Institutions: Beyond 'Calculus' and 'Cultural' Approaches" (paper downloaded from *CLIO*, 1999, 12-13)].

[26] Kaczyński, *Interview Transcript*.

[27] Reykowski, *Interview Transcript.*

[28] Gdula, *Interview Transcript*; Rakowski, *Interview Transcript.*

C. **Cultural commonalities**. I was able to detect three:

> - "Polishness" (Rakowski, Reykowski). According to Reykowski, during one of the critical political debates someone observed: "What's wrong with Solidarity taking over power? They are also Poles."[29] Gebert writes: "…In Poland (by contrast to Yugoslavia - JK) we could throw out to the communist side the idea that we were all Poles together. Whatever the political differences, we are all good Poles, good patriots, we all love our country";[30]

> - Activists of both sides sometimes stressed the "common sense" and "pragmatism" of their interlocutors (e.g., Reykowski on Michnik, Staniszewska on Kwaśniewski);[31]

> - A decisive predilection for "bloodless" cultural scenarios, shared by both sides. This predilection comes from a specific interpretation of (common) Polish history, which suggests a singularly important lesson: no more blood.[32]

3.2. Solidarity: Dominant relationship between the elite and followers.

A gradual shift from confrontation to dialogue engendered a process of polarization (or diversification) within the Solidarity elites.[33] A group of influential activists emerged, who interpreted rapprochement with communists as "treason." According to them, communists were preparing "another trick."[34] Nonetheless, Wałęsa and his closest advisers at that time were increasingly convinced that there was only one way out of the deepening crisis: negotiations.[35]

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[29] Reykowski, *Interview Transcript*, 7.

[30] Konstanty Gebert, "Ten Years After: Reflections on the Round Table," *Bulletin. East and Central Europe Program, The Graduate Faculty, New School University*, vol. 9/3 (October 1999): 4.

[31] See, for example, Reykowski, *Communism's Negotiated Collapse*,140.

[32] Gebert; also, personal communication with Gebert. Laura Edles demonstrates that a similar cultural maneuver (necessitating a specific interpretation of history) was successfully implemented by the Spanish elites. See Laura Edles, *Symbol and Ritual in the New Spain. The Transition to Democracy after Franco* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

[33] Chrzanowski, *Communism's Negotiated Collapse*; Hall, *Communism's Negotiated Collapse*; Michnik, *Interview Transcript*.

[34] Michnik, *Interview Transcript*.

[35] Geremek; Kaczyński, *Interview Transcript*; Lech Kaczyński and Jan Lityński, "Kompromisu blaski i cienie," *Rzeczpospolita*, September 11, 1999.

3.3. Party-state: Dominant relationship between the elite and followers.

A parallel process of fragmentation (or polarization) began among the ruling elite.[36] A secret poll conducted in November 1988 among over one hundred regional party secretaries revealed that eighty-five percent of them were against "transcending the fundamental features of the system."[37] That meant a decisive rejection of any rapprochement with Solidarity. Stelmachowski reports that after the announcement of the Wałęsa - Kiszczak meeting on August 31, 1988, thirty-two regional (voivodship) party secretaries sent to the Central Committee memoranda expressing their protest against such a meeting. According to Stelmachowski, one of them argued: "For seven years the government argued that Wałęsa is stupid, and now it decides to talk to him. Hence our question: did he become wiser or the government stupider?"[38] The most famous phrase, summarizing the attitude of many party members toward the new approach to Solidarity, was coined by Stanisław Ciosek. As he put it: "The Party howled."

In brief, the decision to establish initial contacts with Solidarity triggered the increasing polarization within the party-state elite. The "pro-Solidarity" part of this elite began drifting away from those members of the *nomenklatura* who felt threatened by the emerging possibility of the regime modification or, even, change.[39] In an attempt to alleviate this budding polarization, the party "reformers" had to devise a series of propaganda moves that would produce a modicum of reassurance for the disgruntled apparatchiks. The political significance of communication between the elite and its "base" increased dramatically. In fact, both elites had to play a double communicative game. They had to interact with their opponents, the "other" elite, according to the unclear rules of a complex game of signals, overtures and tactical withdrawals. At the same time they had to talk to their own "base." Signals sent through these channels often had to be quite different. An excellent example is provided by Dubiński.[40] On August 31, Polish Press Agency (PAP) announced that General Kiszczak met with Lech Wałęsa. It was an event of enormous significance. This official reference to Wałęsa, previously referred to by the regime's spokesman as a private person of no consequence, represented yet another manifestation of Solidarity's re-entry into the public domain. In an effort to dilute the significance of this event, PAP issued on the same day two other communiqués, informing the public of Kiszczak's other meetings. The signal to the

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[36] Rakowski *Interview Transcript*, 9.

[37] Paczkowski, 160-61.

[38] Andrzej Stelmachowski, "Telefon do Sekretarza," *Rzeczpospolita*, February 6, 1999.

[39] Orszulik (*Communism's Negotiated Collapse*, 58) on the first Magdalenka meeting (September 16, 1988): "I was sitting next to two such prominent members [of the hard-line faction - JK] and they were saying: 'What the heck do they want? What are they demanding? This is impossible!'"

[40] Dubiński, *Okrągły Stół*, 52.

"base" seems to have been clear: no big deal with this Wałęsa, Kiszczak is just meeting a lot of people from various organizations.

3.4. The dominant mode of interaction between the main adversaries.

The tenor of the interaction began to change from confrontation to dialogue. The change was occurring simultaneously in several dimensions.

First, both sides, but particularly Solidarity, had to re-establish their "credentials": to signal their presence as a "serious" force and demonstrate their unity. Prior to January 1989, no polls were allowed to measure Solidarity's support, but in the assessment of many Polish sociologists this support was systematically dwindling since 1980.[41] The re-invigoration of Solidarity's public standing was, therefore, no small matter. An occasion to do so presented itself when Miodowicz, the head of the pre-regime labor union federation (OPZZ), challenged Wałęsa to debate him in "a TV duel." Despite tremendous fears and reservations (in itself indicating an acute understanding of the "public relations" aspect of political struggle), Wałęsa, prepared by Andrzej Wajda and other media experts, accepted the challenge and, subsequently, "creamed" Miodowicz (as Michnik put it in an interview).[42] This was a ***symbolic breakthrough***: Wałęsa not only proved that Solidarity was still alive but he also demonstrated that he and the movement were a serious, credible and relatively powerful force on the public scene. As Paczkowski reports, support for Solidarity's legalization went up from forty-two percent in August 1988 to sixty-two percent a day after the debate.[43] In general, as several participants confirmed, the game of mutual perceptions, through which both sides were attempting to test their relative weaknesses and strengths, was very important at this stage.[44]

Second, as both sides were staking out symbolically their positions vis-à-vis each other, they also had to begin building preliminary bridges of communication. At this stage, the choice of a proper idiom was very important. The language and cultural imagery that framed the situation and the identities of both sides had to be carefully chosen. As Stelmachowski observed: "You may think this is amusing, but I had to use

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[41] Krzysztof Jasiewicz, personal communication; Castle, Chapter 4, 1-3.

[42] Michnik, *Interview Transcript*; Geremek, 24-28.

[43] Paczkowski, 158.

[44] See, in particular, Jaruzelski's presentation to the Secretariat of the Central Committee from December 5, 1988 [Stanisław Perzkowski, ed., *Ostatni rok władzy 1988-1989. Tajne Dokumenty Biura Politycznego i Sekretariatu KC* (London: Aneks, 1994), 196-99]. See also, Staniszewska's contribution to the Conference and the following debate, in *Communism's Negotiated Collapse*, 143-48.

their language, because otherwise nothing would have happened as far these negotiations are concerned."[45]

Third, if communication was to happen at all, appropriate spaces for preliminary contacts had to be established. To describe those spaces Kaczyński used the metaphor of "locks." They were initially provided by (a) private apartments, (b) Church spaces and (c) state-sponsored seminars or consultative bodies. Later, the (in)famous villa Magdalenka became the main "lock" between both sides.[46]

Fourth, the process from the beginning was facilitated by the constant presence of the mediator: the Roman Catholic Church, enjoying at that time enormous and unchallenged authority in the society.

3.5. The main features of this phase:

1. ***Mutual adjustment of identities and strategies;***

2. Gradualism (incremantalism): the move from confrontation to dialogue is gradual and "dialogic" from the beginning;

3. The cultural/symbolic side of this process is of primary significance. Symbols, images and rhetorical figures, are used concurrently to (a) sharpen the relative position of both adversaries and (b) build discursive bridges between them.[47]

3.6. Main theoretical points learned from this phase:

A. After a change within the "objective" context opens a possibility of moving the conflict from its intractable phase to tractability, the actors themselves must take initiative and introduce preliminary steps on the road to compromise. Cultural/symbolic scenarios, that shape identities, strategies, and mutual perceptions, are of critical importance at this stage. In brief, this stage is dominated by cultural politics.

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[45] Stelmachowski. Geremek describes how he had to choose a language acceptable to the authorities in his influential article from February 1988, in which he proposed forming an "anti-crisis pact", 9-10.

[46] Geremek, 20.

[47] A captivating confirmation of this proposition comes from Jaruzelski himself. In his presentation to the Party leadership one finds the following fragment: "Accord–struggle. Obviously we have always claimed that accord and struggle are inseparable. The weight of these two words changes, depending on the situation..." (*Ostatni rok władzy*, 1999).

　　　B. The signs of possible rapprochement must come from the centers of power
(the Jaruzelski and Wałęsa circles) to be credible.

4. The Redress Phase: the Round Table negotiations and their immediate aftermath.
(February 6, 1989 - August 24, 1989 [formation of the Mazowiecki cabinet]).

This phase reveals crucial structural contradictions underpinning a social change via
elite negotiations: on the one hand, the negotiating game, by necessity, calls for
exclusion of the majority of a given camp. To be effective, negotiating teams must be
relatively small. On the other hand, the "size" of each elite's constituency ("base") or the
"depth" of its support is a very powerful bargaining chip. Each elite, therefore, tends to
cultivate such support or, at least, invest a lot of resources in creating and upholding an
image of its "massive base." As Kuroń, one of the Solidarity leaders, told Castle: "We
threatened each other with our bases."[48] Thus, the logistical demand for *exclusion*, must
be constantly counterbalanced by some form (purely symbolic, at least) of *inclusion* (of
the base). Moreover, if the whole process is to gain a wider legitimacy, at the end of the
negotiations, the logic of inclusion must take precedence over the logic of exclusion; a
mechanism must be found to re-incorporate the "society" into the process of change.
This can be achieved through a skillful ritualization. In brief, the resolution of this
tension between exclusion and inclusion determines the final outcome of a social drama
and the way its legacy is going to shape further developments.
　　　It seems that this basic dynamic interplay of exclusion and inclusion determines
other features of the redress phase in a social drama played according to a scenario of
negotiations.

4.1. The dominant symbolic vision(s) of the polity.

The dominant vision of the polity in this phase was still bi-polar, but a picture of the
"untouchable" enemy was being slowly replaced by a vision of an adversary-as-a-
negotiating partner. Negotiations are impossible without a symbolic platform of
commonality. To create such a platform, several principal actors engaged in discursive
actions aimed at discharging potentially explosive historical memories. Reykowski said:

　　　Another [condition of successful negotiations – JK] was the principle of not
　　　discussing symbolic problems. We were to solve the future, and avoid arguing
　　　about the past. We believed, and I think most of us agreed here, that if we started
　　　getting into discussions about the past wrongs, we wouldn't accomplish

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[48] Castle, Chapter 4, 18.

anything. We had to accept the fact that we looked at different things from the past in different ways, and that we had different visions of various symbolic problems. There were situations when someone couldn't help raising such a problem, and the emotions flared, but I think we were in solidarity trying to weaken these emotions during the negotiations.[49]

Such visions of commonality must be, however, counterbalanced by images of separateness. Otherwise, a perception of "selling out" or even "becoming polluted" emerges among the "base," and some critics of a dialogue begin to develop a narrative of treason.[50] As a result, a crisp, bi-polar vision of the socio-political field is replaced by an ambiguous, hazy picture of the elite, whose previously totally separate segments are now somewhat overlapping.

Since each elite had to position itself vis-à-vis two different audiences, the adversarial elite and its own followers, one would expect that they attempted to master the art of putting forth various identities, depending on the situation. Even a cursory reading of various party documents and statements confirms this hypothesis. On the party-state side I detected three different discourses (languages) of identity:

   A. The party elite as an open-minded, **compromise-prone partner**.

In this role they use a negotiations-facilitating language.[51]

   B. The party elite as a **"real politic," pragmatic strategist**.

This idiom was used in the internal disputes (in the Politburo or Central Committee meetings).[52]

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[49] *Communism's Negotiated Collapse*, 141.

[50] See Geremek's vivid and dramatic depiction of this process, 146. Hall observed in his conversation with Castle (Chapter 4, 16): "The most important thing was that society, and particularly that part of society which identified with Solidarity and with the opposition, did not get the impression that the border between the camp of the authorities and the camp of the opposition had been erased. That it didn't get the impression that the system was being transformed only as a result of co-opting part of the former opposition elite into the ruling elite. That would have meant a defeat, a fundamental defeat for all of us, since we were convinced that our strength resulted above all from social support. For society it must be clear that it isn't a matter of creating a new Front of National Unity, but that instead there are two forces here, each internally differentiated but each clearly distinct from the other: the camp of the authorities and the camp of the opposition."

[51] This idiom/discourse was used, for example, during the Magdalenka talks (examples in Dubiński, *Magdalenka*).

[52] Many examples in *Ostatni Rok Władzy*.

C. The party elite as a **trustworthy member of the communist bloc**.

This identity was couched in an ideological idiom and used mostly for external consumption.[53] It is striking that in 1989, as best as I can judge, the ideological fervor of this discourse was much reduced, compared both with earlier years in Poland and with the "official" discourses of the Czechoslovak or East German parties. This pragmatization of the official ideological discourse produced by the leadership of the PUWP confirms the thesis that they were the closest allies of Gorbachev in Eastern Europe.

4.2. The dominant relationship between the elite and followers in Solidarity.

Since during this phase the number of actors directly involved in the political process is limited, the politics of exclusion (who gets in, who is left out, who makes such decisions) takes on a tremendous significance. The main reason for this may be what is bound to happen next: during the post-redress period, the exclusionary politics of the redress phase becomes the subject of an intense symbolic war of interpretations.

Some Solidarity politicians seem to have realized this significance early on and invested a lot of energy in communicating with their base. "The Round Table talks were not only talks between the representatives of the opposition and the representatives of the authorities. They were also our talks with society," observed Piotr Nowina-Konopka, a Solidarity spokesman.[54] After the inaugural meeting of the RT, Wałęsa toured several major industrial centers and met with potential supporters at rallies.[55] As most observers indicate, these propagandistic efforts of Solidarity leaders were extremely important, for the size of the base was very unclear and seems to have been weak. There exists, however, evidence indicating that as the negotiations were progressing the support for Solidarity increased.

4.3. The party-state: the dominant relationship between the elite and followers.

The split within the party cadres widened.[56] But generals Jaruzelski and Kiszczak were firmly in control of the basic apparatuses of power, such as the army and the police.[57] Their authority and support for their policies within the communist party was less clear, though. Castle reports that "fifty to seventy percent of its members supported the

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[53] See a report on Jaruzelski's visit to GDR in May 1989 (*Ostatni Rok Władzy*, 363-66).

[54] Castle's interview with Konopka, Chapter 4, 12.

[55] Castle, Chapter 4, 9. It should be noted, however, that Geremek assessed Solidarity's communicative attempts negatively, 145.

[56] Rakowski, *Interview Transcript*, 10.

[57] See Kiszczak's letter to the Michigan conference, April 1999.

liberalization policies,"[58] but within the *nomenklatura* this support was weaker. As Castle reports: "In January 1989, Politburo member Stanisław Ciosek estimated that a majority of the apparatchiks opposed liberalization."[59] What held the party together was the tremendous authority of Jaruzelski and a sense of non-alternativity. Significantly, of course, Jaruzelski had Gorbachev's backing.

4.4. The dominant mode of interaction between the main adversaries.

At this stage, interactions between the members of both elites generate intense strategic learning. Collective stereotypes give way to individualized pictures of actual persons; previously demonized personages reveal their human dimension.[60] Jaruzelski, for example, began perceiving Michnik as a "tactical dove but strategic hawk." It is intriguing, however, that this process was more often mentioned by the representatives of the party-state than by the representatives of Solidarity.[61] This may indicate that the gap between the propagandistic picture and "reality" was much more pronounced within the communist camp than among the Solidarity activists.

4.5. The main feature of this phase.

A tension between the logic of exclusion (underpinning negotiations) and the logic of inclusion lying at the heart of each elite's successful relationship with their respective bases.

4.6. Main theoretical points learned from this phase.

> A. The logic of the negotiating process calls for direct interactions between a small number of participants. As a result, many members of the elite are excluded from the process. At the same time, a danger of symbolic exclusion of the followers increases. Success of the negotiations within the closed circle must be "sold" to wider audiences; a mechanism of (symbolic) inclusion must be implemented.

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[58] Castle, Chapter 4, 7.

[59] Ibid.

[60] Reykowski, *Communism's Negotiated Collapse,* 140; Gebert, *Communism's Negotiated Collapse*, 133 and personal communication.

[61] See, in particular, Staniszewska, *Communism's Negotiated Collapse,* 147.

B. Strategy of incremental gains seems to be superior to any maximalist position.

5. The Round Table's Double Political Afterlife: Schism and Reconciliation.

Solidarity never ceremonialized its victory. Consequently, Poland entered a path of momentous transformations without a ceremonial closure of the redress phase and without a ritualized inclusion of the "society" into the political process. The absence of a ceremonial *rite de passage* from "communism" to "post-communism" has serious consequences for the post-1989 public life in Poland.[62]

Basic cleavages in Polish politics are more "cultural" than in other post-communist Central European states. I see two such cleavages: one that opened within the Solidarity camp between "reformists" and "revolutionaries."[63] Another one separates the Solidarity camp and ex-communists. Both have remained salient throughout the last decade and help to explain the basic maneuvers on the Polish political scene.

Significantly, both cleavages have their origin in the ***unrealized ritual inclusion*** that was supposed to provide a modicum of unity in the divided society. This society has been engaged in an attempt to shed a double legacy of the authoritarian politics of late communism and the extraordinary, liminal, politics of the Round Table. Hence, the first legacy of the Round Table process: a polity dissected by two non-trivial cultural cleavages.

Second, the post-1989 public life in Poland has been characterized by a very low level of trust in political parties and a relatively high level of protest politics.[64] Again, the roots of this dissatisfaction with institutionalized politics may lie in the lack of a proper (ceremonialized?) closure of the RT process and the absence of a symbol or ritual signifying the birth of the post-communist Poland. The existing studies leave no doubt that for those who negatively or critically evaluate the current situation of the country, the RT symbolizes the beginning of the wrong path Poland has taken since the end of communism. Ireneusz Krzeminski, a very perceptive sociologist, writes:

> The moral acceptance of former adversaries (by a section of the Solidarity camp – JK), including the symbolic persona of general Jaruzelski...delineated the basic lines of political divisions, but first of all it generated unusually strong and emotionally laden ***moral divisions*** (original emphasis - JK). A moral anathema

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[62] The lingering consequences of this lack of ceremonialization of Solidarity's victory is carefully analyzed by one of the main actors of the drama, Bronisław Geremek, 147-51.

[63] For its description see Grzegorz Ekiert and Jan Kubik, *Rebellious Civil Society. Popular Protest and Democratic Consolidation in Poland, 1989-1999* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1999).

[64] Ibid.

has been imposed by both sides on each other. The symbolic representation of the society was destroyed and as a result a symbolic picture of the end of the old order and the beginning of the new order has not emerged. Such a symbol, that would dwell in the everyday consciousness and that would constitute a focal point for public rituals, practically does not exist; and yet it is sorely needed.[65]

For those who tend to construe the postcommunist reality in a manner described by Krzeminski, the RT compromise is not seen as an achievement, but rather as yet another example of the murky, if not outright malicious, wheeling-dealing behind the scenes that benefited only the elites of the "Reds" and the "Pinks."[66] In particular, they tend to reinterpret the maneuvers of Solidarity's negotiating elite as having detrimental long-term consequences (for a summary, see Table 1).

Table 1

Political maneuver/skill (Short-term "virtue"?)	Possible re-interpretation as a long-term "vice"
Talent for and openness to **strategic learning**	The lack of "backbone"
Realism: incrementalism of steps and gradualism of goals	Short-sightedness, cowardice, giving in
Exclusion of the majority from the negotiation arena (technical imperative?)	Sectarian deal-making

The third legacy of the Round Table is less symbolic and intangible and more institutional-procedural. As Michael Kennedy argues at length in his newest manuscript,[67] the Round Table, properly "closed" or not, has provided Poland with a model or scenario, that constitutes a cornerstone of the country's robust, parliamentary democracy and remarkably non-violent political practice.[68] Hence, the ultimate paradox of the Round Table: the potentially explosive, deep cultural divisions (*schism*) engendered by the Round Table are routinely channeled through non-disruptive

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[65] Ireneusz Krzeminski, "Moralne Skutki Transformacji Ustrojowej" (manuscript, 1999).
[66] With some exceptions, the "Pinks" are those members of the Solidarity elite who negotiated with the "Reds."
[67] See Kennedy, *Cultural Formations of Postcommunism*.
[68] Zbigniew Janas emphasized this feature of the RT in his interview (*Interview Transcript*, 13).

political mechanisms (*reconciliation*) that also have their origins in the Round Table process.[69]

6. Summary of conclusions (see also Table 2).

1. An analysis of the cultural dimension of the negotiated social change should focus, at minimum, on four political actors (incumbent elite, incumbent followers, challenging elite, challenging followers) and three relationships: between both elites and between each elite and its base. The negotiating game is played concurrently along the lines of all three relationships.

2. The negotiating game, by necessity, calls for *exclusion* (to be effective, negotiating teams must be relatively small). The politics of exclusion (who gets in, who is left out, who makes such decisions) is crucial, but what is particularly important is whether the negotiations end with a (symbolic, ritualized) *inclusion* of a wider public (followers) to the political process or not. The politics of the post-negotiation period are to a large degree determined by the manner in which this issue is resolved.

3. The negotiated social (regime) change is underpinned by an incessant dialectic between *polarization/confrontation* and *compromise/dialogue*. Cultural strategies of polarization/confrontation are used by the negotiating elites to (1) maintain their separate identities and (2) to forge ties with their followers. Cultural strategies of compromise/dialogue are necessary to keep the negotiations with the adversarial elite going.

4. The negotiated social change is ridden, therefore, by two tensions: (1) between *exclusion* and *inclusion* and (2) between *polarization/confrontation* and *compromise/dialogue*.

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[69] Reykowski confirms this observation: according to him the pre-1989 political polarization continues but it is played out in a completely changed institutional system (*Interview Transcript*, 1).

5. Gradualism (or incremantalism) seems to be a mechanism that allows actors to move forward and navigate between both the polar opposites of both logics without abandoning either of them.

6. In order to facilitate negotiations, rhetoric and symbolism, containing the cultural scenarios employed by both elites, should evolve gradually (strategic learning). A dramatic change is bound to produce accusations of "treason."

7. Wagner-Pacifici noted that "Turner, progressively, thought of dramas in four (not necessarily exclusive) ways: (1) social dramas as revelatory of the ongoing but normally indistinct social structures and relations, (2) social dramas as functional (attempted) remedies for societies in crisis, (3) social dramas as self-reflective moments for societies in crisis, and (4) social dramas as potentially liminal moments of social transformation."[70] This fourfold conceptualization of the social drama helps to summarize the significance of the Polish Round Table.

First, the RT process revealed the depth of the schism between Solidarity and the party-state and the nature of the relationship between both elites and their respective bases. Second, RT negotiations did remedy the crisis, ushered in a peaceful regime change, and set Poland on a very successful political trajectory.[71] Third, it is clear that the successful completion of the RT negotiations was made possible by the fact that both elites engaged in the re-conceptualization of their own identities and developed new strategies of interaction (strategic learning). This indicates serious self-reflection. Fourth, it is easy to notice that the RT process was indeed liminal: the rules of the game according to which it was played had little to do with either the rules of the outgoing authoritarian regime or with the rules of the incoming modern democracy.

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[70] Robin Erica Wagner-Pacifici, *The Moro Morality Play: Terrorism as Social Drama* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 9.

[71] On this point and its comparative significance, see Kennedy.

Table 2

	Breach and Crisis	Pre-redress	Redress	Schism or reconciliation
Dominant vision of the polity	Bi-polar cleavage: Solidarity versus the communist state (we versus them)	Bi-polar cleavage still dominant Change in POS Gradual introduction of dialogue New cultural scenarios tested/some applied	Dialectic of symbols/discourses of commonality (elite - elite) and "separateness" (elite - followers"	**Polarization**: Solidarity versus ex-communists
Solidarity: Relationship between elite and followers	Inclusion	Growing strain and polarization (a dynamic of exclusion triggered)	Polarization (Full blown politics of inclusion/ exclusion)	Polarization (within Solidarity) as the dominant cultural legacy of the "RT exclusion"
Party-state: Relationship between elite and followers	Inclusion	Growing strain and polarization (a dynamic of exclusion triggered)	Polarization (Full blown politics of inclusion/ exclusion)	Inclusion
Mode of interaction between two adversarial elites	Confrontation within an authoritarian context	Signs of rapprochement Symbolic breakthrough Gradual change of idioms	Dialogue, personal contact, de-demonization Both need to "play" their respective bases	Contest within democratic structures: political legacy of the RT schism **and** reconciliation
Basic observations/ theoretical points	Intractable conflict: look for signs of tractability	Cultural politics of mutual perceptions Two basic dynamics begin to work: inclusion/exclusion confrontation/ dialogue	Two basic dynamics revealed: inclusion/exclusion confrontation/ dialogue **Ritualized closure: Is it necessary for reconciliation?**	**Cultural cleavages, that result from the lack of ritualized closure of the negotiated systemic change, dominate the post-change politics**.

Appendix 1

Summary of Old and New Approaches to Cultural Analysis

Old approaches	New approaches	Research focus in new approaches
Culture as a molding press (of attitudes and values)	Culture as a tool kit[a] (containing cultural scenarios, schemas)	Texts, discourses, symbols
Symbolic domain per se Semiosis	Symbols in action Context Praxis	Dialectics: models of strategies of action versus actual strategies
Focus on the past Being Traditions "handed down"	Focus on the present Becoming Traditions (re)invented, (re)constructed	Mechanisms of transmission (cultural, social, and political)
Constancy Continuity of traditions: unproblematized	Elasticity, choice (within constraints) Continuity problematized	Limits of malleability and credibility of cultural forms
"Thick" coherence (of a cultural system)[b]	"Thin" coherence Conflict/tension (between various elements of the system)	Culture versus counter-culture; Action versus reaction; Emergence and maintenance of hegemony
Clear boundaries	Hazy, weak boundaries, often contested	Strategies of boundary maintenance
Goals of action	Goals and methods (strategies) of action	(In)compatibility of strategies
Actor(s)' action: **conformity to norms** "Logic of appropriateness associated with obligatory action"[c]	Actor(s) action: **limited choice** Logic of choices among "scenarios" drawn from a limited, but constantly evolving, "cultural kit"	Cultural scenarios, schemas, cultural strategies Cultural entrepreneurship

[a] Swidler.

[b] Sewell.

[c] James G. March and Johan P. Olsen, *Rediscovering Institutions: The Organizational Basis of Politics* (New York: Free Press, 1989), 23.

Dancing on the Mine-Field

László Bruszt

In this paper I will deal with some aspects of the origins of the peacefulness of democratic regime change in Eastern and Central Europe. In the first part, I will focus on the impact of the Polish Round Table negotiations on the strategic interactions among social and political actors in the other countries of the region. I will argue that the specific events of the negotiated regime change in Poland were "signals" to the political actors in the region that peaceful political change was possible. The Polish events of 1989 had the regional effect of reducing the attractiveness of the use of force, while increasing the readiness of non-regime forces for mobilization, as well as the efforts of forces within the elite to find peaceful ways to preserve at least part of their power. In the second part of the paper, I will deal with the question of the origins of peaceful political change in Poland. The search for peaceful ways of political change was partly motivated by pragmatic considerations, based on assessments of the geopolitical situation or the changing relative balance of power between the elite and the opposition. At least as importantly, in the search for peaceful solutions—first within the opposition and later also among reformers within the regime—an important role was played by the rejection of violence on moral grounds. This was not solely about the rejection of the use of violence to further one's political goals. Just as important a role was played by the readiness of the actors to enter into political action to prevent the use of violence by other forces. These two aspects of the principle of non-violence played an equally important role. There was hardly a chance for a peaceful regime change until dominant forces within the regime and the opposition were ready to give up the use of violence as a means to conserve or transform the regime. On the other hand, one of the strongest factors pushing actors toward peaceful regime change had been readiness to enter into political action to prevent the chance of the use of violence by other domestic actors.

In the Eastern and Central Europe of the second half of the 1980's, there was a general feeling that the days of the old regime were numbered. However, no one could predict how long the agony of the state socialist regime was going to last or how it would exit. In most of the countries of the region, the power holders undertook to prepare for the worst by strengthening the repressive apparatuses of the party state and

by increasing the harassment of opposition forces. Even in those countries, like Poland or Hungary, where reformist communists were ready to introduce economic reforms, there were forces within the regime ready to use violence to save state socialism. Even as late as 1987, it was the dominant view in Eastern and Central Europe that the probability of peaceful political change in the countries of the region was minimal, and the chances for finding a way out of the declining state socialist regimes were rather bleak. The general feeling of the political participants and observers both within and outside of these regimes was best expressed by the formula, "Ottomanization," first used by Timothy Garton Ash[1]. The word "Ottomanization" was a reference to the potential similarity between the decay of the Turkish and the Soviet Empires. One could expect accordingly some attempts to reform the system, accompanied perhaps by failed revolts and revolutions on the peripheries of the Empire, with large-scale violence, but without any significant longer term results and without any chance of stopping the deepening economic and political decay of the whole Empire.

But it was in Poland, and somewhat later in Hungary, where first within the opposition and later also within the regime those forces became dominant who not only rejected the use of violence, but who were also ready to enter into political action to prevent violence. The negotiated peaceful regime change was the outcome of the strategic interactions of these forces in these two countries.[2] Whereas in Poland the negotiations brought about a compromised institutionalization of democracy, in Hungary the agreement about the holding of free elections was the final outcome of the negotiations. As stated above, the Polish Round Table negotiations played the dominant role in pushing actors in the other countries of the region toward strategies leading to peaceful regime change. On the other hand, it was the Hungarian regime change that increased for the elite in other regimes the attractiveness of competitive elections, as a way of salvaging their power and as a peaceful way out of decaying state socialism.

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[1] T. Garton Ash, *The Magic Lantern: The Revolution of '89 Witnessed in Warsaw, Budapest, Berlin, and Prague*, 1st US Edition (New York: Random House, 1990); T. Garton Ash, *We the People: The Revolution of '89 Witnessed in Warsaw, Budapest, Berlin and Prague* (Cambridge: Granta Books, 1990).

[2] I. Banac, *Eastern Europe in Revolution* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992); L. Bruszt and D. Stark, "Remaking the Political Field in Hungary: From the Politics of Confrontation to the Politics of Competition," in *Eastern Europe in Revolution*, edited by I. Banac (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992); T. Garton Ash, *Magic Lantern*; J. Staniszkis, *The Dynamics of the Breakthrough in Eastern Europe: The Polish Experience* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).

The "Polish Effect"

By now there is a large body of literature on the sudden and largely unexpected wave of peaceful democratizations in 1989 in Eastern and Central Europe.[3] Within this literature, there is a wide consensus about the existence of linkages among the different transitions in the various countries of the region. In the language of comparative methodology, purely structuralist comparative explanations using the methods of similarity or difference would be inappropriate in the analysis of these transitions, because the country cases were not independent. One way to describe the relationship among these transitions is to use the analogy of diffusion or contagion. According to such an approach, the experiences of the stronger civil societies were charting the course to be emulated by citizens in countries where civil society was far weaker. Using such an approach, one could only expect differences in the timing but not in the mode of democratization. A second approach could be based on a more complex understanding of the effects of the experiences of the earlier cases on patterns of change in later cases. It might be argued, first, that not only citizens within the society but also actors within the old elite learned by observing the processes and outcomes of the interactions of rulers and opposition in other countries.[4] Lessons from the earlier cases have sometimes dramatically changed the perception of possibilities, and with that, the perception of the relative balance of forces between rulers and opposition. On the other hand, the logic of strategic interactions between the later cases was not solely shaped by the characteristics of the previous changes. It was also shaped by the characteristics of interactions within the elite and between the elite and the opposition prior to the starting of extrication. As a result, these cases differed not simply in degree but in kind: 1989 saw a plurality of transitions with diverse paths to different types of political institutions.[5] Thus, as it will

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[3] See, for example: L. Anderson, *Transitions to Democracy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999); G.A. Babcock and Rand Graduate School, "The Role of Public Interest Groups in Democratization: Soviet Environmental Groups and Energy Policy-making" (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Graduate School, 1997); Banac; A. Bozóki, A. Körösényi, and G. Schöpflin, *Post-Communist Transition: Emerging Pluralism in Hungary* (London: Pinter Publishers, St. Martin's, 1992); K. Cordell, *Ethnicity and Democratisation in the New Europe* (London: Routledge, 1999); T. Garton Ash, *The Magic Lantern*; J.F. Hollifield and C.C. Jillson, *Pathways to Democracy: The Political Economy of Democratic Transitions* (New York: Routledge, 1999); M. Kaldor and I. Vejvoda, *Democratization in Central and Eastern Europe* (London: Pinter, 1999); J.J. Linz and A.C. Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996); G. Pridham and T. Vanhanen, *Democratization in Eastern Europe: Domestic and International Perspectives* (London: Routledge, 1994); Staniszkis; D.C. Stark and L. Bruszt, *Postsocialist Pathways: Transforming Politics and Property in East Central Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

[4] Bruszt and Stark.

[5] Bruszt and Stark; Linz and Stepan. For a provocative discussion of the multiple modes of transition, see the work of Terry Karl and Philippe S. Schmitter, "Modes of Transition and Types of Democracy in Latin America, Southern and Eastern Europe," *International Science Journal* 128: 269-84.

be shown below, the "Polish Effect" was different in these countries depending on the characteristics of strategic interactions among the various categories of political actors.

The second aspect of the interrelationship among these cases was the role played by international relations.[6] One of the major differences of extrications in Eastern Europe vis-à-vis those in Southern Europe and Latin America was the fact that these countries formed part of an empire and had limited sovereignty. As Philippe C. Schmitter and Terry Karl have noted, "without a previously announced and credible shift in the foreign and security policies of the Soviet Union, neither the timing nor the occurrence of regime change would be explicable."[7] A simpler understanding of this point would be to speak about the "Gorbachev effect," in the sense that it was the public declaration of the end of the "Brezhnev Doctrine" by Gorbachev that had the effect in the countries of the region of dramatically altering the perception of the range of possibilities, and with that, dramatically altering the strategies of the political actors. This interpretation would, however, be misleading. While the shifting preferences in the foreign and security policies of the USSR played an important role in the later political developments of the region, the effect of these changes was not direct, mainly because of the high level of uncertainty about the *credibility* of these policy shifts. Not only was Gorbachev's own position uncertain until the very end of 1988, but it was also not known how far political changes could go in the other countries, what the limits of Moscow's toleration were, how the speed and the direction of political changes in these countries might affect Gorbachev's position. In the language of game theory, the situation of 1989 could be described in the following way: with the complete absence of self-sustaining institutions allowing for credible commitments and with the absence of a previously acquired reputation for credibility, it was the reactions of Moscow to the actions of the first-movers that established the creditworthiness of the intentions of the leaders in Moscow. Thus the second conclusion: the credibility of the policy shift in Moscow was established by the events and outcomes produced by the Polish Round Table negotiations, or more precisely, by observation of the reactions of the leaders in Moscow to the Polish events and their outcomes. Thus, the first "Polish Effect" activated the "Gorbachev Effect."

The Polish Round Table negotiations and their outcomes were the most important signaling events of the range of possibilities for political action in a highly uncertain geopolitical environment. In a situation in which neither the intentions nor the limits of toleration of the center of the Empire were clear, it was the facts created by the first-movers, the Polish actors in the negotiated regime change, that sent signals to Eastern Europeans, both to those in power and the people at large. These were important signals, dramatically altering the strategies of political actors in these

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[6] Pridham and Vanhanen; P.C. Schmitter and T. Karl, "The Conceptual Travels of Transitologists and Consolidologists: How Far to the East Should They Attempt to Go?" *Slavic Review* 53 (1 Spring 1994): 173-85.

[7] Schmitter and Karl.

countries. The Polish events were proof of the changing room for maneuvering for political action within the communist world. They were signals that it was possible to start negotiations about the legalization of the opposition, to allow for a free press, to pass laws about freedom of conscience and religion or about freedom of association, to run under opposition colors in semi-free elections; that it was possible for the opposition to win elections and for those within the old regime to peacefully accept a humiliating defeat; and finally, that it was possible for the opposition to form a government. These were signals to millions of people in the region that there was a peaceful way out of communism, that Moscow tolerated not only a "change in the model" of state-socialism, but also a change of political regime. On the other hand, these events and facts created by the Round Table negotiations in Poland were proof for the hard-liners and reformers within the regimes in other communist countries that the Brezhnev doctrine was over — they had to face their compatriots, ready to follow the Polish example on their own.

The most important uniform effect of the Polish events of 1989 was the dramatic altering of perceptions of a relative balance of forces in other countries of the region. It altered the perception of a balance of forces between hard-liners and reformers and between the rulers and the forces of civil society in these countries. The perception that the domestic rulers could not count on military support from Moscow dramatically altered the strategies of these actors, increased the readiness of forces within the civil societies to get mobilized, dramatically weakened the positions of those elite segments that were ready to use violence to salvage the regime, and forced reformers within the regime to search for peaceful ways of preserving at least part of their power. The specific impact of the Polish events, however, was different from country to country, depending on the logic of strategic interactions among the forces of political change prior to the unfolding of the Polish events. At the time when the opposition and the rulers in Poland undertook an exchange of *legalization* of the representatives of civil society for conferral by these forces of some *legitimacy* to the regime, in Hungary the ruling hard-liners were busy *"de-legalizing"* the emerging opposition, and the opposition groups were busy mobilizing civil society for *delegitimating* the regime.[8] The Polish events contributed to further weakening of the positions of the hard-liners in Hungary and strengthening of the reformers ready to start negotiations about peaceful political change with the opposition. Combined with the success of the Hungarian opposition's strategy of mobilization, the Round Table negotiations in Hungary could start six days after the electoral victory of the Solidarity movement in Poland. But despite their similarities as negotiated extrications, the Polish and Hungarian cases differ dramatically in the institutional features of their reorganized political fields. Unlike their Polish counterparts, the Hungarian opposition forces never felt strong enough to speak "in the name of society" and enter into negotiations with the rulers about a compromised democratization. This self-perceived weakness of the opposition forces' legitimacy

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[8] Bruszt and Stark.

pushed them towards demanding uncompromised free elections. On the other hand, it was the self-perceived electoral strength of the reformers within the regime vis-à-vis the newly organized opposition forces that made them wholeheartedly embrace the idea of free elections—as a potential means of salvaging the power of the party by acquiring new and robust legitimacy by way of electoral competition.[9]

In Romania, Bulgaria, and later in Albania, where strong repression of opposition forces prevented early large-scale mobilization of civil society, the effect of the Polish events was different. In these countries, segments of the old elite staged successful palace coups to remove hard-liners within the regime and, learning also from the Hungarian case, used restricted electoral competition to severely constrain their weak electoral rivals to stay in power.[10] Finally, in the former GDR and Czechoslovakia, differences in the logic of the interactions between rulers and the weakly organized opposition led to escalating public demonstrations, with rulers lacking either the ability or resolve to use decisive force, and thus to the rulers' capitulation and the collapse of their regime.[11] All in all, the specific impact of the Polish Round Table negotiations differed largely depending on the "national" characteristics of the interactions among forces of political change in countries. The negotiated compromise in Poland contributed to different paths of extrication from state socialism: it restricted electoral competition and unfettered electoral competition, capitulation and regime collapse.

The Principle of Non-Violence and the Origins of Peaceful Regime Change

The most elementary condition for starting a peaceful negotiated regime change is the rejection of violence by influential forces, both within the opposition and inside the regime. Adherence to the principle of non-violence is only partly about the rejection of the use of violence as a means to further one's political goals; it is also about readiness to enter into political action for preventing violence by any other social and political actor. These two aspects of the principle of non-violence are equally important. There is hardly a chance for negotiated regime change until dominant forces within the two camps are ready to give up the use of violence as a means to conserve or transform the regime. On the other hand, one of the strongest factors pushing actors towards a negotiated regime change might be the readiness to do something to prevent or reduce violence by other domestic actors.

In the Eastern and Central Europe of 1988, there was a general feeling that the days of the old regime were numbered, but no one could predict how long the agony of the state socialist regime was going to last and how it would make its exit. In most

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[9] Ibid.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Ibid.

countries of the region, power holders undertook to prepare for the worst by strengthening the oppressive apparatuses of the party state and by increasing the repression of opposition forces. Even in those countries, like Poland or Hungary, where reformist communists were ready to introduce economic reforms, there were forces within the regime ready to use violence to save state socialism. But these were also the two countries in the region where, first within the opposition and later also within the regime, those forces became dominant who not only rejected the use of violence, but who were also ready to enter into political action to prevent violence.

Rejection of the use of violence among the forces of opposition in these countries had deep roots. The Hungarian democratic opposition, among others, was strongly influenced by the "new evolutionist" ideas of the Polish opposition.[12] Also, a central role was played in the development of the ideology of non-violence by the idea originating from Polish opposition circles that the re-establishment of democratic order and rule of law cannot be based on disorderly political change.[13] As in many Latin American countries, by the late 70's a new opposition identity emerged in Eastern and Central Europe, one based on a rejection of revolution and any other violent form of political change and centered on the ideas of human rights and democratic values. The "new evolutionist" ideas, themselves products of several previous failed attempts at political change, rejected direct confrontation with the regime, still based mainly on pragmatic considerations. Confrontation with the regime might have just provoked repression and the use of violence, both by the domestic rulers and by Moscow. The opposition should try to push for change in social fields where direct confrontation with the regime might be prevented, in fields where the dominant elements of the structure of the repressive political regime would not be challenged.[14]

The idea of *non-violent political change*, unlike the anti-political idea of new evolutionism, was based on moral principles. The reasoning was twofold. First, revolution, and any other form of violent political change, might just lead to the emergence of another repressive regime. Second, violent political change might not only endanger possibilities for the emergence of a democratic order, but might also undermine the chances for the preservation of human rights. Why would those who use violence to further a political goal be prevented from using it for another political goal? With this ideological change, the difference between the means and goals would also disappear: the means became identical to the goals. Not political change *per se,* but non-violent political change became the goal of opposition.

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[12] T. Garton Ash, *The Uses of Adversity: Essays on the Fate of Central Europe* (Cambridge: Granta Books, 1989); J. Kis, *Politics in Hungary: For a Democratic Alternative*, Social Science Monographs (Boulder, CO: Atlantic Research and Publications, 1989); A. Michnik, *Letters from Prison and Other Essays* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985).

[13] Kis; Michnik, *Letters*; A. Michnik, A. Grudzinska and G. Mink, *La Deuxième Révolution* (Paris: La Découverte, 1990).

[14] Michnik, *Letters.*

Rejection of the use of violence was but the first step towards the negotiated regime change in Eastern Europe. The next step was made in the second half of the 80's, when both the Hungarian and the Polish opposition publicly declared their readiness to enter into political dialogue with the regime to prevent violence. The "Social Contract," the political program of the Hungarian democratic opposition, was published in 1987 in *samizdat* and was read by the members of the Politburo of the HSWP on the next day.[15] The idea of striking a "crisis pact" between the Polish regime and the Solidarity movement was first announced in 1988 by one of the leading opposition figures, Bronisław Geremek, in an interview given to one of the regime weeklies. Both the Hungarian "Social Contract" and the idea of a Polish "crisis pact" were logical consequences and continuations of the above described ideas and moral standards about non-violent political change. Also, both of them were based on the assumption that there were forces within the regime ready to enter into dialogue on political change with the opposition to prevent violence.

It is important to see that these two programs were not based on fear of the imminent danger of violence but on readiness to prevent the possibility of the use of violence, either by those within the regime or by any other social force. By the second half of the 80's it was commonplace to talk about the "dangers of social explosion," even in the official regime newspapers of both countries. This "social explosion," according to arguments used at that time, might be triggered either by further deteriorating economic conditions in the absence of economic reforms, or by deteriorating social conditions resulting from the introduction of economic reforms. This picturing of the possibilities of political action was just like dancing on a mine-field: one bad move and there is an explosion. Dialogue and negotiation, in the programs of the Polish and Hungarian opposition, were the means and the ends: negotiations about peaceful political change in order to prevent violence.

To be sure, both the Polish and the Hungarian opposition could in principle have chosen other strategies to further political change. They could have chosen the strategy of "wait and see," led by the maxim of "the worse, the better." Time was on their side: either the absence of economic reforms or their introduction would have dramatically increased opposition to the regime. Sooner or later, they could have led masses against the headquarters of the state-party. Violence could also have come, to be sure from the other side—police forces against peacefully demonstrating workers sent by fearful local apparatchiks or by hard-liners within the regime—triggering an outburst of mass violence. Both the Polish and the Hungarian opposition rejected these solutions, not because they did not desire the final outcome, but because they were convinced that the chosen means might determine the outcome, that the achievement of the goal of the universal extension of human and political rights might be endangered by the use of violent means. All in all, by the second half of the 1980's the strategy of the opposition

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[15] Kis.

both in Poland and Hungary went much beyond the pragmatic considerations of non-confrontation of new-evolutionism. The compromise offered to the regime by the opposition in these countries was not solely based on pragmatic geopolitical considerations and/or the actual perception of the domestic balance of power among the supporters and opponents of the regime. The offer of a compromise solution was also based on moral reasoning. In the case of Poland, behind the slogan of the Round Table negotiations—"legality against legitimacy"—was the idea that, in exchange for re-legalization, the Solidarity movement was ready to lend some legitimacy to the regime, even at the price of the partial loss of its own legitimacy. This way, it could contribute to preventing violence, due either to the absence or to the introduction of economic reforms. In Hungary, similar ideas led the opposition to offer a compromise solution to the regime.

In both countries, non-confrontational forces were in the majority within the regime. However, those ready to enter into negotiations with the opposition to prevent violence remained in the minority until early 1989, and, until very late in both countries, there were significant forces ready to use violence to salvage the political status quo. In both countries, the dominance of the non-confrontational strategy within the regime was mainly the result of previous sharp confrontations between society and the regime. Haunted by memories of the 1956 revolution, previous violent confrontations with striking workers and with the legalized Solidarity movement of the early 80's, both the Hungarian and the Polish communist elite had good reasons to pursue strategies that did not provoke society. Fear of the use of force was, on the other hand, strengthened by the characteristics of the double geopolitical dependency of the communist governments in these countries. Added to the fear of Soviet intervention on the side of regime reformers, and later on, the fear of non-intervention on the side of the hard-liners, was the growing fear of a loss of Western credits, a fear resulting from the growing indebtedness and economic dependency of these countries, coupled with the changing Western political conditioning of continued financial support. Until the late 80's, growing fear of "social explosion" mainly had the impact of paralyzing the communist elite: delaying necessary economic reforms or, still worse, introducing redistributive economic policies with the object of improving the mood of society and resulting only in a further deterioration of economic conditions. Although in both countries there were forces within the regime ready to use violence, it was this paralyzing fear of both domestic and external reactions that helped reformers within these regimes to neutralize the hard-liners. Finally, in both countries, rapid erosion of the dominant ideology further contributed to the loss of viability of any strategy based on the use of force. Mere rejection of the use of violence, under the influence of regime interactions with the opposition, was slowly coupled with a readiness to take political action to prevent violence.

Summary

The skillful negotiations of the participants of the Polish Round Table negotiations had an enormous impact on later political developments in Eastern and Central Europe. They sent signals about the increased range of feasible political goals. Although no country has repeated the strategy of compromised democracy—the immediate outcome of the Polish negotiations—all of them were affected by the ethos of non-violent political change. Even the final outcome of the Polish Round Table negotiations has proven the use of the strategy of non-violent political change. A year after the introduction of the first non-communist government in Poland, nearly all the former communist countries had some form of free or semi-free elections. But among them, there were only two where a former communist would not be in the position of prime minister: Poland and Hungary.

Having said that, it is neither the external nor the internal consequences, but the means used that justify the political strategy of the participants of the Polish Round Table negotiations. Since these means—peaceful political change—were also the goals, and since these means and goals had robust moral foundations, one could hardly see the validity of recent opposition to these negotiations on "moral grounds." Such a rejection of the Polish Round Table negotiations can only be validated from a perspective that would allow for the use of any means to attain desired political ends. But on this basis, it is hard to see how one could perceive democracy as not solely a means but also as an end in itself.

Meaning, Memory, and Movements:
1989 and the Collapse of Socialism

Stephanie Platz

The "meaning" of 1989 in retrospect pertains both to events and to modes of analysis. For many, 1989 is an icon of the terminal weakening of Soviet socialism and of unification in Europe. For others, it represents a series of events that scholars and regional specialists were neither able to anticipate nor to explain fully in causal terms. Rather than isolating 1989 itself I prefer to see the years between 1988 and 1992 as a temporal axis around which many circumstances of global significance turned to different degrees. Study of the Polish Round Table and of the conference, "Communism's Negotiated Collapse: The Polish Round Table, Ten Years Later," offers general insight into the significance of this period for scholarship in the social sciences.

Proceedings from the conference exemplify and give shape to important disciplinary and interdisciplinary debates about interpretation and analysis. First and foremost, participant accounts highlight tensions between inductive and deductive modes of analysis and between the relative value of explanations of events that are grounded in the particular and those that are generalizable and abstract. For example, Prime Minister Rakowski finds the roots of the Round Table in "unique traits" of Polish history: "All this put together caused...the fact that after 1956, since the beginning of 1957, Poland has been able to maintain its own uniqueness in comparison to all the remaining countries of the Soviet bloc, and this very uniqueness at a certain moment, in '76, results in the appearance of an organized opposition, that is the Committee for the Defense of Workers."[1] Similarly, Ambassador Ciosek explains the ideas underlying the Round Table as being "created at a specific time and under specific conditions in

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[1] *Communism's Negotiated Collapse: The Polish Round Table, Ten Years Later. A Conference at the University of Michigan. April 7-10, 1999. English Transcript of the Conference Proceedings*, trans. by Kasia Kietlinska, ed. by Donna Parmelee (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Center for Russian and East European Studies, 1999), 21-22. Page numbers in footnotes referring to the Round Table transcript correspond to the original printed version of the transcript, which was provided to the contributors to this guide for reference. These page numbers may not correspond to the transcript currently available on the web or to subsequent printed versions.

Poland."[2] In contrast, others argue in terms of structural factors, such as Professor Chrzanowski, who says that the "Round Table did not cause decomposition in the imperial structure of the Soviet Union; it was rather the consequence of that decomposition."[3] Zbigniew Janas, likewise, attributes the cause of protest in the 1980's in Poland to "the lack of balance between the material needs and expectations of the society and the life conditions that the system could provide."[4] The latter type of explanation views the collapse of communism in Poland as a function of systemic forces derived from outside rule. The conference proceedings do not resolve the tension between these divergent explanatory frameworks, but embody both logics, alternately providing insight into an explanation of 1989 that is grounded in a centuries' long Polish historical narrative and an explanation that is grounded in synchronic social, economic, and political structures. Advocates of each paradigm can interrogate their own assumptions and theoretical dispositions with the reflective accounts of participants in the events.

For scholars of collective memory and historical memory in the humanities and social sciences, the conference proceedings challenge other assumptions. Whether reforms are credited to visionary actors or are used to discredit weak politicians has far-ranging implications for collective narratives of change and the relationship of the present to the past. In the words of Professor Kaczyński,

> But whether for the generation of Polish politicians who played a key role in Solidarity but who remembered communism much better than my generation, the syndrome...? I mean older than forty-year olds at that time, the previous generation, those people who well remembered the '50's and still remembered the World War II years, well, they had a certain syndrome, but it wasn't gratitude for the tormentor so much as it was a syndrome of thinking with memory. It was a certain point of view, where communism acquired some features which made it seem extremely dangerous, even when it was no longer dangerous. And that syndrome of thinking with memory to some extent did effect the shape of Polish politics in the early period of the '90's.[5]

"Collective memory" is commonly imbued with explanatory power, as in the view expressed by Adam Michnik, that our "patriotism is about opposition to any dictatorship. It is also about memory. We're trying to remember that in the past it wasn't only foreign power that caused Poland's defeat, but it was also our own cantankerousness and preference for private gain, our lack of capability for internal compromise...."[6] Memories that are considered to be collective may also be fluid,

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[2] Ibid., 60.
[3] Ibid., 28.
[4] Ibid., 77.
[5] Ibid., 186.
[6] Ibid., 235.

changing, contested, generational and exploited circumstantially. Whereas past injustice is easily assumed to motivate collectivities into action, the conference proceedings remind readers that narratives of the past are selective and often applied metaphorically or metonymically to present circumstances. Participants in the Round Table themselves reflect differently upon the influence of the past upon their own actions. Therefore, while "collective memory" may be an apt label for a particular discourse or ideology, it should not be treated as a monolith for purposes of analysis.

The conference proceedings also prompt reflection on the definition of a single event. Over and over, actors, when challenged with the consequences of political and economic change, reconstruct their own self-consciousness in participation as having been processual. Whether the conditions that produced the Round Table began centuries or weeks before its first meeting, participants record differential awareness of themselves as "making history," to the extent that some are even now reluctant to view it as finite, bounded, or finished. Conference transcripts re-animate debates about structure, process, and agency. While memoirs abound among historical sources, retrospective dialogues among interlocutors on the nature and significance of collective past actions are scarce, to say the least.

Solidarity can be compared to social movements and national movements everywhere from the standpoint of theories of social organization and change. However, in particular, it is illuminating to compare the Round Table with the dynamics of engagement between Soviet nationalities and the state in the late 1980's. Of these, I can speak best to a comparison with the Karabagh Movement, in three areas. The first is the sociology of the movement itself under socialism; the second is the process of accommodation or non-accommodation between the opposition and the state; and the third is the aftermath—the implications of agreements reached for national politics after 1991 and the reverberations of choices and decisions made by political actors at the time of the movement itself.

The Karabagh Movement emerged in February 1988 in response to a vote by the Supreme Soviet of Nagorno Karabagh in favor of a transfer of status from autonomous oblast within Azerbaijan to the same within Armenia. This vote reflected widespread perceptions by the majority Armenian population of Nagorno Karabagh (eighty percent) that their oblast was underdeveloped or mis-developed by Azerbaijani authorities. However, the vote by the Karabagh Supreme Soviet was not ratified by Azerbaijan (and the by now well known ethnoterritorial conflict escalated into war between Armenians and Azeris). A February 20 demonstration by 3,000 environmentalists outside of Yerevan added the status of Mountainous Karabagh to its agenda, and by word of mouth, attracted crowds of 150,000 within two days. A spirit of solidarity and equality grew among demonstrators, as crowds swelled to 300,000. Treating the status of Karabagh as a test-case for perestroika, Armenians appealed to the Central Committee in Moscow to unify Armenia and Karabagh through due process.

In Armenia, anti-Azerbaijani sentiments peaked after episodes of violence against Armenians, such as those in Sumgait (February) and Khojalu (September). When reactionary violence against Armenians in Azerbaijan went unrecognized by the Soviet press and unpunished by Soviet authorities, collective sentiment turned against the central government. Anti-Soviet feelings reached their apogee after troops clashed with demonstrators in July, killing one veterinary student near the airport. In May, popular opinion turned against the Soviet Armenian government, and, in particular, against First Secretary Karen Demirchyan, for pandering to Moscow in the interests of his own career and fortune rather than his nation. Seen as an impediment to transparent political process, criticism of Demirchyan became a touchstone for the introduction of democratization in movement discourse by activists. Soon thereafter, calls for Armenia's independence were introduced into demonstrations.

The Karabagh Movement was a movement based in Armenia itself, in support of Armenians in Nagorno Karabagh. In 1988 and 1989, Armenian public intellectuals from Karabagh and from Yerevan traveled to Moscow as a delegation to persuade Moscow to overturn the decision of the Supreme Soviet of Azerbaijan. Yet movement activists, largely members of Yerevan's intelligentsia, were not always a united front. When one member of the Karabagh Organizing Committee came out in support of cooperation with Demirchyan in May, belittling the notions that the movement might serve as a vehicle for democratization and that the movement's agenda should be extended beyond the status of Mountainous Karabagh, a new Karabagh Committee was formed. Though its members eventually became high officials in Armenia's independent government (including President Levon Ter Petrossian), their movement activism was not a vehicle to gain power, nor did they support an immediate transition to independence. They did share a commitment to collective decision-making and political transparency. At times, their views differed from popular positions, and their thought diverged on issues ranging from the foreign policy of an independent Armenia to the means of grassroots organization, meetings, and strikes.

In addition to mass meetings in a city square, a network of committees was formed largely through workplaces. These networks disseminated information about the situation and through them, strikes of different kinds were organized. Despite some boldly apparent structural similarities in the organization of Solidarity and the Karabagh Movement, Armenians almost never explicitly looked to the former as a model. Most, I think, would say that this was the result of lack of information about Solidarity. However, via *samizdat* literature and underground networks, Armenians were better informed about and made explicit reference to national movements in the Baltics. References to Poland that I observed in my study of political discourse in that period were limited to likenesses among victims of earlier crimes by states (one Armenian political poster lists Buchenwald, Auschwitz and Katyń along with sites of violence against Armenians). Certainly the contrast between a movement for national self-

determination by a Soviet national minority and a trade union movement in Poland entails profound substantive and structural differences. Nevertheless, I perceive parallels in the underground organization of a mass movement within a totalitarian regime, particularly as participants strove to organize themselves democratically within a hierarchical system of workplaces. The flow of information and the emergence of an ethic of participation within these movements merit comparative study.

Closer to the theme of the Round Table itself, it is important to note that independence for Armenia was not negotiated, and that one legacy of the way in which the Soviet Union dissolved is the stagnation of attempts to settle the Karabagh conflict. Armenians were largely unsuccessful in their negotiations with Moscow between 1988 and 1990—Moscow neither prosecuted perpetrators of anti-Armenian violence nor accommodated Armenian claims. Peaceful protests were forcefully disbanded by Soviet military troops, and Armenian accounts of events—conflict in Azerbaijan in particular— were censored and/or misrepresented by the Soviet press. The Karabagh Movement was institutionalized as the Armenian National Movement in September 1988, and Karabagh Committee member Levon Ter Petrossian was popularly elected President of the Armenian Supreme Soviet in 1990. Armenia passed a referendum on independence, but did not become independent until December of 1991. This situation recalls one theme of the conference proceedings, in the form of the claim that communism's collapse could never have been negotiated had not both sides (the government and the opposition) been equally weak. Relations between Armenia and Moscow were clearly never symmetrical. While the equivalence of weakness explanation of the efficacy of the Polish Round Table appears (to this outside observer) to be a popular one in contemporary Polish political discourse, it merits study by international relations theorists (power transition theorists et al.) and other structural analysts of systemic, political change. Poles and Armenians had a common enemy of sorts in Moscow. The role of a dominant outside power in national politics is equally fertile for structural analysis and a study of the coalition and fraction of political parties within Poland and Armenia relative to Moscow might illuminate nationality politics and identity more broadly. Such research would also contribute to the study of decolonization elsewhere in the world.

A third, ongoing topic for comparison is the political career trajectories of opposition and communist leaders after independence from Moscow. As I will discuss below, popular, teleological narratives in which opposition leaders were setting themselves up to be the next big criminal magnates and perpetrators of corruption in the new era abound in both contexts. Before independence, opposition activists' credibility and authority may have been enhanced by arrest or exile, and they may have been seen to embody characteristics of dedication to the nation. After independence, a conservative backlash can view such risk-taking as individualistic and self-interested. The "icing" or "frosting" that Solidarity activists are now accused of having pursued

resembles popular criticisms of officials in the first Armenian government, who were elected on the basis of their platform in the Armenian National Movement. I will not digress here into an essay on contemporary politics in Armenia, but revisionism, denouncement, and rehabilitation of former communist leaders are common themes. Neither Solidarity (as the conference proceedings make clear) nor the Karabagh Movement was as monolithic in its agenda as they have sometimes appeared. In the case of the Karabagh Committee, members disagreed subtly and not so subtly amongst themselves and with the public on matters such as the nature of relations with Armenia's neighbors (Iran, Turkey, Azerbaijan, and Georgia). A comparative study that disaggregated partisan politics and personality politics in the aftermath of Soviet rule would be useful in the theorization of political legitimacy more generally.

Finally, the Round Table offers a case for comparative study of overt and covert interventions by external states in domestic political change. Ambassador Davis mentions the important role that the Polish-American diaspora played in influencing US policy towards Poland at the time,[7] and Helen Davis speaks of the role of her "salon" in introducing Polish opposition members to one another.[8] The Armenian-American diaspora has played a similar role in influencing US policy towards Armenia and its neighbors, as María Torres reminds us the Cuban diaspora has in influencing US policy towards Cuba. These cases, among many others, offer insight into Cold War politics and the battles being waged between the US and the USSR in third party states. In these examples, political process cannot be viewed outside the context of the balance of power between Cold War adversaries.

The Polish Round Table and the proceedings from Communism's Negotiated Collapse are both useful for discussion in the college classroom. I teach a junior/senior history seminar entitled, "History, Memory, and Identity," as well as a freshman seminar entitled "Nationality and the Soviet Union," which explores the national composition of the Soviet Union, the development and significance of Soviet nationalities' policy, and the emergence of nationalisms in the late 1980's. The Round Table, and the conference proceedings, would fit well into each of these courses.

In the first of these two courses, I have, in past semesters, compared the Armenian pan-national movement (the Karabagh Movement) to Solidarity in connection with the use of historical consciousness (as described above). In the case of both movements, alternative narratives of the past were circulated and popularized, challenging official accounts sanctioned by a totalitarian state. Also, in both cases, the re-narrativization of national history emancipated "national" identity and fueled the mobilization of grass-roots support and its organization. In particular, I have used *We All Fought for Freedom: Women in Poland's Solidarity Movement* by Kristi Long (as well as her earlier article that appeared in *American Ethnologist)* in order to compare the

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[7] Ibid., 45-46.
[8] Ibid., 50.

iconography of underground Solidarity stamps with the system of historical reference used in Armenian political posters exhibited during the Karabagh Movement between 1988 and 1990 (my analysis of which appears in my 1996 doctoral dissertation in anthropology at the University of Chicago). In these ways, which I have already described, both Solidarity and the Karabagh Movement nicely illustrate linkages between popular, national histories and the experience of national identity.

Beyond the comparison of national movements in socialist settings, I can imagine using the Round Table in several other ways—and more particularly, I can envision using the proceedings from "Communism's Negotiated Collapse." References to Polish identity appear throughout the conference proceedings in ways that legitimate imperatives to action. Ideologies of good and bad Poles underlie us-and-them distinctions between the opposition and the government, and political actors are retroactively judged by Polish society in terms of dedication to the nation on the basis of the consequences of their actions. The words of Prime Minister Rakowski illustrate this point well. He says of contemporary stereotypes regarding the Round Table, "[o]n the one side in short we had completely white angels and on the other side we had black angels who sold their souls to the devil. And the devil was in Moscow. So bringing it all to political categories I'm supposed to be a worse kind of a Pole and I cannot agree with that decidedly. I'm not any worse from the one who was yelling the day before yesterday that I shouldn't be allowed to speak."[9] Similarly Bishop Dembowski says, "a good Pole is a Pole who loves Poland and is a good person, that is a person who in his choices takes into account moral values, who desires to serve the common good of his homeland."[10] On the same theme, Konstanty Gebert underscores the role of national identity underlying civic empowerment

> If we are in it all together because we are all Poles then those of us who are not Poles are in it together less. It is difficult to discover this Poland being an almost entirely monoethnic country and the national minorities essentially identifying not only with the Polish state but with Polish society but in fact we have been to an extent deluding ourselves by believing that we have set up a civil society. What we have set up is a national society masquerading as a civil society. Successfully, because almost all members of the potential civil society are in fact members of the existing national society. I would not easily give up this national society for the sake of ideological purity, but I do remember what a friend's uncle used to repeat: do not scare me with nations, I want to live in society.[11]

Participants in the conference continuously resist binary stereotypes of us/them, good/bad, Pole/non-Pole with respect to popular characterization of the intentions and

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[9] Ibid., 164.
[10] Ibid., 11.
[11] Ibid., 214.

consequences of their actions. In so doing, they underscore the conceptual intertwining of a moral discourse regarding the nation and defining national membership, and post-hoc interpretations of political participation. In the study of contemporary history, we can explore the ways in which moral discourse and interpretation of the recent past contribute to ideologies of national identity

In the same course, I would also draw students' attention to the difference between history and (what we might call) "History" as they appear in participants' accounts. In this distinction, "history" refers to a plain account of the past, whereas "History" alludes to an overarching, meta-narrative that implicitly interprets facts for its readers. Round Table participants express discomfort with the latter vis à vis the conference, out of concern that the events of 1989 not be mythologized. For example, Stanisław Ciosek says,

> history cannot be divided into pieces. That is against natural tendencies of historians who would like everything in order, would like the maximum number of facts gathered. The situation in Poland, on the other hand, and this topic that we are discussing, cannot be put into the brackets of the period of the two or three years we're focusing on here. Things stem one from the other, and their consequences are of utmost importance, so I am going to mess up our topic a little bit with my speech.[12]

This concern with the formation of a legacy also stems from concerns about moral judgements in the present. Ciosek later says, "presenting history in such black and white terms is not just and it seems to me that our seminar should lead us to some just and honest assessments."[13] Likewise, Adam Michnik says, "we should not create legends. What we should tell our contemporaries and particularly our children is a true picture of reality. And here the Round Table may be perceived from a variety of perspectives."[14] In contradistinction, President Kwaśniewski says that the fact of the conference being organized at the University of Michigan is "the final, major proof that the Round Table is part of history."[15] Common to these comments is the notion that the past becomes "History" only with distance, be it temporal or geographical. Ambivalence about whether or not a series of events can be fully understood ten years later embodies theoretical and disciplinary debates about appropriate units of study and analysis. For students, this aspect of the conference proceedings could be used to explore the nature and limits of perspectives: how can we "do" contemporary history? How far must we be from a subject to subject it to scholarly analysis? And, are narrators of history ever free from interests or stakes in the stories they tell?

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[12] Ibid., 40.
[13] Ibid., 64.
[14] Ibid., 126.
[15] Ibid., 245.

I can also imagine using the conference proceedings from "Communism's Negotiated Collapse" in the second of my two related courses ("Nationality and the Soviet Union"). In this course, I focus less on identity per se, and more on distinctions among the past, history, and historiography. I take Armenian national historiography as an example, and illustrate the ways in which historical sources undergird polemical scholarship as well as policy. For example, I use a collection of primary sources related to the status of Nagorno Karabagh (beginning in the nineteenth century and tracing its status as an autonomous oblast in Azerbaijan up to the late 1980's from its status in the Russian Empire). Walking through the compilation, I elicit students' comments about what is elided from the presentation of individual texts, what is lost in translation, which impressions emerge from the juxtaposition of texts that might not have flowed from the original context, and what kinds of other primary sources we can imagine having been selected out of the collection. Then, we read two articles on the Karabagh conflict—one authored by a pro-Armenian scholar and the other authored by a pro-Azeri scholar—and we walk through the sequence of events they describe, step by step, to see that they offer significantly different chronologies based upon the *very same single collection of primary sources* that we have just read. (Here I recall the words of Bishop Bronisław Dembowski regarding Biblical quotation: "let me bring your attention to the fact that while tempting Jesus, Satan was quoting the Bible."!)

The conference proceedings would be useful in exercises like these. First, they show how popular memory of a series of events can differ from the way the nature of those events is recalled by actors who participated in them. Second, they show how the same sequence of events can be interpreted in numerous ways, depending on political and personal interests entailed. For example, Round Table participants have been accused of pursuing "frosting" in the negotiations—angling to modify a political field for personal and professional benefit. Such accusations emerge in participants' accounts, as well as in comments from the audience. Yet participants themselves largely recall the degree of risk and uncertainty they were embracing in undertaking the negotiations and deny having been motivated by self-interest. Indeed, they powerfully argue that in the flood of events, outcomes were uncertain enough to make strategies of profit-maximization impossible to identify. A related issue is the divergence of views among members of the opposition, among communists, and between the two groups. No two individual actors offer an identical account of the Round Table. Grażyna Staniszewska, a Solidarity activist, disagrees with analyst Jane Curry that Round Table participants thought the system was being dismantled; she says, "I think that if anybody had thought that the system was being dismantled, the Round Table would not have happened at all."[16] She further states that her experiences differed from those of Solidarity leader Zbigniew Bujak because she was organizing Solidarity in the mountains. Thus, not only do individual experiences differ, but the experience of Solidarity by the center and the

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[16] *Communism's Negotiated Collapse*, 144.

periphery differ structurally as well. Neither Poland nor the opposition was monolithic in the process. This example could be the basis for a classroom exercise in identifying multiple perspectives within and among sources as well as the multiple ways in which written sources can be used. Finally, the conference proceedings offer insight into the definition of or identification of an "event." Repeatedly, speakers emphasize the fact that they perceived themselves to be engaged in a "process," whereas commentators in retrospect attribute motives to actors on the basis of known outcomes. The temptation to read sources teleologically is strong among undergraduates as well as among pundits; the conference proceedings offer an opportunity for students to interrogate the bounded nature of events that is often implicit in analysis.

In both of these courses that I teach, the Polish Round Table is a very appropriate case study for comparison with nationalism in the Soviet Union in the late 1980's. The means of illegal grassroots organization under totalitarian rule, the conceptualization of national rights and human rights infringed upon by the state, the role of historical injustice in an emancipatory ideology, and the eventual dynamics of engagement with the state are features shared by such movements. Further, the conference proceedings themselves serve as a collection of primary documents that can be exploited fruitfully to illustrate methodological and epistemological problems of historical analysis.

In conclusion, I would like to add that reading the transcript of the conference proceedings was a bittersweet, nostalgic, and moving experience for me. It resuscitated the flavor of the mass movements and the promise of change that characterized those years for me in both my research and my personal life as I lived through them in the Soviet Union. The hesitancy with which participants themselves characterize those days now, the scrutiny and reevaluation they are subject to in popular politics, the press and in their own minds, the doubts and uncertainties that dominate comparisons of the independent present with the socialist past, and the consequent reduction of those events to circumstantial explanation all sadden me when I recall the euphoria and effervescence of empowerment that were experienced on such a mass scale. I feel this apart from my own opinions about better and worse systems of governance. Rather, it is a reaction to seeing confidence and optimism diluted to equivocation with the passage of time. Perhaps we should all be relativistic about our actions at all times, but the loss of solidarity, is, well, still a loss.

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Negotiating New Legal Orders:
Poland's Roundtable and South Africa's Negotiated Revolution

Heinz Klug

The process of negotiated political change which was the focus of the University of Michigan's conference "Communism's Negotiated Collapse: The Polish Round Table, Ten Years Later," rests on the premise that these processes can establish new political orders. A negotiated agreement to abolish the special status of the Communist Party in Poland—like the agreement to recognize the political rights of all South Africans— implies not only a change in political arrangements but also a more fundamental shift in the constitutional structure of government, in the basic rules of the political game. From a legal perspective, these events represent a particular path for establishing a new political and legal regime. Although revolution, military defeat, decolonization or military coups were for most of the twentieth century the usual precursors to a fundamental restructuring of a state, the century ended with a wave of political changes brought about largely through processes of public negotiation between state and opposition, leading to democratization and the transfer of power. That these new phenomena should occur in a number of countries on three different continents more or less simultaneously—including Chile, Poland and South Africa—was indeed unique.

During the Michigan conference, Michael Kennedy identified a number of underlying commonalities which characterized the South African and Polish processes of democratic transition, including: (1) the inherent ideological limits on unilateral state reform; (2) the erosion of the dominant ideology, coupled with mass mobilization by the opposition; (3) the existence of powerful religious discourses offering the vision of a peaceful alternative; (4) the adoption of an internationally sanctioned path to democratization; and finally, (5) the creation of a "contractually limited but democratically selected" government.

Significantly, these "commonalities" identified by Michael Kennedy address both the preconditions to negotiations and the outcomes but not the process of negotiations itself. The comparative task must be to identify similarities and differences within these negotiated transitions that will highlight the significance of the Round Table negotiations that began in Poland. Both the ideological limits on state reform and the

erosion of that ideology in the context of mass opposition may be characterized as the conditions under which the major protagonists realized that they could neither continue governing nor remain in opposition to any advantage: they were in a position of mutual weakness. The existence of religious discourses, while central in Poland, may not be that significant elsewhere. Although South Africa is a deeply religious and primarily Christian country, religion did not provide an alternative vision; protagonists on both sides of the political divide believed they had God on their side and used biblical sources to justify their conflicting claims and actions. The fourth element stresses the international climate which helped to define the realistic options available to the conflicting parties, and the final element addresses only the immediate outcome of the negotiations. I will suggest that there are important differences as well as similarities in these two cases.

Before attempting to do this, I would like to present a brief description of the South African process. After forty years of apartheid rule—an ideological system based on racist notions of white supremacy and built on the political power of South Africa's white minority—the South African state found itself internationally isolated and facing unprecedented levels of domestic resistance. Despite a number of reform efforts, including the adoption of a policy of separate development for whites and blacks, and later, the acceptance of a tri-racial constitution for the minority groups—white, Indian and "coloured"—the continued exclusion of the African majority precluded any resolution of the conflict. Although a series of steps—including talks with Nelson Mandela in prison, the release of some major political prisoners and even clandestine contact with the exiled African National Congress (ANC)—preceded negotiations, the process was effectively launched by the government's unilateral unbanning of black political movements, including the ANC and South African Communist Party. Even then, the government and the ANC remained far apart. In accepting the need for negotiations, the government argued that their bottom line would be a constitutionally inscribed system of ethnically-based power-sharing with veto rights being retained by the minority groups, including whites. On the other hand, the ANC believed that the government should immediately hand power to an "interim government" to oversee elections for a democratically elected constitution-making body, which would have an unfettered right to produce South Africa's post-apartheid constitution.

The period between February 1990 and the holding of South Africa's first democratic elections in April 1994 parallels the Round Table experience in Poland. Unlike the East European roundtables, the South African process cannot be viewed as a single set of meetings between the government and opposition. Rather, it involved—at the level of formal meetings—three distinct phases: the talks about talks; the Codesa meetings which led to a temporary breakdown in the negotiations; and finally, the Multi-Party Negotiating Forum in which the parties negotiated the "interim" constitution and the transitional arrangements which led to the holding of the first

elections. Once the elections were held and the interim Constitution came into force, then the democratic transition entered its next phase—not unlike the subsequent periods of continuing political change that characterized the European experiences. The difference in South Africa after the elections was, however, profound: the shift in political power from the old to new only accelerated, with any negotiations between the parties in the Constituent Assembly and Parliament focused on the creation of the "final" 1996 Constitution.

In comparing the South African and Polish experiences, there are a number of important differences that will have a central bearing on our evaluation of these experiences. First, the role of violence and its relationship to the negotiating process is quite different. Second, the relationship between legal continuity and constitutional change framed both the nature of the demands of the opposition and the position of the government quite differently. Third, both the formal and informal bases for decision-making in the negotiations were different. Fourth, our understanding and characterization of the result raises the question of timing: at what point may we consider the results of the negotiations to have been superseded by subsequent events? Finally, the question of timing, both in the sense of conditions for negotiations—internationally and locally—and in terms of the process of negotiations itself, distinguishes the opportunities and restraints on the parties in these two cases.

Unlike the Polish experience, which, despite the imposition of martial law and other draconian actions by the state, remained essentially non-violent, the South African transition was accompanied by unprecedented levels of violence. In fact, it is fair to say that the process was in many ways driven forward and shaped by the escalation of violence during the political transition and the threat of greater violence if the negotiations had failed. The violence took many different forms: near civil war in Kwa-Zulu/Natal between ANC and Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) supporters; clandestine state-instigated efforts to disrupt ANC organizing and demobilize ANC supporters in many other parts of the country; a series of massacres and assassinations of ANC supporters, organizers and leaders; and finally, an ill-fated rebellion by neo-fascist whites who attempted in the weeks before the election to instigate the breakaway of the Bophuthatswana bantustan as part of their effort to halt the transition. Yet the effect of the violence was to build, over time, a center of activists and politicians who understood that the only way forward, and the only hope of reducing the levels of political violence, was to proceed with the democratic transition. In many ways the violence, and reactions to it, made the government negotiators realize that their goal of an indefinite, or at least fifteen-year, transition period was unsustainable—the economic and social impact of the violence required a speedier transition to full democracy.

A second important distinction is the legal or constitutional assumptions that underpinned the different sets of negotiations. In Poland, both the government and opposition entered the Round Table negotiations assuming a process of legal reform,

beginning with the legalization of Solidarity and its implications for the central constitutional question: the special status of the Communist Party within the constitutional order. In contrast, the South African process could only begin once there was an understanding that fundamental constitutional change was the central issue. Although the regime entered the negotiations believing that it could engineer a period of power-sharing based on ethnicity, by the time the negotiations ended, the "interim" constitutional order agreed to by the major parties clearly provided for a transition to majority rule. Although both processes involved a series of steps towards full democracy, the essentially colonial nature of the South African context made it absolutely clear that, once the vote was exercised by the Black majority, neither the old regime nor its politicians and social support-base would ever exercise political power again. Thus despite the insistence by the old regime in South Africa that there be legal continuity—i.e., that the old regime formally enact the "interim" constitution—unlike Poland, there was in effect an immediate, complete, and final political break. When Mandela assumed the Presidency, there could never again be an elected, white minority-controlled government in South Africa.

This difference is made clearer by understanding the nature of the decision-making process adopted within the South African negotiations and within the "power-sharing" Government of National Unity (GNU) that was constitutionally enshrined in the interim Constitution. Despite the rather large number of parties at Codesa and later at the Multi-Party Negotiating Forum, the principle of "sufficient consensus" was formally adopted as the means of ensuring progress. Although this concept was not fully clarified, in effect it meant that so long as the National Party government and the ANC agreed to a particular point there was sufficient consensus. While this led to great unhappiness on the side of the IFP, the principle effectively reflected the realities of power within the process. The government believed that this arrangement should be formally entrenched as the basis of power-sharing in the executive branch of the GNU. However, the ANC insisted that decisions within the cabinet would, in the event that consensus could not be reached, be made by majority vote. This, combined with the fact that positions within the GNU were to be allocated in proportion to the vote each party received in the elections, meant that the negotiators understood that the degree of power-sharing guaranteed by the constitution was in fact fairly limited. The old National Party would have seats in the new cabinet and thus continue to control some ministries, but Mandela would be free to govern, and the ANC would be able to insist upon the implementation of its own program. In practice, this led to the National Party withdrawing from the GNU well before the end of the guaranteed five years and the ANC finding that the problem of implementation of its policies lay more in the bureaucracy, whose positions had also been guaranteed as part of the negotiated agreement, and in its own lack of bureaucratic capacity.

It is this last element, the nature of the post-election government, that also distinguishes these two sets of negotiations. Despite the formal commitment to power-sharing in South Africa, in fact, the 1994 elections saw a final shift in power. Over the subsequent five years, that shift was consolidated through the writing of the final constitution and the slow transformation of most of the central institutions of political power. While the legacies of apartheid and the realities of economic power and privilege are slow to change, in South Africa, negotiations indeed led to a political and constitutional revolution. Significantly, both the fact of the collapse of state socialism in Eastern Europe and the level of social and political mobilization achieved in South Africa by the anti-apartheid movement during the 1980's, meant that the international and domestic contexts in which the South African "roundtable" negotiations took place—from February 1990 to December 1993—had already been significantly transformed and were quite different from those in which the Polish Round Table took place. Although the South African state had imposed a brutal state of emergency in the late 1980's, the level of resistance to the regime and social mobilization that reemerged as conditions began to change in 1989 made it a quite different context than Poland's.

Despite these differences, however, it is striking, given the obvious political and military power retained by both the South African and Polish states, that the old regimes would succumb to a process in which they were effectively forced to more or less peacefully relinquish the monopoly on formal state power they had formally enjoyed. In this regard the Polish Round Table, while not completely unique (negotiations were clearly on the agenda in South Africa and elsewhere by the late 1980's) set the stage for others as they began down a similar path.

The South African Negotiations

South Africa's negotiated revolution began with the unbanning of the political movements. This led to a series of preparatory meetings in which the ANC insisted that the government fulfil the terms of the Harare Declaration, an internationally adopted statement which required the apartheid regime to: release all political prisoners; unban political organizations; remove military personnel from the black townships; cease political executions; end the state of emergency; and repeal all legislation designed to circumscribe political activity. In a series of "talks about talks," beginning with the Groote Schuur meeting in May 1990, the ANC engaged in direct talks with the government to secure the implementation of the Harare preconditions. These agreements enabled the ANC to begin to re-establish a legal presence in the country as part of the process towards the normalization of political activity. However, by December 1990, when the ANC held its first legal consultative conference in South Africa in over thirty years, its fast expanding legal membership reacted sharply to the

rising violence directed by clandestine forces and IFP-aligned hostel dwellers against the black community. Calling for arms and military training, these new members and activists reminded the leadership that the armed struggle against apartheid had not as yet been formally suspended.

At first it seemed that the ANC leadership would respond to the pressure from its membership and demand that an end to the violence be added as a precondition to negotiations. But it soon became clear from the pattern of violence, particularly the manner in which it intensified to coincide with ANC political initiatives, that if an end to violence was to be an additional precondition to negotiations, the state would be in a stronger position to exert control over the transition. Although always denied, both the behavior of the police and military units of the old regime, as well as occasional disclosures about clandestine projects, including the funding and supply of arms to the IFP, made the source of the violence clear. Instead of allowing these episodes of violence to dictate the pace of events, the ANC decided to take the initiative and established its own framework for the transition to democracy: the calling of an all-party conference; demanding the establishment of an interim government; the holding of elections for a constituent assembly to draw up a new constitution; and finally, the election of a democratic government under a newly adopted constitution.

With the convening of the Conference for a Democratic South Africa (Codesa) on December 20, 1991, it appeared that South Africa was entering the last mile of a process which would extend political rights to all the country's citizens. This sense of progress was increased by an apparent convergence of opinion as the major parties—the ANC and the Government—agreed on a number of fundamental issues, including the establishment of a multi-party democracy in a united South Africa with an entrenched bill of rights to be adjudicated by a special constitutional tribunal. Substantive negotiations began with the convening of Codesa's five working groups in February 1992. Their terms of reference included: the re-incorporation of the four bantustans given independence under apartheid (the Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Ciskei and Venda); the creation of a transitional government to lead the country to democracy; a set of constitutional principles; a method for drafting and adopting a new constitution; and the creation of a climate for free political activity.

It was the Codesa working groups that came closest to resembling the roundtable format of negotiations. Each working group, made up of a number of representatives of the twenty-seven different political parties participating in Codesa, met over a period of months between Codesa I and the collapse of Codesa at its second plenary. Although the agreements reached had no formal status after the collapse of the talks, in fact, the basic outline of the transition was first discussed at these meetings. In order to make this clear, I will briefly summarize the issues discussed and agreements reached in the different working groups.

The main task of Working Group One was the creation of a climate for free political activity. The working group focused on resolving the status of political prisoners and exiles, reforming Emergency and Security legislation, regulating broadcast media and the state-controlled South African Broadcasting Corporation in particular, and implementing the National Peace Accord. It also discussed the funding of political parties and control over security forces during the transitional period. In principle, progress was made on most of these issues. The question of the release of political prisoners and return of exiles was identified as, "a priority in the completion of the reconciliation process," but it was decided that it could only be resolved in bilateral negotiations between the government and the ANC. Although the working group agreed to place controls over the declaration and implementation of states of emergency, it agreed that, "special measures are necessary to deal with the threats to public peace and order during the transitional period." The working group's understanding of the role news reporting plays in the creation of a climate of free political participation was reflected in agreement on the establishment of an independent body to regulate the broadcasting media. Working Group One agreed to a range of specific mechanisms to ensure the effective implementation of the National Peace Accord, including the imposition of stronger sentences for the possession of illegal arms or public displays of dangerous weapons. Working Group One also agreed to suspend the Prohibition of Foreign Funding of Political Parties Act until six months after the first non-racial election. Finally, the working group agreed that during the transitional period the Security Forces should be placed under the control of one of the sub-councils of the Transitional Executive Authority.

Working Group Two tackled the question of constitutional transformation, which was divided into two distinct issues. First, it sought to establish a set of constitutional principles which would be absolutely binding on a future elected constitution-making body. Second, the working group would decide upon a method of drafting and adopting a new constitution. However, Working Group Two was torn between the government and its allies, who argued for a broad definition of "constitutional principles," so as to ensure that the bulk of a future constitution be negotiated within Codesa, and the ANC and its allies, who argued for a more limited conception of constitutional principles, so as not to encroach upon the constitution-making functions of an elected constituent body. Although there seems to have been agreement on the inclusion of principles guaranteeing individual rights and democratic political processes, attempts to include principles on the composition of governments and the distribution of power within the state remained contentious.

This contention flowed into the debate on a constitution-making body. The ANC viewed an elected constituent assembly as the only legitimate means of producing a new constitution. The government and the IFP feared that elections would marginalize their role, and sought to resolve all uncertainty about a future constitutional order at Codesa.

For the government, this would require the establishment of an interim constitution and a seventy-five percent threshold for the adoption of a new constitution in an elected constituent assembly. The IFP objected in principle to an elected body and insisted that federalism be constitutionally guaranteed prior to any election. Finally, Working Group Two failed to reach agreement and precipitated Codesa's deadlock when the government insisted on a seventy-five percent majority for adoption of a new constitution and the ANC agreed to seventy-five percent for the bill of rights but insisted on seventy percent for the adoption of a new constitution.

Working Group Three achieved greater consensus on how the country should be governed during the transition to democracy, agreeing on a two-phase process. The first stage would involve the establishment of a multi-party Transitional Executive Authority to operate in conjunction with existing legislative and executive structures rid of their tricameral structure, while the second stage was to be a period between the election and the adoption of a democratic constitution. During this period, the elected body would combine the functions of an ordinary legislature and a constitution-making body. In addition it was agreed that an Independent Electoral Commission be established to ensure a free and fair election.

Working Group Four focused on the future of the "independent" TBVC-bantustans and agreed to the principle of reincorporation. Although the parties agreed that the TBVC administrations should come under the control of the Transitional Executive Council, conflict remained over whether reincorporation would be contingent on a decision by the population of each of the TBVC entities. Although the ANC and its allies refused to agree to any procedure which would recognize the TBVC entities' claims to statehood, they accepted that voting in a national election could be arranged to demonstrate support or rejection of reincorporation. Finally, Working Group Five, which was to determine timeframes for the implementation of Codesa agreements, remained dependent on progress in the other groups.

It soon became clear, however, that the convergence in language masked deep differences and a clear strategy on the government's side to retain control of the process of transition and, thus, to project the power of the ruling National Party and its allies into the future through constitutional gerrymandering. Although Codesa's founding declaration included a commitment to a united South Africa the government soon interpreted this to mean merely the maintenance of South Africa's internationally recognized 1910 borders. The government began to insist that there be prior agreement that any future constitution be premised on a strict federal system of government, based on the balkinization of the country into a number of all-but-independent regions. Given the vast racial and economic inequities between different regions of the country, the ANC and its allies saw the demand for federalism as an attempt by the old regime to protect white economic and social advantage through the effective division of the country into different regions, some of which would remain under white control, due to

the geography of racial segregation imposed by apartheid. It was this insistence on federalism as a precondition to the creation of a democratically elected constituent assembly and the demand that a new constitution be adopted by seventy-five percent of the proportionally elected constitution-making body, as well as seventy-five percent of the regionally elected delegates, that led to the failure of the second plenary session of Codesa in May 1992.

The collapse of formal negotiations in mid-1992 introduced a period of dramatic tension and conflict in which South Africa came perilously close to abandoning the path of negotiations altogether. The response of the ANC and its allies in the Labour Movement and the South African Communist Party was to mobilize their supporters in a campaign of mass action in demand of a democratically elected constituent assembly. However, the ANC initiative was met with a series of violent attacks on communities, culminating in the Boipatong Massacre, in which IFP-aligned hostel dwellers were escorted by police during an extended and deadly rampage against the civilian population of an ANC-aligned community south of Johannesburg. In response, the ANC announced a formal suspension of multi-party negotiations and demanded that the government halt the escalating violence. The ANC noted that the government was still holding more than three hundred political prisoners, in contravention of earlier agreements, and had made no effort to ban the carrying of lethal weapons by its allied parties, particularly the IFP, which insisted that its members had a right to carry "traditional" weapons, such as clubs, spears and pangas.

After a two day general strike in early August, the state seemed ready to reopen negotiations, making concessions such as the acceptance of international observers and an expansion of the Peace Accord structures designed to address the violence. Despite these concessions, however, the government still refused to accept a democratically controlled constitution-making body. Further, when evidence began emerging of the government's role in political assassinations, the government called for a general amnesty for politically motivated crimes—without documentation of specific responsibility for particular acts.

Rejecting the government's response, the ANC committed itself to intensifying its mass action campaign to ensure free political activity in those areas (bantustans and right-wing white towns) where it claimed local administrations continued to suppress ANC organization. This strategy was designed to highlight the contradiction between the government's claim that apartheid had been abolished while it sustained apartheid's bantustan system, thus denying responsibility for the lack of free political activity in areas controlled by the government's allies. Significantly, it is this same division of power which would leave local communities under the control of local elites, free of national authorities' intrusion, which the ANC feared the government sought to perpetuate through its federalism proposals.

This fear was underlined by the massacre of ANC demonstrators at Bisho, in the Ciskei, on September 7, 1992. The Ciskei security forces fired on 120,000 unarmed demonstrators, leaving twenty-eight dead and nearly 200 injured. On the same day, State President F.W. de Klerk hosted a conference on federalism and regionalism. Billed as an open forum to discuss constitutional options and criticized as an attempt to build an anti-ANC alliance, the conference was supposed to resuscitate the multiparty negotiations, which collapsed at Codesa's second plenary meeting. The massacre overshadowed de Klerk's federal initiative, and the ANC refused to formally re-enter the multi-party negotiations. Nevertheless, the ANC seemed to embark on a process of arms-length negotiations by making public proposals for the transition to democracy.

Seeking to, "create the possibility of a major positive breakthrough,"[1] South African Communist Party Chairman Joe Slovo took the lead in arms-length negotiations in the period following the Bisho massacre, proposing the adoption of a "sunset clause," which would provide for compulsory power-sharing for an agreed number of years after the adoption of a democratic constitution. When, on November 18, the National Working Committee of the ANC formally adopted a policy of power sharing with the National Party during the transition, it argued it was necessary to minimize the threat from those in the South African Defence Force, South African Police, other armed formations and the civil service who had the capacity to disrupt and delay the transition.[2] A week later, when the policy was adopted by the ANC's National Executive Committee, the NEC said it recognized, "that even after the adoption of a new constitution by the Constituent Assembly, the balance of forces and the interests of SA as a whole may require us to consider the establishment of a government of national unity."[3] Despite these concessions, the ANC argued that its "strategic perspective" was fundamentally different than the Government's power-sharing proposals, which sought to, "entrench veto powers for minority parties on the basis of a constitutionally enforced coalition," and thus to, "frustrate the will and aspirations of the majority."[4]

The assassination of South African Communist Party and ANC leader Chris Hani in April 1993, and the mass outpouring of grief and anger which his death precipitated, galvanized the negotiating process, providing a glimpse of the consequences that might flow from a failure to reach agreement. Marching through cities around the country, hundreds of thousands of mourners expressed an anger and militancy that caused millions of Rands of property damage and openly threatened the possibility of any future racial reconciliation. However, after having just agreed to reopen multi-party negotiations at a multi-party planning conference on March 5 and 6, 1993 the parties refused to allow the right-wing assassins to achieve their aim of

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[1] *Star*, Oct. 1, 1992, p. 1.
[2] *Star,* Nov. 19, 1992, p. 1.
[3] *Star*, Nov. 26, 1992, p. 12.
[4] Ibid.

shattering the already brittle negotiations process and instead appealed, in the name of Hani, for heightened efforts to achieve a settlement. Within weeks of Hani's death, formal negotiations re-opened in the form of a Multi-Party Negotiations Process at the World Trade Centre outside Johannesburg.

Capitalizing on the pressures raised by Hani's assassination and the growing anger of the Black community, the ANC used this opportunity to demand the setting of an election date. Once a date was tentatively agreed upon—April 24, 1994—the negotiators realized that this could not be easily changed and that time for decision-making was short. In order to facilitate the process, the structure of the negotiations was now revamped. Unlike the failed Codesa talks, in which negotiations were conducted between political party representatives in the different working groups, the new process provided for a Negotiating Council to discuss and decide upon reports from seven technical committees, whose role it was to clarify and present alternatives and issues for the political negotiators. In addition, a ten person Planning Committee was responsible for keeping the process on track by structuring the debates and dealing with grievances. Dominated by academics and lawyers, the technical committees facilitated the emergence of clear alternatives. Although some observers and participants were critical of the "professionalization" of an essentially political process, the process, focused as it was on the production of written proposals, gained momentum. Despite the fact that the technical committees were often required to rework and reconsider their "technical" inputs, the series of reports that flowed from the committees slowly crystallized the position of the Negotiating Council.

At the beginning of the negotiations process the IFP had asserted itself as a third major player, demanding parity with the ANC and the National Party government, but it soon retreated to the advocacy of regional autonomy in an attempt to perpetuate its existing advantage, as the government of a self-governing territory, into the post-apartheid era. Although it described its proposals as federalism, the form of regional autonomy advocated by the IFP and its allies in the Freedom Alliance (consisting of various bantustan governments and pro-apartheid white parties) was closer in substance to a system of confederation. In terms of the IFP's proposals, the different regions of South Africa would constitute autonomous states whose constitutions would dictate interpretation of the "federal" constitution. In other words, any application of the federal constitution to issues within a region or to conflicts between regions would have to be consistent with the constitutions of the relevant regions. This conception of "autonomous federalism" was revealed in both the IFP's proposed constitution for KwaZulu/Natal and its proposed Constitution for the Federal Republic of South Africa, which advocated a federal government of limited powers. The federal government would, according to this proposal, have limited powers in specific areas, while the national legislature would be empowered to adopt general principles of legislation on defined subject matters, in order to establish a framework to facilitate intrastate

negotiation over policies in these areas. Finally, any federal legislation would have to be passed by both houses of parliament, effectively giving the senate—made up of four representatives of each state—a final veto over national legislation.

Unable to obtain support for this extreme form of federalism, the IFP joined with its allies in the Concerned South Africans Group (Cosag) to launch the Freedom Alliance, thus effectively achieving collectively what it had failed to achieve unilaterally: the creation of a third power-bloc within the negotiating process. Created in October 1993, this alliance of right-wing white parties committed to the continuation of apartheid and black bantustan parties and governments, with vested interests in the regional enclaves created by apartheid's bantustan policy, demanded that ethnicity be recognized within the negotiating process. Despite some awkward moments—for example, when neo-fascist Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging (AWB) stormed the negotiating venue and assaulted a number of IFP delegates—this alliance managed to threaten the election process and obtained a series of concessions from the major parties (the ANC and the government) which went some way toward accepting the need to address ethnic concerns.

The negotiations were also subject to various other demands and pressures. The ANC's Women's League staged a sit-in at the negotiations, and, supported by women from all the other parties, won a requirement that each delegation at the negotiations include a woman as one of its two negotiating council representatives. At the same time the Women's League continued to press for greater participation within the ANC, winning a recommendation from the ANC's national working committee that one-third of all ANC candidates in the April 1994 elections be women.[5] Gender equality was, as a consequence, formally recognized in the interim bill of rights, and the interim constitution included specific provisions for the establishment of a Commission on Gender Equality, "to advise and to make recommendations to Parliament or any other legislature with regard to any laws or proposed legislation which affects gender equality and the status of women."[6] In addition, as part of a general attempt to preempt negotiations, the de Klerk government ratified the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in January 1993, binding the South African state to particular international obligations in this area. This successful inclusion of the principle of gender equality into the interim constitution was the product of the interaction of local women's mobilization against gender discrimination and the increased recognition of gender equality as an internationally accepted norm of human rights and constitutionalism.

These gains were not unilinear. Despite these breakthroughs in an otherwise deeply sexist society, and despite the popular repetition of the democratic movement's vision of a "non-racial and non-sexist" South Africa, women active in the negotiations

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[5] *Saturday Star*, Oct. 16, 1993, p. 6, col. 1.

[6] South African Constitution, 1993, section 119(3).

process had to fend off a challenge resulting from the demand to recognize indigenous law. Traditional leaders' claims for the recognition of indigenous culture led to an attempt to include provisions in the interim bill of rights recognizing "customary law" and regulating the contradictions between indigenous law and other "fundamental rights." Although it was rejected, one proposed interim bill of rights granted "any court applying a system of customary law" the power to determine the extent to which customary law undermines the equality provision and to decide when and to what extent these rules—even where they discriminated against women—should be brought into conformity with the constitutional requirement of equality.[7] In the end, the interim Constitution came down in favor of gender equality, making indigenous law "subject to regulation by law," implying its subordination to the fundamental rights contained in the constitution, gender equality in particular.[8]

The process of political transition formally began with the adoption of four statutes in October 1993. After approval in the Negotiating Council and passage through the white-controlled Parliament, these new laws marked the legal demise of the old constitutional order. Although the unraveling of the apartheid constitutional framework had already begun with the abolition of the President's Council and the amendment of legislation defining the status of the bantustans, it was only with the passage of the Transitional Executive Council Act that power began to formally shift away from the allocations determined by the 1983 Constitution. Together with the three other Acts passed at the same time—the Independent Electoral Commission Act, Independent Media Commission Act and the Independent Broadcasting Authority Act—the Transitional Executive Council Act provided the basis for a pre-constitutional order directed towards the holding of a democratic election.

Although the ANC's demand for an interim government had been rejected by the National Party government, the agreement to establish a transitional executive council constituted recognition of the fact that the government could not retain control over the transitional process. Providing for formal power-sharing over specific areas of governmental activity and outright authority over issues affecting the transition to a democratic order, the Transitional Executive Council Act allowed the negotiating parties access to the governing process without making them responsible for apartheid policies and programs which would be beyond their power to change. In terms of the Act, the TEC was to be constituted by all participants—governments, administrations and political groupings—in the multi-party negotiating process who wished to be represented. The TEC was directed by the Act to facilitate and promote the transition to democracy through the achievement of two primary goals: the creation and promotion of a climate of free political participation and the creation and promotion of conditions

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[7] See Section 32(2) of the proposed chapter on fundamental rights, Technical Committee on Fundamental Rights During the Transition, Tenth Progress Report, Oct. 1, 1993.

[8] See South African Constitution, 1993, section 181.

conducive to the holding of free and fair elections. Reflecting the significant involvement of women in the negotiating process, the Act specifically directed the TEC to have as one of its objects to "ensure the full participation of women in the transitional and electoral structures and processes."

The TEC mirrored, through its seven subcouncils, the most important government ministries and functions, thus enabling it to formally monitor and intervene to the extent of its mandate in all the vital aspects of governance. Among the TEC's specific powers and duties was the power to order any government or administration under its jurisdiction not to proceed with proposed legislation if it determined that such legislation would have an adverse effect on the TEC's objectives. This power to issue "desist orders" extended to any decision or action of any government, administration, political party or organization that was a party to the TEC. Although the IFP refused to take part in the TEC, s21(1) of the Act made the Act applicable to all self-governing territories regardless of the Self-Governing Territories Constitution Act of 1971, thus making KwaZulu formally subject to TEC oversight, regardless of the KwaZulu administration's and IFP's rejection of the TEC.

Apart from the power-sharing devices designed to achieve a level playing field in the political process leading up to the elections, the pre-constitutional legal framework centered on two Acts designed to manage the election itself. The first of these was the Independent Electoral Commission Act, which sought to remove the electoral process and authority for the verification of the elections away from the sitting government, because the black majority, who had been historically excluded from the vote, feared that government officials might attempt to interfere with the democratic process, or that government control of the process might bring suspicion upon its veracity. Secondly, the Electoral Act dealt with the conduct of the electoral process itself and the technical minutiae of the election, including the form of the ballot paper, the identification of voters, the procedures at the polling stations, and the exact formula for counting the ballots and calculating the proportional distribution of legislative seats between the parties. The most significant departure from past electoral law, apart from the adoption of a universal franchise, was the move away from a constituency-based electoral system to the adoption of proportional representation. The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) had responsibility for ensuring a fair electoral process and verifying the result as "substantially free and fair." Appointed by the State President on the advice of the TEC, the IEC was comprised of "impartial, respected and suitably qualified men and women" representing a cross-section of the population. It included five non-South Africans drawn "from the international community," and was "independent and separate" from all existing bearers of political authority or power.

The adoption by Parliament of an "interim" constitution on December 22, 1993, brought into "legal existence" the constitutional agreement reached after months of negotiations. Although intended to be an "interim" constitution with a lifespan of only

five years, it effectively secured the final demise of the racially-structured constitutional system and the apartheid order which flowed from it. In terms of this "interim" constitution the parliament was to play the dual role of legislature and Constitutional Assembly, and was charged with the task of adopting a new constitution within two years. In the course of negotiations, there were significant changes in the positions of the major players and compromises that were cobbled together in the interim constitution. Most fundamentally, the ANC's demand for a unitary state came to be interpreted to mean national sovereignty over South Africa within its 1910 boundaries, rather than a central government with preemptive power over regional authorities. As a result of this change in policy, the issue of federalism, rejected initially by the ANC because of a fear that the need to redress the legacies of apartheid might be frustrated by the emasculation of central government powers under a federal structure, became a central feature of the constitutional debate. The adoption of the language of "strong regionalism" by both the ANC and the National Party government coincided with the National Party's acceptance that the absolute veto powers of the upper house of the legislature would be limited to regional matters and that its notions of political consociationalism would be restricted to local government structures. Although the National Party government accepted the rejection of its proposals for a rotating presidency and equal representation of political parties in the Senate, many of the provisions of the 1993 constitution, and in particular its guarantee of a five year government of National Unity, satisfied some of the goals implicit in the government's earlier proposals.

Unlike the ANC and the National Party government, the IFP refused to compromise on its central claim to regional autonomy and, in its alliance with white pro-apartheid parties, continued to threaten to disrupt the transitional process. Although factions of the IFP seemed ready to contest the elections for the KwaZulu/Natal regional government, the party's leader, Chief Buthelezi, interpreted the IFP's poor showing in pre-election polls as cause to promote an even more autonomous position encouraging and supporting King Goodwill Zwelethini in his demand for the restoration of the nineteenth-century Zulu monarchy with territorial claims beyond the borders of present-day KwaZulu/Natal. By the time the constitution was adopted by parliament, the IFP and the white right-wing parties of the Freedom Alliance had walked out of the multi-party talks. The IFP was particularly concerned about the failure of the ANC and the government to concede anything but concurrent legislative powers to the regions. In order to address these concerns, the constitution was amended in March 1994 and regional legislatures were granted powers of preemption over national legislation. However, it was only after the constitution was amended a second time in April 1994 to entrench the constitutional status of the Zulu King in KwaZulu/Natal that the IFP agreed—within days of the polls opening—to participate in the election.

Conclusion

Although these processes of negotiated change in Poland and South Africa provide an extraordinary example to the world of an alternative to conflict and social disintegration, it is important to situate these processes in their particular historical contexts. Despite the commonalities of negotiations and step-by-step democratization, the particular facts—the collapse of state socialism in Poland and the effective decolonization of South Africa—provided completely different circumstances and outcomes. Despite their dramatic loss in the elections, members of the old regime and their political heirs would continue to play a role in Polish politics, even enjoying the possibility of being democratically elected to positions of power in some circumstances. In South Africa the democratic transition, granting political rights to an African majority that makes up close to eighty percent of the population, means that, not unlike other post-colonial situations, the old political elite and its particular social base is effectively precluded from holding political power in the future. Here, the negotiations could not be limited to the establishment of a democratic opening, but had to include the creation of institutions and processes that provided a sense of security for the minority losing power. In this sense the creation of a supreme constitution with an entrenched bill of rights was as central to the South African negotiations as the process of democratization itself. In contrast, the Polish negotiations focused on the creation of political opportunity, even as it was understood that the future of the whole economic and social system was at stake. It is by understanding the role of "roundtable" negotiations in such disparate circumstances that the lesson and value of these experiences may benefit others seeking ways to overcome entrenched conflicts.

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Conflict Resolution and the Polish Round Table:
Negotiating Systemic Change?

Mark Chesler

In this paper, I apply literature and experience in studies of escalated social conflict and conflict resolution to the history of the Polish Round Table. The Polish Round Table experience, as well as the events leading to its formation and the review of its impact ten years later, represents a useful data base for considering theories and practice principles extant in the conflict resolution literature. Likewise, the conflict resolution literature and experience represent a unique vantage point from which to examine the Polish Round Table. Both this literature and the Round Table experience stand to gain from their linkage.

For current purposes, I define conflict as a situation wherein two or more *engaged and interacting parties* have a substantial and *relevant difference in goals or interests* that cannot be achieved simultaneously. The key terms here are italicized, because if parties cease being interdependent with one another (do not need one another for survival or productivity or whatever) or no longer differ (on important matters) the conflict either ceases or becomes irrelevant. I will return to these conditions in more detail later, but it is clear that the Polish situation meets these definitional terms.

Moreover, although I have chosen the terms "conflict resolution," "the Polish Round Table" and "systemic change" as the title and foci of this analysis, each of these terms has multiple or unclear meanings, and each has a contentious history. For instance, various analysts of conflict processes prefer not to think of serious conflicts as ever being fully resolved, but as being "managed," "processed," "dealt with," etc. In the case of the Polish Round Table, it is clear that core and underlying conflicts were by no means settled at or by the Round Table. Rather, a negotiation process was put into place wherein people who disagreed strongly and had fought with one another came to some agreements that permitted them to live together and the social system in which they lived to continue to operate without warfare or schism. The Polish Round Table itself is a term that is applied to more than a single session or series of sessions at a round table; it covers an entire series of meetings and formal and informal negotiation processes that occurred over a considerable period of time. And it cannot be understood without some

examination of both the pre-history that set a context and need for the Round Table and the ten-year post-history that permits us to review its accomplishments. Finally, whether or not systemic change occurred in Poland, whether it occurred as a result of the Round Table, and whether more and better change would have occurred without the Round Table, are other matters of continuing debate.

These are the multiple contexts for this paper. At the outset, I assert that most of what we know about the formation, operation and attributed outcomes of the Polish Round Table fit well with widely held understandings in the conflict resolution field. At the same time, the Polish example deepens and extends our understanding of some of these widely held principles and practices and provides a uniquely interesting context in which to examine them again. I have organized this paper around six key issues or questions that are endemic to most discussions of conflict and conflict resolution; they are all present in the discussion of the Polish Round Table.

I. What kind of issues can be negotiated?

II. When are negotiations (most) useful as a strategy?

III. What is required for negotiations to work well?

IV. What are useful third party or "intervenor" roles?

V. How do parties in conflict come to trust one another enough to negotiate?

VI. Can, and how can, negotiations lead to systemic change?

I conclude the analytic portion of this paper with some reflections on the scholarly and political uses of organized memory as part of the Round Table experience and with some suggestions for comparative analyses that might broaden inquiry. Finally, I raise a series of questions that may be useful in guiding classroom discussions that could flow from this data base and analysis.

I. What Kinds of Issues Can Be Negotiated?

The first vital issue in the analysis of this and other conflicts must be the nature and extent of the parties' different goals or interests. Are they truly incompatible? Are there issues where compromises or negotiations can occur, or is warfare and victory/defeat the appropriate model? Is this a zero-sum—a winner take all—situation?

Most of the literature addressing these questions draws a distinction between

issues involving: (1) core or sacrosanct values, such as conceptions of basic rights, truth and social justice; and (2) sharable resources, such as power, money and material goods.[1] Indeed, Fiss argues that constitutional rights are non-negotiable, while slices of the pie may well be.[2] Fisher and Ury, in counseling parties on how to get to a negotiating situation, suggest that conflicting parties recede from stating inviolable "positions" or "ideologies" and concentrate on articulating "interests": the latter are potentially negotiable while the former are not.[3] In a similar context, Susskind and Cruikshank suggest that when it appears that sacrosanct values are involved, combatants who wish to negotiate should repackage, redefine or reframe the issues so that talk (and hopefully compromise agreements) can occur.[4]

In the context of the Polish Round Table, several participants explicitly agree that it was not a place for seeking "truth" or justice." Bujak notes that, in his view, the fight for freedom and democracy was not the same as the fight for justice, and that even the victims of regime crimes "were not fighting for this one hundred percent justice and eradication of evil. They were fighting for freedom and democracy."[5] Indeed, he argues that, from the point of view of justice for victims or punishment for criminals, "the Round Table negotiators (were thought of) as bad."[6] Some of the current debates about the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa (as in other places) is how much "truth" (and justice) versus how much "reconciliation" took place or could take place or even should take place.[7] If these Commissions (or the Round Table) are for reconciliation, not justice, what does that do to truth? Would Pinochet (and other members of his regime) receive a "fair trial" in Spain—would the "truth" emerge or "justice" prevail? Would that happen in Chile, or would a compromise result? What would the Chilean opposition to Pinochet say about reconciliation as a goal?

If core disagreements about values such as truth and justice were not to be

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[1] M. Deutsch, "Equity, Equality and Need: What Determined Which Value Will Be Used as the Basis of Distributive Justice," *Journal of Social Issues* 31 (1975): 137-150; D. Luban, "The Quality of Justice*," Denver University Law Review* 66 (3) (1989): 381-418.

[2] O. Fiss, "Against Settlement," *Yale Law Journal* 93 (1984): 1073-90.

[3] R. Fisher and W. Ury, *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1981).

[4] L. Susskind and J. Cruikshank, *Breaking the Impasse: Consensual Approaches to Resolving Public Disputes* (New York: Basic Books, 1987).

[5] *Communism's Negotiated Collapse: The Polish Round Table, Ten Years Later. A Conference at the University of Michigan. April 7-10, 1999. English Transcript of the Conference Proceedings*, trans. by Kasia Kietlinska, ed. by Donna Parmelee (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Center for Russian and East European Studies, 1999), 63. Page numbers in footnotes referring to the Round Table transcript correspond to the original printed version of the transcript, which was provided to the contributors to this guide for reference. These page numbers may not correspond to the transcript currently available on the web or to subsequent printed versions.

[6] Ibid., 62.

[7] D. Bronkhuorst, *Truth and Reconciliation: Obstacles and Opportunities* (Amnesty International, 1995); M. Minow, *Between Vengeance and Fairness* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1998).

debated at the Round Table, what was? What were the "sharable resources" or compromisable issues around which negotiations could occur? Underlying the varied positions taken by Solidarity activists and Government officials was a concern for, and indeed a commitment to, the sharing of legitimate power and authority. And this is the master resource in any social system, one that governs the distribution of other resources, and indeed the distribution of rights and privileges.

Thus, it was generally concluded that the Polish Round Table was about a series of negotiated compromises in order to maintain a stable and relatively peaceful society, one in which the legitimate authority of the state structure was maintained, albeit with different arrangements regarding who would share in the exercise of this legitimate authority. Neither of the major parties at the table wished to unleash (or see unleashed) the destructive power of violence—state violence or challenger violence. The issues on the table, the disagreements and compromises, were marked by more concrete objectives, such as recognition of free trade unionism, space for the development of democracy, and the possibility of economic improvement. Why compromise? Michnik makes the case that compromise is essential for democracy, "…freedom is not democracy yet. Democracy is freedom institutionalized, subjected to the state of law. Democracy is not only the rule of the majority, but it is also the rights for minorities. In other words the bread and wine of democracy is compromise."[8] Michnik suggests further that Solidarity activists by and large did not wish to overthrow the Communist government; not only violence but "reconquest" would have been morally wrong and undemocratic (as was conquest itself). Since reconquest or reconciliation were the only choices apparently available, clearly reconciliation was to be chosen. Staniszewska puts it even more clearly, noting that dismantling the system was not the goal: "If anyone had thought that the system was being dismantled the Round Table would not have happened at all."[9] Reykowski indicates that people tried to let go of the (oppressive) past and not discuss "symbolic issues." And Rakowski indicates that he, "treated the Round Table as a beginning of an evolutionary change of the system,"[10] not as an attempt at attaining the end point. Hall provides a useful coda for this discussion, noting that the Round Table was a pragmatic political choice for everyone.

A pragmatic approach to the negotiation of divergent interests must identify some mutual interests among the parties. What the parties to the Polish Round Table acknowledged, and what permitted them to come together to the table, was their mutual interest in the "survival of the whole" or the "good of the whole" (the whole society in this case, the whole company in labor-union negotiations, the whole family in formal or informal marital/divorce negotiations). Some observers discuss this as the development

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[8] *Communism's Negotiated Collapse*, 234.

[9] Ibid., 144.

[10] Ibid., 189.

or articulation of concern for a "superordinate goal,"[11] which constitutes an objective both (all) parties have in common but which cannot be obtained by any party acting alone. This is a vital criterion that permits people who have strongly opposing positions to come to a negotiation table. In the Polish case, the stability and survival of the society and civil order was at stake as a superordinate goal, as was economic sustainability, and both parties (the Government and Solidarity) agreed that they needed to work with one another to achieve these goals. Indeed, Michnik indicates that what was a supreme value for him in the Round Table negotiations was the "overriding good of the nation."[12]

Many of the Round Table participants discuss how, as they tried to both represent their constituency (particular interests) and strive for the common good (mutual interests), they were sometimes seen as betraying their true cause and collaborating with the enemy. Michnik identifies this issue as part of being seen as "pink," as he noted that it is the "reformers' fate" to be "accused of betrayal by their own communities."[13] On the other side, Reykowski indicates that he also was accused of betrayal by staunch Communists and that Party people were shocked at his liberal stance toward Solidarity and negotiations. One way of dealing with this issue is suggested by Staniszewska, who notes that representatives need to be open and check often with their constituency. But none of these checks guard effectively against the perceptions of betrayal. The tension between being an advocate for one's own constituency and its particular positions or interests and being a seeker of compromise solutions in the common good or mutual interest is a common experience of representative negotiators.

The splits within their own constituencies extenuated this dynamic, and raised the question of representatives' interest in the survival of their own party as a whole, and of their associated leadership role. It is clear that neither the Government nor Solidarity represented all the people and interests within their own general constituency. Davis notes that there were not just two sides at the Round Table, or in the society, and that not all these sides were represented and represented well at the negotiations. Both Kaczyński and Hall also suggest that there were numerous opposition communities not necessarily represented by Solidarity, and certainly not (selected by Solidarity to be) present at the Round Table; the implication is that they were "too extreme" in their views or not sufficiently willing to disavow violence and embrace the potential for compromise. Moreover, and importantly, it is assumed (or hoped) that the unrepresented groups are not powerful enough to stop negotiations or to prevent implementation of agreements.

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[11] R. Lewicki and J. Litterer, eds., *Negotiations: Readings, Exercises and Cases* (Homewood, IL: Irwin, 1985); J. Rubin, D. Pruitt, and S. Kim, *Social Conflict: Escalation, Stalemate and Suppression* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1994); P. Wehr, *Conflict Regulation* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1979).

[12] *Communism's Negotiated Collapse*, 234.

[13] Ibid., 16.

II. When Are Negotiations (Most) Useful As a Strategy?

Tactical discussions of when, in the course of a conflict situation or process, negotiation is appropriate, or when parties are "ready to negotiate," are commonplace in the conflict resolution literature. Thus, the second vital issue in the analysis of this and other conflicts is the degree to which the parties are truly interdependent, unavoidably engaged, and interactive with one another. It is clear that the parties to the Round Table, indeed the parties to Polish society, had been and were engaged and interacting with one another in a variety of ways and would continue to do so. Once that was clear, negotiations depended on each party's willingness, and their ability to convince the other, that they would reject (or withhold) system destruction or violence and coercion, and thus could legitimate one another's existence, their mutual interdependence, and their desire to work together. That opened up the possibility of a "deal" or compromise solution.

This raises a strategic as well as moral question. System crisis—violence and coercion or the threat of such—can soften up opponents and bring them to the table. But continued threats of violence and coercion also can backfire, hardening opponents into enemies and losing public support from the marginally committed as well. The most significant calculus for parties at this strategic juncture is called BATNA: Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement.[14] If a party can improve its position and achieve its goals by using tactics other than negotiation, it is not likely to come to the table. Of course, a party can come to the table in "bad faith," appearing to engage in negotiations but using the situation to gather strategic intelligence about the opponents, create delay and confusion, etc. However, Susskind and Cruikshank argue that sooner or later, "As the dispute continues and the stakes rise, most groups eventually get around to considering their BATNA, rather than holding out for an extreme outcome," one created by unilateral or coercive action.[15]

Thus, in addition to the prior discussion of the nature of the issues at stake as a relevant consideration in decisions to come to negotiation, it is important to consider the Round Table as a social change strategy in the context of other modes of change and resistance that were or might have been available.[16] For instance, Chrzanowski suggests that several alternative models of resistance to the authoritarian regime existed: insurrection (as in national strikes, demonstrations and the use of force), active defense (as in the exertion of softer political and economic pressure on the regime, including the use of the press and the church), direct interaction (as in efforts to gain concessions), and

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[14] Fisher and Ury; H. Raiffa, *The Art and Science of Negotiation* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982).

[15] Susskind and Cruikshank, 117.

[16] J. Crowfoot, "Negotiations: An Effective Tool for Citizen Organizations?" *Northern Rockies Action Group Papers* 3-4 (1980): 22-44.

finally negotiation (as in the Round Table).[17] Bujak expresses the view that the strikes were planned to lead to talks, not to violence, and that, "talks as a mode for resolving conflict have been the constitutional principle within Solidarity."[18] Moreover, force alone didn't work! Staniszewska agrees that, "Violence was pointless and that violence breeds nothing but violence and nothing constructive can emerge from it."[19] Perhaps Hall sums up this view best in strategic terms, arguing that, pragmatically speaking, options other than negotiation and the Round Table, "appeared to me to be even more risky for Poland, more dangerous,"[20] in terms of the uncontrollable outcomes of direct pressure and violence and the unpredictability of Soviet actions. From the government's side, Ciosek argues in parallel, or perhaps reciprocally, indicating that, "We were not afraid of Solidarity itself as that Solidarity would not be able to put the genie back in the bottle,"[21] that Solidarity could not control its people and that mass protest would erupt. It is clear that there were Solidarity elements that did prefer options other than negotiations and did seek more fundamentally challenging goals for the change process. But as noted above, many of them weren't (selected to be) at the Round Table.

The external context of the conflict situation is another critical factor affecting the likelihood that various parties will enter into negotiations, and is thus another variable in parties' calculation of their BATNA. In the Polish context, varied external forces escalated the level of threat regarding the society's survival and/or the level of optimism about the possibilities for change. Either way, they heightened for many the need to consider the common good. For instance, part of the relevant externality concerns what else was going on in Poland at the time. Various participants talk about the economic or material crisis occurring, and the frustration and "bottom-up pressure" engendered by unmet promises of greater prosperity. Others suggest Poland had already experienced more freedom than other Soviet bloc states and, thus, was readier for change, compromise, and negotiations like the Round Table. Similarly, we can see how the state of a national economy and changing cultural politics certainly affect union-labor relations or interracial negotiations in the United States.

Another set of external forces concerns the reality—and, despite the objective reality, people's perceptions of the reality—of Soviet intentions and the potential of Soviet intervention, should the Polish Communist regime "give up too much" to Solidarity negotiators. For instance, Rakowski notes (and Ciosek agrees) that communist leaders, themselves rooted in a certain historical time and experience, felt that they had perhaps exaggerated their fear of Soviet intervention, out of "sheer fear and respect for the power East of the Bug river."[22] Davis, even without that personal experience, reports

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[17] *Communism's Negotiated Collapse*, 26.
[18] Ibid., 36.
[19] Ibid., 242.
[20] Ibid., 106.
[21] Ibid., 173.
[22] Ibid., 22.

that he, "suspected strongly that the Soviets would eventually intervene if, in fact, Solidarity took over power in Poland…(and thus) did warn my Solidarity friends to be careful…(and) tried to influence the opposition…that it was in their interest to talk to the government."[23] On the other hand, Chrzanowski suggests the Russians were far too weak to intervene by the late 1980's, although it is not clear that many wished to gamble on that assessment.

In addition, there is substantial commentary about the role of the United States, other Western nations and Polish immigrants in the US. Rakowski suggests that Poland was uniquely able to move in the direction of the Round Table because of its links to the US via Polish immigration. This view is seconded by Davis, as he discusses both the Reagan administration's "enthusiasm for hammering the Polish regime…(and how through) the Polish-American community, their moderation, their wisdom and their political support, we were able to achieve a balance"[24] in the effort to (more gently) influence the regime. Orszulik adds that the western sanctions "actually turned very effective"[25] in helping to soften the regime, although they also caused suffering among the Polish people. We can imagine similar dynamics of external influence in the activities of the American Jewish community vis-à-vis the Israeli government in its negotiations with Palestinian (or now Syrian) statesmen (in both directions—hardening and softening); the role of the Irish-American communities in support and opposition to events in Northern Ireland; the role of non-governmental US economic boycotts in lending support to challenges to the Apartheid regime in South Africa; US—C.I.A. activity in support or opposition to regimes in Latin America and elsewhere. (None of this argues either the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of any of these influences, merely their existence.)

The role of the Catholic Church (and the current Pope) is also cited several times, both in the sense of the Polish Church as a supporter of Solidarity and of negotiations, and of the impact on the regime of the international Catholic Church in the form of papal visits and pronouncements.

III. What Is Required for Negotiations to Work?

The literature indicates that once it is clear that parties are prepared to negotiate, successful negotiations require the presence of a variety of factors or conditions. Some of these conditions are themselves the natural context that drives parties to the table (given their BATNA's) while others can be created or facilitated by the ways in which negotiations are structured or organized. For convenience, we have labeled the former

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[23] Ibid., 61.
[24] Ibid., 95.
[25] Ibid., 135.

external conditions and the latter *internal conditions*.

   External conditions. As discussed above, the external societal context of conflict situations is a critical factor affecting the very possibility or existence of negotiations (and helping to calculate parties' BATNA's). In the Round Table context, part of the relevant externality concerns what else was going on in Poland, in the larger arena of Eastern Europe, and in the world at large at the time.

   Successful negotiations generally require the parties involved to have relatively equal power, or at least enough power parity to create a situation of mutual vulnerability and deterrence, or at least perceived vulnerability: "each side has to have at least some leverage it can use, if necessary, to the other's disadvantage."[26] As Wehr points out, often negotiation only can begin when, "oppressed groups…reduce the imbalance of power through confrontation to the point where conciliation and bargaining can take place."[27] At the macro or societal level in Poland, this principle was reflected in the argument that, at the time of the construction of the Round Table, both sides were pretty weak…and each knew it. As Staniszewska states, "The Round Table was actually evolved from the weakness of both sides.…If at that time at least one of the sides that finally sat down at the Round Table had felt and had been strong, had felt that it actually had power over the souls and minds of the people, I am sure that there would have been no Round Table."[28] So mutual weakness is as clear an example of the "power balancing" principle as is mutual powerfulness.[29] But power is never truly equal, and Jankowska argues that the Communist Party and Solidarity "were not truly partners all the way"[30]; the Party had the power to control the TV and press, and Solidarity had to run after and correct "regime journalists" who were telling the story of events in their partisan manner.

   It was helpful to the creation and conduct of the Polish Round Table that all members considered themselves "Poles" first and foremost. To the extent that major racial/ethnic, class or cultural conflicts break along the same lines as do power and privilege, power is less likely to be balanced, fundamentally different ideologies are more likely to be at stake, and historic grievances and injustice more likely to be part of the contest. This may make such multi-identity alignment a good mobilizing tactic for bringing together and energizing challenging groups. But mobilization and negotiation are distinctive change tactics, even if they often occur in tandem. When negotiations are undertaken, parties must be able to separate—intellectually, emotionally and practically—issues of identity and issues of interest, just as they must be able to separate interests and positions. Interests are negotiable, while ideological positions and core

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[26] Susskind and Cruikshank, 190.

[27] Wehr, 38.

[28] *Communism's Negotiated Collapse*, 242.

[29] L. Kriesberg, *The Sociology of Social Conflicts* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1973).

[30] *Communism's Negotiated Collapse*, 83.

identities are not. If such separations are not made, negotiations are less likely to come to pass, and when they do, are more likely to be highly contentious and unsuccessful. Consider the ethnicized and identity-group heightened nature of resource-based conflicts in Israel-Palestine, Northern Ireland, the former Yugoslavia, etc.

Internal conditions. A number of internal conditions also have to be met for negotiations to be successful. Chief among them are "process issues," such as power parity,[31] the ability of each party to work effectively with its own constituency, as well as to develop effective communication with opponents and with allies, and representatives' interpersonal skills (e.g., communication skills, emotional control, anger management). The literature on negotiations is replete with theoretical support for the particular necessity of relatively equal power participation and contains many suggestions for process interventions that may more or less (or even temporarily) provide power balancing.

Power parity, or relative power equality, was promoted at a micro or process level within the Round Table by such things as equal numbers of representatives for each side, rotating chairs of meetings, a norm of alternative-side speakers (Reykowski), autonomy in selection of representatives, and the use of "small tables" where people could engage in direct one-to-one conversations and negotiations, freed from the public posturing manifest in some total Round Table deliberations and the power plays enacted by a few dominant leaders of either side (perhaps to keep their own people "in line"). Another important balancing condition of the Round Table was that each side decided who would sit for itself; for the most part the Communists did not decide who would represent Solidarity (a condition noted as essential by Susskind and Cruikshank). Chrzanowski indicated that at one point the authorities wanted to pick Solidarity's Round Table representatives, but this did not happen. As we see, the people who did represent Solidarity (or the regime) had enough trouble retaining their credibility with their constituency as it was; it would have been lost completely had selection autonomy been compromised.

The difficulty each party to the Round Table experienced in managing its own internal splits and debates exerted pressure on their ability to construct and operate negotiations. For instance, Michnik argues that both Solidarity and the Communist Party (the government) were divided, that even in the subsequent election the country was divided, and Janas notes that it was clear to him, as he tried to organize the opposition in the factories, that all Poles did not oppose the Communist Party and support Solidarity. Bujak explicitly notes that maintaining Solidarity was key, but that, since it was a

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[31] A. Davis and R. Salem, "Dealing with Power Imbalances in the Mediation of Interpersonal Disputes," *Mediation Quarterly* 6 (1984): 17-26; B. Mayer, "The Dynamics of Power in Mediation and Negotiation," *Mediation Quarterly* 6 (1987): 75-86; L. Susskind, "Power and Power Imbalance," in *Removing the Barriers to the Use of Alternative Methods of Dispute Resolution* (Burlington: University of Vermont, 1984); Susskind and Cruikshank.

decentralized movement with no direct supervisory system, that was very difficult. The stakes got especially high when some within Solidarity's ranks (according to Janas, the young radicals) turned to violence, or blurred the border between peaceful demonstrations and terrorism (of course, as previously noted, the Party was only too willing to help blur this distinction). Parties who know about one another's split constituencies may elect to strengthen the negotiation situation by ignoring them, or they may try to weaken their opponent (and thus alter the power equation in the negotiation itself) by exploiting or appealing to these splits. The issue of working with one's own disparate constituencies is certainly a common theme in movement politics, and a great deal has been written about these internal struggles (for unity, for power between different sub-movement groups, about tactical preferences) in the US labor, student, civil rights and feminist movements and in national liberation movements in Africa, the Middle East, etc.

The problem of being and staying in good touch (and good graces) with one's own constituency, so that one could be a "legitimate spokesperson," was also raised by several participants. I referred earlier to the ways in which Michnik and others discuss their reactions to the charge that they betrayed their Solidarity comrades. Reykowski reports that unity within the government was more likely, given the constraints and rewards operative for Party leaders, but that, "some in the government undertook some efforts to limit or eradicate certain evils which the regime generated…they voluntarily undertook actions geared toward fundamental transformation of the system."[32] He argues that he and some others wanted change and to work with Solidarity, while others wanted to respond to the opposition with force, by annulling elections, etc. (Solidarity participants were not prepared to agree that such stances were "voluntary" or that party members "wanted change," preferring to see such stances as the result of their pressure and the changing situation). Reykowski identifies himself as a "party liberal," expecting "huge resistance within the Party apparatus, particularly of the Central Committee, toward negotiation and agreements."[33] He also identifies himself as part of the "reformist wing," a wing that was in the minority within the Party and "could not afford to say no openly and to organize ourselves within the party"[34] because of the press for Party unity. Despite these expectations, he reports that he found surprising support among many younger Party members. All liberation or resistance movements seek dearly to find "reformers" or "allies" within government and regime ranks; it also is common, after the fact, for many government/regime actors to identify themselves as "previously hidden" friends of a successful change effort.

Despite all efforts… Despite all efforts to create the conditions under which negotiations can be successful, there is no way to control all the forces and conditions at

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[32] *Communism's Negotiated Collapse*, 112.

[33] Ibid., 138.

[34] Ibid., 165.

work. In the Round Table context, for instance, there is a delicate story told about the last-minute negotiating stance of a government-oriented labor union and the mental and political gymnastics of several Solidarity members and the Church to work with extra-Round Table government actors to create a press release that would not sink the Round Table agreement. There are many examples of this phenomenon of uncontrollability in other settings. As one example, consider how the Memphis Public Employees (garbage collectors) strike and negotiations took a dramatic turn when Martin Luther King, Jr., who had come to Memphis to show support for the strikers, was assassinated during negotiations.[35]

IV. What Are Useful Third Party or "Intervenor" Roles?

Was a third party necessary to facilitate the process of coming to the Round Table…and continuing to meet and negotiate? A substantial portion of the literature on conflict resolution addresses the utility of third-party intervention: in Rubin et al.'s. terms, "a third party is an individual or a collective that is external to a dispute between two or more people and that tried to help them reach agreement."[36] Third party roles may be formal (contracted and arranged) or informal (emergent), advisory and facilitative or directive and coercive, and partial or impartial. In theory and practice, the necessity of an intermediary is a matter of debate, although many of the participants seemed to agree that it was required in the Polish situation. Examination of the record of the Polish Round Table is contradictory regarding whether a real third party was ever present, let alone if such a presence was necessary or useful.

Orszulik (a member of the Church hierarchy) argues that any two sides require an intermediary, and that the Church played this role. It does not seem the Church really "mediated" the Round Table in the formal sense of mediation, nor was it external to the negotiations, nor was it neutral. Neutrality is a hallmark of formal mediation rhetoric, but in practice it is usually redefined as a sense of fairness that gains the trust of varied parties.[37] Few people espousing a cause they believe to be just ever fully trust the person in the middle, the one without a position, even if they agree he/she/it was useful

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[35] R. Marshall and A. Adams, "The Memphis Public Employees' Strike," in W. Chalmers and G. Cormick, eds., *Racial Conflict and Negotiations* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan and Wayne State University, 1971).

[36] Rubin, Pruitt and Kim, 197.

[37] G. Cormick, "Intervention and Self-determination in Environmental Disputes: A Mediator's Perspective," *Resolve* (Winter 1982): 1-7; J. Forester and D. Stitzel, "Beyond Neutrality: The Possibilities of Activist Mediation in Public Sector Conflicts*," Negotiation Journal* 5(3) (1989): 251-263; J. Laue and G. Cormick, "The Ethics of Intervention in Community Disputes," in G. Bermant, H. Kelman and D. Warwick, eds.,*The Ethics of Social Intervention* (Washington, DC: Halstead Press, 1978); C. Moore, *The Mediation Process: Practical Strategies for Managing Conflict* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1996).

and helpful.

Rather, it seems that the Church facilitated the coming together of the various parties and was able to do so because all parties had some degree of knowledge and trust in the Church, despite its forthright claims of support for Solidarity and its active role in a negotiated transition. Indeed, Orszulik suggests that the Church was, "some kind of safety oasis, some kind of guarantee of safety."[38] Solidarity groups met in the Church; the Church used parish announcements to support Solidarity and was in turn trusted by Solidarity because of this moral alliance and the forthright support of the Pope. On the other hand, the Church also worked with the government: the regime wanted the Church to help moderate Solidarity activism and met with Church leaders secretly to encourage this prior to the 1980's. As Ciosek says, the regime trusted and understood the Church better as "another strong (autocratic?) structure than an unbridled Solidarity which was only in the state of emerging."[39] He supports Orszulik's argument that the Church mediated between communists and Solidarity. Thus, the Church appears as an "honest broker," one able to communicate with both the government and Solidarity, and to facilitate their communication with one another, but not one that in any sense was outside the struggle or impartial.

Most of the conflict resolution literature regarding third parties focuses on an external neutral party; here we see the development of an internal non-neutral third party, and we can imagine other variants. For instance, in the South African situation, it appears that Nelson Mandela played a crucial mediative role between the ANC and the Government, even as a member of one of the parties and a clearly non-neutral advocate of major transition. In a recent struggle around issues of racism at the University of Michigan, between protesting students and the Administration, Jesse Jackson played a useful third party role; no one had to wonder where Jackson's loyalties lay, but he was a mutually trusted (more or less), external but non-neutral third party.

As is typical for involved parties who also are active as "go-betweens," "brokers" or mediators, Orszulik indicates that at times the Church's mediative motives were questioned. Moreover, he acknowledges that indeed the Church had benefited, had increased its own legitimation as an important social institution, as a result of its mediative role. In a number of other seriously escalated conflicts, non-governmental organizations also have played key roles in "mediating" between, or facilitating communication among, regimes and challenging parties. Gidron et al. discuss a particular variant of these NGO's active in the Republic of South Africa and in the Israeli-Palestinian and Northern Ireland conflicts.[40] Called "Peace and Conflict

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[38] *Communism's Negotiated Collapse*, 53.

[39] Ibid., 173.

[40] B. Gidron, S. Katz, M. Meyer, Y. Hasenfeld, R. Schwartz, and J. Crane, "Peace and Conflict Resolution Organizations in Three Protracted Conflicts: Structures, Resources and Ideology," *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Non-Profit Organizations* 10(4) (1999): 275-98.

Resolution Organizations" (P/CRO's), they manage to convene conflicting parties, set the stage for mediation and strengthen the conflict resolution process; sometimes they also are directly involved in monitoring conflict, conducting mediation themselves, and training people in conflict resolution tactics. The dominance of the Church as a P/CRO in Poland, coupled with the monopolistic nature of the socialist state vis-à-vis voluntary and third sector organizations, may have masked or deterred recognition of the role other NGO's played in the Polish situation.

V. How Do Parties in Conflict Come to Trust Others Enough to Negotiate?

Several discussants point to the ways in which they used to (and perhaps still do) see the "other side" at the Round Table in stereotypic terms. These stereotypes, often born out of direct painful experience with one another, help maintain opponents as evil and the struggle as one between the forces of "light" and "darkness," and they play an important role in helping to mobilize partisans for protracted and risky struggle.[41] At the same time, when negotiations are possible, such demonization of opponents may make it impossible to see them with human faces and to communicate or negotiate effectively.

"Enemyship" often is a key element in escalated conflicts that require negotiations, even if they make coming to the table more difficult. As Michnik notes, he was coming to the table to negotiate with enemies[42] (not imagined enemies but people who had done him and his interests grievous harm). Indeed, he argues later that for genuine negotiations you must have genuine enemies,[43] not just opponents. (There is a really quite poignant and painful story Michnik tells of his desire not to shake hands with a notorious communist Round Table participant—he felt his wife would not let him back into the house if he did so—but despite his efforts to hide in the bathroom to avoid facing and greeting this person, he stumbled into the necessity of a handshake.)

Both "sides" (a telling term in itself) had previously used the metaphor of enemies to rally their own troops or to delegitimize others. For instance, Lityński states that Solidarity deliberately "treated the government as a monolith, if we refused to distinguish between hard-liners and liberals, then the government side would have to allow groups to emerge that would start negotiations."[44] But sometimes partisans didn't have to do much to accomplish this, as Bujak notes that the government tried to, "push us (Solidarity) into the terrorist position…as some sort of criminals, armed assailants."[45]

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[41] M. Chesler and J. Crowfoot, "The Concept of the 'Enemy'": Reflections on the Strategic Use of Language, in V. Suransky, et al., eds., *Paulo Freire in Ann Arbor* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan School of Education. 1981).

[42] *Communism's Negotiated Collapse*, 9.

[43] Ibid., 233.

[44] Ibid., 171.

[45] Ibid., 37.

Quite similarly, Dembowski suggests that he (and the Church) had no enemy, but that, "the authorities of Poland placed themselves opposite of me."[46] On the other hand, Rakowski wants it to be clear that he objects to the notion that, "our (government) intentions were evil and they (we) were all evil….I'm supposed to be a worse kind of Pole, and I cannot accept that decidedly."[47]

Several participants indicated that they had tried, and evidently still are trying, to diminish the enemyship rhetoric and perception. For instance, Ciosek pleads for people to recognize, "some of the value on our (government) side and notice that the Polish success is made up of goodwill on both sides, and not just one."[48] And Dembowski argues that the Church did care for opponents in the government.

A number of commentaries note how, as meetings progressed, some of these enemies did gain a human face and how direct interaction created human connections that permitted real talk and eventual agreement. Jankowska indicates that the Round Table, "allowed us to look at the opponents, at the partners, know them. And this is when the links were created, and they were quite necessary in order to perceive these people differently and try to understand their motivation, their way of thinking."[49] In the context of the Round Table, then, "these were our enemies…(but we showed them) an attitude of human respect (Hall)."[50] And as Reykowski reports with regard to the Solidarity people, "I was afraid of their radicalism and fundamentalism. And to my great surprise…I found that it was a very reasonable group of people, who were well prepared and with whom we could think together how to find solutions to the Polish situation." [51] Ciosek reiterates his position that at the Round Table "both sides acted in good will" [52] — but it is important to remember that not everyone felt that way (several Solidarity participants argued that the government did not negotiate in goodwill!).

The notion that Poland was a client state of the Soviets led many to the argument that the regime was not nativist but foreign (even if they were Poles) and evidence of an occupying power rather than a domestic dictatorship. That view does lead more quickly to fundamental distrust, supports enemyship notions of the regime, weakens the commitment to non-violence, and breaks down the integrative force (referred to earlier) of all participants being considered (by themselves and others) Poles, above all. Several different perspectives on the "construction of enemies," especially in the cold war context, are available in a special issue of *The Journal of Social Issues*, "The Image of the

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[46] Ibid., 114.
[47] Ibid., 164.
[48] Ibid., 64.
[49] Ibid., 96.
[50] Ibid., 177.
[51] Ibid., 140.
[52] Ibid., 175.

Enemy."[53] It would be interesting to consider how issues of "opponency" and "enemyship" escalate when the contestants are also of different (and historically warring) national/ethnic/racial/religious groups. Then we have seen people, parties and nations go beyond enemyship to use even more intractable terms such as "heathens," "foreign devils," members of an "evil empire," and "non/sub-humans" (as in US WWII views of the Japanese, etc.).

The Round Table certainly did not erase differences, or ill will, and even the discussions at the conference itself sometimes re-raised strong feelings of anger and hurt.[54] Participants for the various sides continued to argue—sometimes openly and sometimes subtly or indirectly—about the prevalence and mutuality of goodwill; generally government/Communist Party participants said there was a lot of it and it was mutual, and generally this was contested by Solidarity/opposition participants. As Michnik states, "an amnesty, yes, amnesia, no."[55] Finally, Ciosek remarks, "Each side used its own language to address its own constituency and used the conceptual apparatus appropriate for that constituency."[56] No wonder there are different stories to tell about serious conflicts: not only do people from different social/political locations see things differently, they each talk about what they see in different languages.

The development of some sort of trust in one's opponents, or (former) enemies, is essential for the negotiation process. But trust has various meanings, and interpersonal attraction or friendship is the least important ingredient in conflict resolution settings. More important is the ability to count on (trust) one's adversary to behave in a reliable and predictable way, hopefully but not necessarily in a way consistent with their public pronouncements, and to be committed to implement an agreement. Rubin, Pruitt and Kim argue that the key elements of trust in negotiating situations are perceptions that the other party is concerned about one's interests, acknowledges interdependency, and is willing to yield or compromise at some point.

It is common after difficult negotiations for participants to speak well of their former opponents for a while, thus to lay the groundwork for peace, for their varied constituents' willingness to accept an agreement, and for their ability to continue to work together. It also is common before, during, and after difficult negotiations for participants to continue to characterize their opponents or enemies in less than flattering ways; for the larger (and underlying) contest continues, and these characterizations (regardless of their truth value) are part of the continuing struggle for symbolic resources.

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[53] "The Image of the Enemy: US Views of the Soviet Union," *Journal of Social Issues* 45(2) (1989). Entire Special Issue.

[54] See Ciosek, *Communism's Negotiated Collapse*, 173-74.

[55] *Communism's Negotiated Collapse,* 234.

[56] Ibid., 175.

VI. Can, and How Can, Negotiations Lead to Systemic Change?

The goal of negotiation is in part to transform a process of contested and resisted (and potentially violent) unplanned change into a process of more collaborative (and relatively peaceful) planned change. Certainly this happened in the Polish situation. But how much systemic change was agreed upon and/or implemented in, or as a result of, the Polish Round Table? On the one hand the specific outcomes of the Polish Round Table are murky and unclear. No one was quite certain whether and which agreements would be kept—by the regime or by Solidarity. Nor was there clarity as to whether each major party was strong enough to "control" dissident elements within or without their own ranks. On the other hand it is clear that there has been a transition in Poland to a more or less stable democratic regime, with elements of economic openness and growth. There were negotiated changes, even major transitions, but there has not quite been a revolution.

The proof of the pudding of any negotiation or change process is in the action implementation that follows, not in the negotiating talk (or even its written agreements). The literature on many forms of "informal justice," and even "formal justice" (i.e., that decided by the courts), is replete with examples of agreements made and not kept. US Black activists such as Wilcox[57] provide examples of community-school and other civil rights negotiations that were violated or sabotaged immediately after they were concluded or that were vetoed by higher powers external to negotiations. There is continuing debate at the University of Michigan about whether the University ever has fulfilled the conditions that were apparently negotiated as part of the conclusion of the Black Action Movement strike in the early 1970's about Black and other minority enrollment goals (and this debate has been part of the fuel for later demonstrations, protests, counter-protest activity and general distrust). And even US federal court decisions about school desegregation, for instance (supposedly backed by the formal power of the law and the state), often never were implemented.[58] We can easily multiply the examples of this phenomenon and then reasonably ask what the conditions are (for the Round Table or any other process) that might maximize the likelihood of fulfilling agreements made.

Several researchers have tried to specify the conditions under which negotiated agreements are most likely to be kept…and implemented.[59] Fisher and Ury emphasize

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[57] P. Wilcox, "To Negotiate or Not to Negotiate: Toward a Definition of a Black Position," in W. Chalmers and G. Cormick, eds., *Racial Conflict and Negotiations* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan and Wayne State University, 1971).

[58] C. Bullock and C. Lamb, eds., *Implementation of Civil Rights Policy* (Monterey: Brooks/Cole, 1984); M. Chesler, J. Sanders, and D. Kalmuss, *Social Science in Court: Mobilizing Experts in the School Desegregation Cases* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988).

[59] M. Galanter, "Why the 'Haves' Come Out Ahead: Speculations on the Limits of Legal Change," *Law and Society Review* 9 (1974): 95-160.

the importance of "realistic commitments," and Susskind and Cruikshank likewise stress the criterion of feasibility: "Participants…should not strike a deal they will be unable to implement."[60] Susskind and Cruikshank also suggest that a monitoring process be established to confirm implementation processes, and that an agreement should contain a provision for review and potential renegotiation. The issue here is not just whether parties to a negotiated settlement did or will act in good faith: a non-implemented and failed agreement re-stokes the fires of discontent and distrust, making future agreements and system stability even less likely.

Just as there have been major changes in Poland since the Round Table, there have also been limits to its hoped-for material and symbolic outcomes; as Kaczyński notes, there is still a lot of political and economic work to be done. The economy struggles, and Janowski argues that Solidarity has ignored the rural community (and the farmers) and has been snooty and arrogant toward them. And as Michnik concludes, "It's a good moment to remember about those who've lost, those who are unemployed and homeless, those who are poor and buried in apathy, those who don't participate in elections, those who organize strikes and road blockades, uncertain about the day to come….Their fate should be of concern to all of us, from all those political camps."[61]

Over and above (or perhaps below and behind) this discussion of what changes really have occurred in Polish society over the past ten years, lies the question of whether the Round Table itself is responsible for any of these changes. Would they have happened anyway? Was the Round Table necessary? Chrzanowski suggests that if there had been no Round Table there still would have been major change of a liberalizing and democratizing sort. In his view the Round Table influenced the manner of changing power (peaceful and reconciliative rather than violent and punitive) rather than the fact of change itself. Davis, among others, argues that the regime was failing anyway. Ciosek counters, however, arguing that the Polish system was not falling apart by itself and needed the Round Table to work a good compromise. In his view Solidarity's way to the future was unclear and although the regime knew change was necessary it didn't know how to make it happen. And Michnik also doubts whether the regime would have collapsed by itself, without the assistance of the Round Table.

A Methodological and Strategic Note About Memory and Mythology

The creation of stories and myths about the Polish Round Table is another way of "telling history" and of "debating the telling of history." Since the historical record is a resource that is interpreted, misinterpreted and used in social struggles we can expect

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[60] Susskind and Cruikshank, 31.
[61] *Communism's Negotiated Collapse*, 235.

that the conference report[62], too, will be debated. It is in itself a narrative, one to be fought over and used in continuing struggles. Moreover, in this and other analyses we work from memory that is concretized in documents and in people's retelling of their stories. Memory is fallible. Memory is partisan. Memory makes it obvious that the struggle (both material and symbolic) is still alive. Memory and myth-making are resources that are used tactically (sometimes intentionally and sometimes unintentionally) in the underlying and ongoing social struggles in which negotiations are a temporary element

We see some of the continuing debate about the Round Table reflected in Michnik's opening comments about wanting to challenge/avoid the myths of the, "benevolence of the (Communist) party leaders…(and) the conspiracy of the reds with the pinks."[63] Hall identifies the same myths in somewhat different language, expressed as concern with the, "black legend that depicts the Round Table as a betrayal…(and) that both sides, Solidarity and the government, are being presented as equally concerned with the need for transforming Poland."[64] Several other Solidarity participants comment on these issues, often disagreeing about the Communist Party's benevolence, goodwill and voluntary participation in the Round Table. Comments also are made by some Solidarity members regarding their concerns about their own side's collaboration with the regime ("the meeting of the reds and the pinks").

Myths that participants in a struggle try to prevent, curtail or correct indicate the continuing struggle over the underlying issues and the perceptions depicted in conference proceedings and at stake in the Polish experience. As Hall notes, while respecting and acknowledging some of the positive behavior of the government's representatives, "we cannot create an impression that these fundamental differences have been blurred and that martial law, with its victims, and the whole balance sheet of the Polish People's Republic have been forgotten."[65] There seems little danger of that occurring, given the nature of the views expressed at the conference (not only from the stage but often from the floor), but the notion that peace and good will reign or reigned could no doubt assume mythic power in some people's minds (especially in the absence of clear voices to the contrary).

Another mythic element concerns the place of the Round Table in the history of negotiated transitions in the communist bloc. Ciosek argues that Poland (i.e., the Round Table), "was ahead of events outside (e.g., *perestroika*) and had a real and very visible impact on the course of events in the Soviet Union,"[66] as well as in other former states of the USSR. On the other hand, others argue that it was the weakness, imminent collapse,

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[62] I.e., *Communism's Negotiated Collapse.*

[63] *Communism's Negotiated Collapse,* 10.

[64] Ibid., 107.

[65] Ibid., 117.

[66] Ibid., 42-43.

or liberalization of the Soviet Union that opened the way for the Round Table.

Ciosek places a methodological cast on the issue of myths, suggesting that the re-telling of the Round Table story is problematic unless one does, as this conference did, emphasize the testimony of witnesses (first-hand) versus documents (which were created for political purposes), which do not reflect, "those informal conversations…where the real battle was going on."[67] But one might just as well raise questions about the objectivity and self-servingness of the witnesses at the conference, as they may have continued to try to justify their own and their constituency's roles in these retrospections.

So who is telling "the truth" regarding some of these debates or differing perceptions and memories? And, in the end, does it matter?

Some Important Possibilities for Comparison

Several somewhat similar conflict situations, conflict resolution processes, and negotiations can be examined to provide a comparative basis for these and other observations. One obvious set of comparisons could occur with other situations in which colonial or occupying powers (or what some parties may see as such) were brought to a negotiating stance—in part or in toto. Examples might include Israeli-Palestinian negotiations; the US government and Native American Indian tribes and similarly, the Canadian government's negotiations with Native Peoples; the South African case; resistance to wartime or post-wartime occupations in Europe and Asia; Northern Ireland; and some Truth Commissions. In all these cases, we would want to know about the patterns of resource allocation (including legitimacy and power) in the society and among the parties, the events leading up to and from negotiations, the processes and structures of negotiations, and how sufficient trust was developed in order to permit some sort of negotiations (successful or not) to ensue.

A second useful comparative base could be grassroots insurgencies against indigenous autocracies that led to some sort of negotiations. Examples might include the process of getting to elections in Nicaragua (with Sandanistas), efforts between US localities or corporations and Black or Latino/a protest movements (or more recent Latino and Asian-American parallels), indigenous Truth Commissions in Guatemala, Ethiopia, etc.

A third comparative base, but one that offers major contrasts with regard both to enemyship (much less vibrant than Poland and others above) and to a history and established structure of negotiation processes (much more experience than Poland and others above) could include heated disputes between activist organizations and corporate/government parties in the environmental arena, particular cases in US (and

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[67] Ibid., 40.

other nations') union-management/government disputes (including riots and police/army repression), and local community mobilizing efforts that end up in some sort of "informal justice" process. In these areas, there is a great deal of available literature on the processes of internal power balancing, mediation, negotiating tactics, constituency representation, etc.[68] There is much less literature and/or agreement on the role of negotiations in achieving systemic change, reductions in societal power imbalances and resource inequality, and reductions in injustice.

Discussion Questions for Classroom Use

These questions can be applied to the Polish situation and the Round Table (via the transcript or through the use of other primary/secondary sources). They also can be applied to other conflict situations and other resolution or negotiation arenas, through analysis of documentary materials or direct observation of contemporary events. Consider referring to the section on comparisons and applying these questions to other major state-level conflicts or to the case studies present in the references.[69]

I. How does one analyze the fundamental roots and developments of a social conflict?

Such analysis can help focus attention on the often unstated "interests" that lie beneath stated negotiating "positions", ideologies and rhetoric. It also can help identify possible options for intervention and/or resolution. Consider using Wehr's "conflict mapping guide"[70] to identify the important features of a conflict.

> +Conflict history
> +Conflict context
>   Scope and character
>   Setting (geographic, political)
> +Conflict parties
>   Primary (direct stake and highly impacted)
>   Secondary (indirect stake and minimally impacted)
>   Interested third parties

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[68] J. Crowfoot and J. Wondelleck, eds., *Environmental Disputes: Community Involvement in Conflict Resolution* (Washington: Island Press, 1990); Lewicki and Litterer; L. Nader and H. Todd, eds., *The Disputing Process: Law in Ten Societies* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978); Susskind and Cruikshank; Wehr.

[69] See especially Crowfoot and Wondelleck; Gidron, et al.; Lewicki and Litterer; Moore; Rubin, et al.; Susskind and Cruikshank; and Wehr.

[70] Wehr, 19-22.

+Issues in Disagreement
     Fact-based ("what is")
     Value-based ("what should be")
     Interest-based ("who will get what")
     Non-realistic ("personal style and quality of interaction/communication")
+Conflict Dynamics
     Precipitating events
     Issues emerging, transforming, proliferating
     Polarization (increase in intensity and disagreement)
     Spiraling (increases or decreases in hostility or damage)
     Stereotyping and mirror-imaging
+Alternative Routes to a Solution(s) of the Problem(s)
+Conflict Regulation Potential
     Internal limiting factors (interests, values, relationships in common)
     External limiting factors (higher authority who could intervene)
     Interested or neutral third parties
     Techniques of conflict management (knowledge/experience in their use)

A. Apply this map to the Polish situation and the Round Table.

B. Apply it to another social conflict at a different level of social system operation.

C. What are some alternative definitions of social justice?

D. Under what conditions are conceptions of justice negotiable?

E. What is "non-negotiable" in your life? In this class? In your identity group?

II. When is negotiation an appropriate strategy for dealing with strong and sustained disagreements or conflicts and attendant threats of increased violence?

This is one of the major questions raised throughout the Polish Round Table experience. Examine the Polish situation, or another negotiation situation, by focusing on issues such as:

A. What are the goals of negotiation in a particular conflict situation (justice/truth, increased freedom and democracy, material self-interest, the good of the whole, reduction of conflict and "noise")?

B. Why and how do participants choose between alternative social change strategies such as: armed struggle, protest and demonstration, use of official police force, local organizing, lobbying to affect legislation or regulation, petitions or appeals to elites, elections, slander and delegitimation through the media, etc.?

C. Is there a relative power balance among contesting parties? What are the forms of power that were used or were available to be used in a particular conflict situation: numbers of people, arms, moral high ground, public support, external support, regime legitimacy, etc.?

D. How and to what extent is a relative power balance created within the negotiating arena…at the table? What is the basis(es) of such relative power/vulnerability?

E. What tactics are used to mobilize and organize the challenging group? To support established authority and its dominant constituency?

F. What are the power dynamics within the ruling coalition and within the challenging movement (the government and Solidarity in the Polish situation)?

G. What conflict engagement/escalation/de-escalation/management/resolution strategies are useful under what general conditions? What is used in the particular conflict selected for analysis? When, at what stage of a conflict, are they (most) useful?

H. What are the tactics by which reluctant or resistant parties are brought to the table? How and why do such tactics vary over time?

I. What are the effects of negotiations on the internal dynamics of the contesting/collaborating parties and their relationships with their constituencies?

III. *What does it take for negotiation to work? How does it work?*

A. To what extent is it important that negotiating parties assume one another's good will or interest in the "common good"? What is the behavioral evidence (or the signals) of either good will or commitment to the good of the whole?

B. What mini-tactics can be used at the negotiating table to reduce or control major real differences in social/economic/political/coercive power between the parties?

C. How do people move from enemyship to respected (but not necessarily liked or fully trusted) opponents…or even (temporary) collaborators? Is it important to do that?

D. What is the difference between competitive versus integrative bargaining? Can you provide examples from case studies in the literature or from common practice?

E. How do negotiating representatives stay in touch with, and trusted by, their constituencies? How do they communicate with other potential allies outside the negotiating situation?

F. How do negotiators manage the personal (physical and emotional) pain of dealing with former enemies? With being labeled by friends and allies as a traitor, betrayer, "Uncle Tom," "Banana," "self-hating Jew," "turncoat," etc. (add your own labels and epithets from conflict situations you have known or been a part of)?

IV. What roles do or can mediators, arbiters or friendly convenors and honest brokers play? When are they especially likely to be useful and helpful?

A. Was there a third party at the Polish Round Table? Why or why not?

B. Can the Polish Round Table itself be considered a third party? An NGO? A P/CRO?

C. What are the critical differences between bargaining/negotiation, mediation and other third party processes?

D. Consider the roles of US Presidents Carter, Reagan and Clinton in sponsoring meetings and negotiations among parties to the Mideast conflicts and what happens when these parties meet without such sponsorship. Discuss other examples of US support, presence or intervention in national-international disputes.

E. How important is third party neutrality (is that possible or advisable when justice issues are involved)? What is the difference between "issue neutrality" and "process neutrality"? In the absence of neutrality, what makes an intervenor trustable and effective?

F. Is a third party always necessary to resolve an escalated conflict? Why or why not?

V. How does one (learn to) talk and work or act with enemies and opponents, or even strangers from very different social locations/identities? Here we also can learn from the efforts to create intergroup dialogues (in colleges and communities) that are focused on creating understanding as an essential precondition for peacemaking.

A. How can people "unlearn" group stereotypes and prejudices?

B. How can participants in social conflicts be helped to see "the other side" and how can they come to see the other side differently.

C. How do people who do not trust one another personally or politically manage to work together—in negotiation situations or on the job?

VI. What steps preparatory to, during, or after negotiations can help ensure that agreements made will be acted upon, implemented and fulfilled?

A. Is a formally signed agreement necessary (e.g., will a series of handshakes do)?

B. What examples are there of post-negotiation formal monitoring processes?

C. What provisions are there for revisiting or supplementing agreements?

D. What forces in the immediate political environment can constitute oversight checks on the implementation process?

E. Is it important for the general public to learn about agreements? How can that best happen?

VII. With regard to social science methods…

We can use this text regarding the Polish Round Table and Polish history to discuss a series of general methodological questions.

> A. How do you assess the comparative accuracy and utility of using archival material, oral histories, participant memory and "member validation" of observers' conclusions to come to an understanding of a contested and contentious situation?

> B. Identify other examples of "myths" (or extraordinary individual stories) that have been used as part of social movement struggles and official responses to these struggles.

Stepping Back: Around the Round Table

Gay W. Seidman

As we move into the twenty-first century, it is sometimes hard to remember just how much the Cold War dominated our political imaginations for most of the last fifty years. From 1945 to 1989, few policy-makers around the world would have taken seriously suggestions that Eastern European communism was on the verge of collapse, or that the Soviet Union would soon disintegrate. Within the Round Table discussions, as we can see from the comments of participants at the Michigan conference, participants on both sides overestimated the Polish government's strength: while government participants apparently thought they were creating a more legitimate basis for continued control, Polish opposition members thought they were maneuvering for political space. But at the first elections, the government discovered it had lost all control, while the opposition discovered it had somehow won power. How could they have all been so mistaken?

As we now know, the Round Table was simultaneously a portent of, and an important episode in, the end of the Cold War. But at the time, no one could have really understood that a war, which had gone on so long that no one questioned its underlying dynamics, was already over. Indeed, international policy analysts probably took as long to absorb the intellectual shock as the Soviet Union took to disintegrate, but by the early 1990's, they had to accept a new vision: in our global political imagination, the world was no longer divided between two superpowers, each willing to intervene in the areas they claimed as their sphere of influence. While Poland's step into self-determination marked a crucial moment, it was hardly the only one; the Round Table marked a new era, but neither initiated it, nor defined it. As a new political reality took hold, new political possibilities opened up everywhere. From Vietnam to South Africa, Ethiopia to Chile, Albania to Yemen, old alliances collapsed, old lines of conflict blurred, new fault-lines revealed themselves. By the early 1990's, "globalization" and a new emphasis on electoral processes had reduced the range of options available to governments: from Nicaragua, where a former leftwing government gave up power through elections, to El Salvador, where rightwing paramilitary forces accepted a negotiated settlement with

former guerrillas, consensus was framed by two basic assumptions.[1] First, all parties began to accept as a starting point that they would live within the constraints of neo-liberal economic strategies; by the late 1980's, the famous phrase, "There is no alternative," had become an ideological reality. Second, all parties to negotiations began to accept the definition of "democracy" as elections; political groups which rejected electoral processes found themselves isolated on the international stage, and increasingly losing support at home.

In these comments, I want to step back from the negotiating table, to look at the broader global context in which the Round Table talks took place, at the general processes that opened up discussions, borders and economies throughout the 1980's and early 1990's. After briefly reviewing the different approaches in the literature on "democratic transitions"—beginning with Western Europe and Latin America, and then moving on to Eastern Europe, South Africa and elsewhere—I want to discuss some of the global changes that produced a climate in which negotiated transitions began to seem possible. Above all, I want to insist that we cannot understand any single case of transition at the end of the Cold War in isolation: there were too many dramatic changes, in too many different parts of the world, to view the Round Table as entirely the product of a local balance of power, or even, the product of local actors' strategies. As the participants in the Michigan conference repeatedly recognized, external factors played an enormous role in pushing Poles to the table: international sanctions, American political pressure, changing policies within the Soviet Union, a pressing sense on all sides that economic reforms were inescapable, are all mentioned in the conference transcripts. To what extent are these external pressures specific to Poland, and to what extent had the bipolar dynamics of the Cold War already given way to new forces, provoking political and economic change across the globe, by the late 1980's?

Democratic Transitions

As the Polish participants in the Michigan conference reflect on their experience at the Round Table, the internal dynamics of Poland in 1989 clearly stand out in their minds; but the external pressures, from the diminished threat of Soviet invasion to the impact of economic sanctions from the West, stand as an evident backdrop to the more local events they describe. This kind of shift—away from focusing entirely the strategies brought to local negotiating tables by individuals, or even social movement representatives, to considering the impact of the global context in which negotiations were breaking out in the late 1980's and early 1990's—parallels a shift in theoretical discussions of what is often called "democratization," or "democratic transitions"

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[1]Jeffrey Paige, *Coffee and Power: Revolution and the Rise of Democracy in Central America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997).

through the 1990's. In the mid-1980's, many intellectuals, especially in Latin America, found themselves confronted by a shocking new phenomenon: after some fifteen years of explaining the prevalence of authoritarian rule in Latin America,[2] they found themselves trying to explain instead a series of sudden transitions to democracy. First in Spain and Portugal, then in Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay and eventually even Chile, military governments began to negotiate their way back to the barracks.

These transitions were often slow and controlled, as authoritarian governments gradually allowed changes in rules that permitted unexpected outcomes—instead of the strictly controlled electoral processes that mark authoritarian regimes. Former military officers often demanded restraints on the newly-formed governments, such as general amnesties for human rights violations, special privileges for military budgets, or even control over the choice of candidates for new "democratic" elections. But by the mid-1980's, many of the theorists that had previously linked Latin America's dependent capitalism with authoritarianism found themselves struggling to explain what appeared to be a new democratic impulse.

At first, most theoretical discussions of democratization focused on the negotiating strategies of the opposition. Often using metaphors drawn from game theory, intellectuals talked about what kind of strategies might support the "reformers" against the hard-liners in authoritarian regimes, or how best to widen the space for democratic activism.[3] Many of these theoreticians were themselves participants in specific opposition movements, and their academic debates paralleled real political discussions taking place among and within their countries' democratic oppositions. Often pointing to lessons based on the recent experiences of other countries undergoing similar transitions, these discussions frequently underscored the importance of creating new rules for the political game, in which everyone would learn to abide by electoral outcomes, accepting uncertainty and the possibility of losing power as a key aspect to building sustainable democracies—even if the negotiated rules required that the opposition abandon some of its demands, and restrained its followers from asking for redistribution of wealth and power as well as for democratic political space.[4]

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[2] Guillermo O'Donnell, *Modernization and Bureaucratic Authoritarianism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973); David Collier, ed., *New Authoritarianism in Latin America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980); Alain Rouquie, *The Military and the State in Latin America*, trans. Paul Sigmund (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987).

[3] Guillermo O'Donnell and Phillipe Schmitter, eds., *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986); Alfred Stepan, ed., *Democratizing Brazil* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989); J. Samuel Valenzuela and Arturo Valenzuela, eds., *Military Rule in Chile: Dictatorship and Oppositions* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986).

[4] Adam Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market: Political and Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Samuel Valenzuela, "Labor Movements in Transitions to Democracy," *Comparative Politics* 21:4 (1989): 445-72. But see Bruce Cumings, "The Abortive Abertura in South Korea in Light of the Latin American

The parallels between many of these theoretical discussions and the language used by participants in the Polish Round Table in the Michigan conference—the language of contingency, of mutual weakness and compromise, of commitment to a national project and to non-violence—are hardly accidental: they reflect the immediate concerns of activists engaged in a delicate effort to move beyond stalemate, towards defining new rules for the political process.

But over time, the tone of academic discussions of democratization began to change, as academic studies moved beyond the immediate negotiating strategies of players. As academics, who were not themselves players in negotiations, began to study the new "democratic transitions," more studies began to explore how specific social actors found themselves sitting at the table at all. While in the case of Poland this question does not appear to have been salient—apparently because Solidarity and the Catholic Church dominated the opposition so thoroughly[5]—throughout Latin America and elsewhere, sociologists and political scientists began to ask who were the organized democratic opposition, how they emerged in the interstices of authoritarian rule, and how social movements began to provide a broad constituency for democratic political activists.[6]

But even these studies tend to restrict their vision to a local focus: the dynamics of social movements tend to reflect local conditions, local contingencies and opportunities. Thus, for example, the specific character of urban growth in Brazil, or the daily needs of women and their families in Chile's *poblaciones*, help explain where and how social movements begin to emerge at the margins of authoritarian rule. Social

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Experience," *New Left Review* 173 (Jan-Feb 1989): 5-32; Scott Mainwaring, Guillermo O'Donnell and J. Samuel Valenzuela, eds., *Issues in Democratic Consolidation: The New South American Democracies in Comparative Perspective* (Notre Dame: Published for the Helen Kellogg Institute for International Studies by University of Notre Dame Press, 1992).

[5] Even in the case of Poland, however, a more skeptical examination of the representation of social movement constituencies in negotiations might ask which individuals actually appeared at the Round Table, and why. Thus, for example, the virtual absence of women might merit some discussion—although it appears to have been taken for granted by the participants who spoke at the Michigan conference.

[6]Arturo Escobar and Sonia Alvarez, eds., *The Making of Social Movements in Latin America: Identity, Strategy, and Democracy* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992); Sonia Alvarez, *Engendering Democracy in Brazil: Women's Movements in Transition Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990); Maria Helena Moreira Alves, *State and Opposition in Military Brazil* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1985); Norma Stoltz Chinchilla, "Marxism, Feminism and the Struggle for Democracy in Latin America," *Gender and Society* 5:3 (1991): 291-310; Elizabeth Jelin, ed., *Women and Social Change in Latin America* (London: Zed Books, 1990); Margaret Keck, *The Workers' Party and Democratization in Brazil* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992); Anthony Marx, *Lessons of Struggle: South African Internal Opposition, 1960-1990* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992); Deitrich Reuschemeyer, Evelyne Huber Stephans and John Stephans, *Capitalist Development and Democracy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992); Gay Seidman, *Manufacturing Militance: Workers' Movements in Brazil and South Africa, 1970-1985* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

movements take advantage of unintended contradictions in the rhetoric of authoritarian regimes, of moments of political opportunity, of divisions within the regime's leaders; but almost by definition, they must draw on local political culture, local symbols and local loyalties, to develop a popular base. Thus, while the social-movement perspective provides a different perspective on negotiations than the game-theoretical approach, it cannot explain the global surge of democratic transitions. For that, we need to look beyond any single case, to get a sense of whether and how larger global processes altered the pressures on authoritarians and democrats alike in the 1980's and 1990's, in a wide variety of places, but with similar effects.

Global Shift

Discussions of global change in the late twentieth century often take on a slightly ad hoc character: there is as yet no coherent theoretical matrix for understanding the kinds of global changes that led to democratization in authoritarian capitalist regimes as well as in the communist regimes of Eastern Europe. Debates persist about what globalization includes, about which aspects, if any, are new in the late twentieth century, about whether the uneven quality of its processes makes it so indistinct as to be virtually meaningless. Most discussions of what is frequently called "globalization" lump together dynamics as varied as the spread of new technologies and production processes, the spread of new consumption patterns, or changes in the rules governing international finance; yet in fact, most analysts acknowledge that each of these processes had its own dynamics, its own set of social actors, and each process looks slightly different from the perspective of different regions.

Yet while the peculiar concatenation of global processes from the mid-1980's may be highly path-dependent, and differs from place to place, the coincidence between the upsurge in democratic transitions and the end of the Cold War is hardly accidental: the pressures that pushed authoritarian regimes and democratic oppositions to negotiate in Latin America are, I would argue, closely related to those which led to the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War. In this section, I will describe some of these changes; while this picture will of necessity be simplistic and caricatured, it may help provide some of the context in which discussions like the Round Table became possible.

By the mid-1980's, it was no longer possible to ignore dramatic changes in the international economy. From the early 1960's, there had been a significant shift in the character of international investments by companies from America and Western Europe: for the first time, multinational corporations began to move overseas, building industrial plants in developing countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America.[7] Today, it is easy to

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[7] Peter Dicken, *Global Shift: The Internationalization of Economic Activity*, 2nd ed. (New York: The Guilford Press, 1992); David Held, Anthony McGrew, David Goldblatt and Jonathan

forget how relatively new this development is: before 1960, foreign investors in developing countries tended to restrict their vision to raw materials and agricultural goods, leaving industrial investment to local states and entrepreneurs. But as developing countries around the world became independent of their former colonial rulers, they followed the prescriptions of both modernization and Keynesian economists, seeking to attract capital into industrial production by providing infrastructural support, subsidies, and tariff protection—often with explicit support from American and European government agencies, who viewed this kind of subsidized, protected industrial expansion as the best recipe for the economic development they hoped would block the spread of communism into developing countries' impoverished urban populations.[8] From the 1950's to the mid-1970's, import-substitution industrialization (ISI)dovetailed easily with the goals of multinational corporations, who viewed the cheap labor and new markets of developing economies with eager eyes; through direct investment and through joint ventures, multinational corporations headquartered in the United States or in Europe found they could ally with local capital to begin industrial production in far flung corners of the world.[9]

But by the mid-1980's, ISI policies had begun to fall into disfavor among policy-makers and theoreticians alike: the protectionism inherent in ISI packages was considered to create inefficient companies, dependent on state subsidies and protection, preventing local consumers from buying goods that would be competitive on the world market. Particularly after the world realized the depth of the disaster of autarchy in Pol Pot's Cambodia, it became virtually impossible for development theorists to argue that industrialization required a complete break with the exploitative capitalist system. Instead, the emergence of "newly-industrialized countries" in East Asia suggested to many observers that rather than inevitable stagnation, involvement in the capitalist world offered new opportunities for trade and for growth.[10] By the mid-1980's, most developing countries sought greater integration into the world economy, rather than less.

This changing perspective was clearly strengthened by intellectual shifts and supported by powerful institutional actors, who from the late 1970's insisted that developing countries should open their economies along neo-liberal lines. By the mid-1980's, academic economists had generally become convinced that economic growth was

Perraton, *Global Transformations: Politics, Economics and Culture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999).

[8] Fred Cooper and Randall Packard, eds., *International Development and the Social Sciences* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

[9] F.H. Cardoso and Enzo Faletto, *Dependency and Development in Latin America,* trans. Marjory Mattingly Urquidi (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979); Peter Evans, *Dependent Development: The Alliance of Multinational, State, and Local Capital in Brazil* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979).

[10] World Bank, *World Development Report 1991* (Washington: World Bank, 1991).

directly linked to expanding trade: based largely on the experiences of East Asian NIC's like South Korea, the inward-looking vision of import substitution proponents was replaced by the view that export-oriented expansion would ultimately produce a more sustainable kind of growth.[11]

This intellectual shift coincided with major changes in the international financial world, both in terms of private banks and public institutions. From 1971, when the United States quietly took its currency off the gold standard, the fixed relationships between international currencies that had been in place since the Bretton Woods meetings of 1946 began to come apart; the "floating exchange rates" that began to dominate by the mid-1970's transformed the world of finance, creating new possibilities for international financial speculation. Recognizing the implications of these changes, in the late 1970's and early 1980's the British and American governments began to deregulate international financial dealings: the City of London and Wall Street re-emerged as centers of finance, in a world where tiny changes in the relative value of currencies could serve as a basis for vast new fortunes.[12]

At the same time, however, the International Monetary Fund shifted its role internationally[13]: the IMF moved away from serving simply as a source of short-term international trade credits, to an institution oriented toward bailing out indebted developing countries. Concomitantly with this shift, the IMF began to view its debtors with a different eye, relaxing its earlier restraints on interfering with borrowers' sovereignty. By 1979, the IMF was beginning to shift its stance in relation to borrowers: instead of simply assessing creditworthiness, the IMF began to attach conditions to loans, requiring that would-be borrowers agree to first economic, and later, political restructuring as a condition of new loans. Through the 1980's, governments which turned to the IMF for loans knew they would have to negotiate not only the rates of interest and the repayment schedule, but also the terms of future economic policy: broadly, economic growth was redefined in terms of trade expansion, and the IMF's commitment to reducing state expenditures and expanding export revenues became the guiding principle for developing countries across the globe. "Structural adjustment," as

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[11] Thomas Biersteker, "The Triumph of Liberal Economic Ideas in the Developing World," in Barbara Stallings, ed., *Global Change, Regional Response* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 174-98; Michael Carter, "Intellectual Openings and Policy Closures: Disequilibria in Contemporary Development Economics," in Frederick Cooper and Randall M. Packard, eds., *International Development and the Social Sciences* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 119-149; Gary Gereffi and Donald Wyman, eds., *Manufacturing Miracles: Paths of Industrialization in Latin America and East Asia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990); Robert Wade, "East Asia's Economic Success: Conflicting Perspectives, Partial Insights, Shaky Evidence," *World Politics* 44 (1992): 270-320.

[12] Eric Helleiner, *States and the Reemergence of Global Finance: From Bretton Woods to the 1990's* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994); Held, et al.

[13] Philip McMichael, *Development and Social Change: A Global Perspective* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press, 1996), 125-62.

it was called, involved reducing state expenditures, dropping protective tariffs and subsidies, and promoting export-oriented production; across Latin America and Africa, governments were required to slash budgets—cutting both civil service positions and social services to their citizens—and to open markets to imported goods, with the twin goals of reducing inflation and increasing trade.

By the mid-1980's, developing countries were clearly aware that a new international context constrained their options for development strategies[14]; the neo-liberal policies required by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, backed by conservative administrations in London and Washington, required privatization of public enterprises and production for export. The ideological shift was dramatic: whereas in the 1970's, developing countries had talked about human development as well as economic growth, by the mid-1980's, most third world governments no longer saw any viable alternative to neo-liberalism. Two decades earlier, when the Cold War was at its height, developing countries had often been able to manipulate Cold War rivalries, either by persuading superpowers to bid against each other in offers of economic and military aid, or by building a special relationship with a single superpower.

But by the 1980's, the Eastern European bloc could offer neither economic or strategic protection for countries that hoped to avoid the "savage capitalism" that marked so many developing economies. In the early 1960's, Cuba was able to use its relationship with the Soviet Union to sustain its economy despite the US boycott; in contrast, by 1980, the Soviet Union could no longer offer any such arrangements, even to governments that seemed completely willing to throw themselves into the Soviet camp, like the Sandinista government that took power in Nicaragua. The complete inability of the Soviet Union to provide real development aid to its allies had become undeniable. In the mid-1970's, the Soviet Union's acknowledgment of a serious grain shortage inevitably revealed its internal economic problems, while its drawn-out, disastrous engagement in Afghanistan underscored a lack of military capacity; in the early 1980's, its inability to provide more than rhetorical support for would-be socialist allies, from Nicaragua to Mozambique, underscored the weakness of its reach.

General awareness of these external weaknesses was, of course, paralleled by an increasing recognition of internal failure. Experts on Soviet history will no doubt continue to debate for decades to come the extent to which the Soviet Union's weaknesses in the mid-1980's were internally generated, or the result of pressure from the outside, as the Reagan administration engaged the Soviet union and its allies in a series of proxy battles around the edges of what Reagan considered the "evil empire." But from the perspective of global change, the crucial point here is that by the mid-1980's, even citizens of Russia itself were beginning to recognize that the Soviet Union's

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[14] McMichael; Barbara Stallings, ed., *Global Change, Regional Response* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

promises were wearing thin. As the rest of the world moved into a new technological era—as personal computers, VCR's, and other new technologies of daily life became easily accessible to the global middle class—even privileged residents of the Soviet bloc must have begun to make uncomfortable comparisons with the standard of living in global cities like New York, London, even Sao Paulo, and the standard of living in places like Moscow or Warsaw.[15]

Most of these shifts are directly related to the balance of power in the Cold War: they constrained the economic and political options of developing countries, putting pressure on governments to adopt export-oriented development strategies, staying firmly within the western camp. But there were also important changes within the western halls of power that provided a new impetus for democratization within the capitalist world. Many authoritarian regimes might have been able to respond to these pressures by restructuring their economies, shifting to a greater emphasis on private investment and ownership, without undergoing a simultaneous democratic transition.

But through the 1970's and 1980's, there was also another development, which might be said to be located outside the Cold War's dynamics: the emergence of an international human rights movement, which challenged authoritarian governments' treatment of their citizens, insisting on subjecting even allied governments to careful scrutiny. Just as the IMF decision to attach political and economic conditions to loans involved a recasting of the IMF's relation to sovereign states, the human rights movement's insistence that governments could be held accountable to a broader international community for their treatment of dissidents involved a subtle recasting of sovereignty, where states were no longer automatically treated as the legitimate representatives of their citizens.

This new emphasis on democratization and human rights owed as much to the work of activists and popular movements within developing countries—and, of course, to movements like Solidarity in places like Poland—as it does to the work of Western activists in organizations like Amnesty International or Human Rights Watch, of course. When middle-class mothers whose children had been kidnapped by security forces in the middle of the night began to hold weekly demonstrations in a central plaza in Buenos Aires, challenging a repressive military regime to produce their children, the impact of their silent demonstrations—as bereaved mothers held up photos of their disappeared relatives—was felt far beyond Argentina. When lawyers in Brazil's Bar Association began to assert that the military regime no longer conformed to the "rule of law," because it ignored rights of *habeas corpus* in its treatment of political prisoners, support for the military government began to erode even among the elite that had benefited from authoritarian economic growth strategies.

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[15] Ian Kearns, "Eastern and Central Europe in the World Political Economy," in Richard Stubbs and Geoffrey Underhill, eds., *Political Economy and the Changing Global Order* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), 378-89.

This new discourse of democratization spanned the political spectrum—or perhaps changed the character of that spectrum, redefining previously clearer, bipolar categories of "left" and "right." Authoritarianism in capitalist countries certainly eroded support for right-wing regimes, but from the perspective of left-wing groups around the world, the Soviet clampdown on Czechoslovakia in 1968 and the imposition of military rule in Poland in 1981, led to growing disillusionment with Soviet-style authoritarianism, and a growing reassessment of the "success" of the Soviet model. The growing influence of a more democratically-oriented, humanist "western Marxism" on left-leaning democratic parties around the world undermined Leninist vanguardism, with increasing emphasis being placed on democracy as a goal in itself rather than as a road to power, combined with a new concern for self-determination in a post-colonial world. In the mid-1970's, the Italian Communist Party opened a new path, declaring itself independent of the Soviet line and speaking of an "historic compromise" with democratic processes. With armed struggle receding as an acceptable or viable option for anti-authoritarian groups, and with a growing acceptance of the constraints imposed by the international context on development strategies, it became easier for even left-leaning opposition activists to view the state as an "arena of struggle" as well as an instrument of class domination—a view that underscored the importance of accepting the rules of the political process on all sides, even when it meant accepting defeat at the polls.

Historically, international policy-makers generally pretended that the internal affairs of their allies were none of their business: the assumption of sovereignty, on which the international institutions of the modern state system rest, required that policy-makers stay out of internal affairs. In reality, of course, powerful states have often meddled in the internal affairs of their weaker neighbors, not least through direct mechanisms such as colonialism; but the veneer of sovereignty long provided a convenient excuse for dubious alliances. From the early 1970's, however, an increasingly vocal international debate about the importance of democracy and human rights placed western governments under new pressure—especially as domestic constituencies became increasingly uncomfortable with the military and economic aid offered by their governments to repressive dictatorships. Even in the United States—where international policy had long been predicated on discussions of "national interest" and Cold War strategy, rather than on any considerations of morality—Congress decided to make human rights records a consideration in discussions about whether to provide economic or military aid; from the early 1970's, even close allies' human rights records became an official component of American international policy-making process. Although, in reality, many American politicians manipulated human rights issues –tending to find more human rights violations in countries they disliked than in countries with whom they hoped to build stronger alliances—the terms of the discussion changed dramatically in a very short time, as more and more politicians and voters became

convinced that human rights issues were legitimate grounds for concern in foreign policy, moving away from the sole focus on security issues that had marked most foreign policy debates during the Cold War's height.

The incorporation of human rights concerns into international policy debates was a complicated process, involving choices by specific individual policy makers as well as the mobilization of a new transnational social movement—or, at least, the mobilization of new networks of transnational activists, who viewed the human rights movement as something morally outside the limits of Cold War politics.[16] But it should not be underestimated as a powerful force in late twentieth century politics: by strengthening the position of those who stressed the construction of democratic institutions, it helped to add a democratic dimension to the transitions away from authoritarian rule.

Consolidating Democracy?

What did all these changes at the global level mean for internal discussions, and why should they have prompted a rise of negotiated transitions away from authoritarianism in contexts as disparate as Poland, South Africa, Chile or Yemen? There are, I think, several ways in which the new global context created the basis for discussion across seemingly wide gaps.

First, the new context reduced the scope for disagreement about economic policies: in a context where neo-liberal economic orthodoxies had become so dominant, few policy-makers were willing to continue to promote radically different options. It is telling, for example, that the Polish government representatives at the Round Table do not seem to have been any less concerned about economic reform than their opposition: both sides seem to have agreed that economic reform, including privatization, was desperately needed, especially in the face of the economic sanctions imposed in the early 1980's. In South Africa, government officials believed that the collapse of the Eastern European model undermined the strength of anti-apartheid activists' demands for redistribution of wealth; in the early 1990's, they believed they could insist on protections for private property as a basic starting point for negotiations. At first, anti-apartheid activists attempted to challenge that protection; but even leading anti-apartheid activists backed away from dramatic redistribution. Moreover, since the neo-liberal economic package requires private investment, governments and reformers alike

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[16] Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998); Liisa Malkki, "Citizens of Humanity: Internationalism and the Imagined Community of Nations," *Diaspora* 3:1 (1994): 41-68; Connie McNeely, ed., *Public Rights, Public Rules: Constituting Citizens in the World Polity and National Policy* (New York: Garland Pub., 1998).

became concerned about retaining the confidence of the business classes—which requires political stability and economic predictability. Without a viable alternative economic proposal—and with international institutions reinforcing the neo-liberal model, insisting that international loans would be tied to specific kinds of economic strategy—the economic proposals of governments and reformers everywhere began to come closer together, making negotiation around political processes easier everywhere.

Second, the new context limited the ability of both authoritarians and oppositions to imagine that they could continue to sustain political repression as a strategy for rule. Facing western concerns about human rights, and lacking any chance of support from Eastern Europe, authoritarian regimes recognized there were real consequences for taking a repressive path: not only would economic and military aid be cut off, but local elites were increasingly likely to reject a government that was too repressive. At the same time, oppositional movements became increasingly skilled at seeking international attention and support. Throughout the 1990's, country after country moved toward elections that were open to outside supervision, seeking to demonstrate through electoral results their governments' popular legitimation.

To say that global dynamics pushed local social actors towards compromise on two key issues of contention is not, of course, to deny the local specificity of each democratization process in the 1990's. Even the two basic starting points—neo-liberal economic policies and democratic elections—were open to broad reinterpretation in specific instances. Inevitably, the local balance of power between different forces was crucial to how these global pressures were interpreted and defined. The term "neo-liberal" can be applied to a range of economic packages, ranging from strict privatization and unregulated markets to policies that provide degrees of freedom within strict regulatory frameworks. Similarly, the label "democratic" has been applied to elections ranging from truly open political processes to processes where voters who made the wrong choice at the polls faced the real threat of paramilitary repression. Nevertheless, without taking account of the shift in global forces, it would be impossible to explain why so many countries seemed to move toward negotiations in the late twentieth century, or to understand the common patterns that seem to emerge in those negotiations within wildly different settings.

Ten years after the Round Table, discussions of "democratic transitions" in Latin America, Africa, Asia and even Eastern Europe have moved away from asking about the basis of consensus and compromise, to questions about the way forward.[17] What do we mean by "democracy" and "citizenship," and how can we consolidate the institutions best able to sustain them? What are the best policies to promote economic growth in

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[17] For example, Glenn Adler and Eddie Webster, "Toward a Class Compromise in South Africa's 'Double Transition': Bargained Liberalization and the Consolidation of Democracy," *Politics and Society*, 27:3 (1999): 347-85; Elizabeth Jelin and Eric Hershberg, *Constructing Democracy: Human Rights, Citizenship, and Society in Latin America* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996).

specific settings? What kind of political institutions best protect and expand citizenship? How can states simultaneously promote the private entrepreneurship required for neo-liberal growth, and provide its weaker citizens with the social services they need? How can we ensure that people in marginalized industries, countries, regions—people who lost their jobs when industries collapsed in the face of global competitions, countries which have been unable to find an economic niche in the new global economy, regions which collapsed into persistent and brutal warfare when superpowers dropped Cold War alliances –are not completely overlooked in the new global context? As several participants in the Michigan conference noted, processes like the Round Table may mark the end of one kind of conflict; but instead of seeing democratization as the end, perhaps we should see it as the beginning. The new regimes that emerged in the post-Cold War moment face new challenges, new questions, as they seek to consolidate new democracies in the context of continuing globalization.

Glossary

This glossary is intended as a guide to people, organizations, and terminology that appear in the excerpts and full transcript from the conference, "Communism's Negotiated Collapse: The Polish Round Table, Ten Years Later."[1]

People[2]

Balcerowicz, Leszek (1947-): Economist; member of the PZPR, 1969-1981; member of Solidarity since 1980; author of the "shock therapy" economic reform plan of 1990; Finance Minister and Vice-Premier, 1898-1991, 1997-present; member of UD and UW

Bartoszewski, Władysław (1922-): Prisoner at Auschwitz, 1940-1941; soldier for the AK, 1942-1945; imprisoned during the Stalinist era; staff member at the Catholic weekly, *Tygodnik Powszechny* (*The Universal Weekly*) since 1957, lecturer for the "Flying University" from 1978-1990; member of Solidarity since 1980; Polish ambassador to Austria since 1990.

Bender, Ryszard (1932-): Professor of History at the Catholic University of Lublin and conservative politician; participant in the Round Table negotiations; Delegate to the Sejm, 1985-1989; Senator, 1991-1993, Chair of the National Council for TV and Radio, 1994.

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[1] The full transcript, *Communism's Negotiated Collapse: The Polish Round Table, Ten Years Later. A Conference at the University of Michigan. April 7-10, 1999. English Transcript of the Conference Proceedings*, trans. by Kasia Kietlinska, ed. by Donna Parmelee (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Center for Russian and East European Studies, 1999), is available at <www.umich.edu/~iinet/PolishRoundTable/frame.html>.

[2] For explanation of abbreviations, see section on "Organizations and Terminology" below.

Bierut, Bolesław (1892-1956): Leader of the Polish communists during the Stalinist era; Secretary General of the PZPR, 1948-1954; First Secretary of the PZPR, 1954-1956; President of Poland 1947-1952; Premier, 1952-1954.

Bruszt, László: Professor of Political Science and Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs at Central European University; Co-founder and National Secretary of the Democratic League of Independent Trade Unions in Hungary, 1988-1992; participant in Hungarian round table negotiations.

Brzeziński, Zbigniew (1928-): American political scientist of Polish descent; Professor of Political Science at Columbia University since 1961; co-author, with Carl J. Friedrich, of *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy* (Harvard University Press, 1956); member of National Security Council under President Jimmy Carter, 1977-1980.

Bujak, Zbigniew (1954-): Worker at the Ursus tractor factory since 1977; member of Solidarity since 1980; Chair of Solidarity in the Mazowsze region, 1981-1986; highest ranking Solidarity figure to avoid arrest, 1981-1986; member of Solidarity's National Executive Committee, 1987-1989; participant in the Round Table negotiations; Delegate to the Sejm, 1991-1997; Director of the Polish Customs Office, 1999-present; member of UD/UW.

Celiński, Andrzej (1950-): Expelled from the University of Warsaw in March 1968 for involvement in student protests; member of KOR; member of Solidarity since 1980; participant in the Round Table negotiations; Senator, 1989-1993; Delegate to the Sejm, 1993-present; member of UD/UW.

Chrzanowski, Wiesław (1923-): Professor of Law at the Catholic University of Lublin; member of the AK, 1942-1944; imprisoned for participating in the organization of the Union of Christian Youth, 1948-1956; advisor to Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński since 1965; member of Solidarity since 1980; co-founder and President of the Christian-National Union, 1989-1994; Minister of Justice in 1991; Marshal of the Sejm, 1991-1993; Senator, 1997-present.

Ciosek, Stanisław (1939-): Member of the PZPR, 1959-1990; Delegate to the Sejm, 1972-1985; regional First Secretary of the PZPR, 1975-1980; member of the Central Committee of the PZPR, 1980-1981, 1986-1990; member of the Council of Ministers, 1980-1985; General Secretary of the PZPR, 1986-1988; Ambassador to Moscow, 1990-1996.

Cyrankiewicz, Józef (1911-1989): Member of the PPS before WWII; prisoner at Auschwitz during the War; member of the Politburo, 1948-1971; Premier, 1947-1952, 1954-1970.

Czyrek, Józef (1928-): Member of Politburo and Secretary of the Central Committee, 1981-1989; Minister of Foreign Affairs, 1980-1982; Delegate to the Sejm, 1985-1989.

Dai Qing: Dissident journalist and environmental activist in China; imprisoned after Tiananmen Square massacre of 1989.

Davis, Helen: As wife of the US Ambassador to Poland in the 1980's, hosted a series of informal meetings between the Round Table participants.

Davis, John: U.S. foreign service officer since 1955; served in the US embassy in Warsaw 1960-1963, 1973-1976, 1983-1988, and (as Ambassador), 1988-1990.

Dąbrowski, Bronisław (1917-1997): Assistant Archbishop of the Warsaw Diocese, 1962-1993; Secretary of the Polish Episcopate, 1969-1993; participant in the Round Table negotiations.

Dembowski, Bronisław (1927-): Professor of Philosophy at the Catholic University of Lublin since 1981; participant in the Round Table negotiations; Bishop of the Diocese of Włocławek, 1992-present.

Dmowski, Roman (1864-1939): Founder and leader of the radical-right National Democratic movement before WWII.

Frasyniuk, Władysław (1954-): Labor activist from Silesia, member of Solidarity since 1980; member of Solidarity Executive Commission since 1987; Delegate to the Sejm, 1991-present; member of UD/UW.

Geremek, Bronisław (1932-): Professor of History at the Polish Academy of Sciences since 1965; advisor to Solidarity since 1980; leader of Solidarity delegation at the Round Table negotiations; Delegate to the Sejm, 1989-present; Foreign Minister, 1997-2000; member of UD/ UW.

Gierek, Edward (1913-): Communist activist since the 1930's; First Secretary of the PZPR, 1970-1980.

Glemp, Józef (1929-): Roman Catholic Primate of Poland and Archbishop of Warsaw and Gniezno, 1981-present; Cardinal, 1983-present.

Gomułka, Władysław (1905-1982): Communist activist since the 1920's; General Secretary of the PPR, 1944-1949; Vice-Premier, 1945-1947; imprisoned 1951-1954; First Secretary of the PZPR, 1956-1970.

Gwiazda, Andrzej (1935-): Co-founder of the Free Trade Union of the Coast, 1978; participant in the Gdańsk strikes of 1980; vice-chair of Solidarity, 1980-1981.

Hall, Aleksander (1953-): Journalist and high-school history teacher; co-founder of the Young Poland Movement in 1979; member of Solidarity since 1980; participant in the Round Table negotiations; Delegate to the Sejm since 1989; co-founder of the Conservative Party in 1992.

Herbert, Zbigniew (1924-1998): One of Poland's most prominent poets.

Hlond, August (1881-1948): Roman Catholic Primate of Poland, 1926-1948; Cardinal, 1927-1948.

Jagielski, Mieczysław (1924-1997): Communist activist since the 1940's; member of Politburo, 1971-1980; Vice-Premier, 1971-1975; Professor of Economics at the Main School of Planning and Statistics since 1975; head of the government delegation that negotiated with the shipyard workers in Gdańsk in 1980.

Janas, Zbigniew (1953-): Worker at the Ursus tractor factory since the 1970's; member of KOR; member of Solidarity since 1980; participant in the Round Table negotiations; Delegate to the Sejm since 1989; member of UD/UW.

Jankowska, Janina (1939-): Broadcast journalist; covered the Gdańsk shipyard strikes and the creation of Solidarity in 1980; produced clandestine audio documentaries in the 1980's; participant in Round Table negotiations; managed Solidarity's TV and radio electoral campaign in 1989; chair of the Program Council of Polish Radio since 1993.

Janowski, Gabriel (1947-): Farmer; instructor at the Warsaw College of Agriculture, 1974-1988; activist in Solidarity and Rural Solidarity since 1980; Senator 1989-1991; deputy in the Sejm 1991-present; member of AWS.

Jaroszewicz, Piotr (1909-1992): Member of PZPR; Vice-Premier, 1952-1970; Premier, 1970-1980.

Jaruzelski, Wojciech (1923-): Member of PPR and PZPR since 1947; Chief of the General Staff of the Polish Army, 1965-1968; Minister of Defense, 1968-1983; directed military assault on striking workers in Gdańsk, 1970; First Secretary of the PZPR, 1981-1989; Premier, 1981-1985; declared martial law and outlawed Solidarity, 1981; President, 1989-1990.

Kaczyński, Jarosław (1949-): Member of KOR; member of Solidarity since 1980; participant in the Round Table negotiations; Senator, 1989-1990; Delegate to the Sejm 1991-1993, 1997-present; chair of the PC from 1991.

Kaczyński, Lech (1949-): Professor of Law at the University of Gdańsk and the Catholic Theological Academy in Warsaw; member of KOR; member of Solidarity since 1980; participant in the Round Table negotiations; Senator, 1989-1991; Delegate to the Sejm, 1991-1993; President of the Chief Inspectorate, 1992-1995; member of the PC.

Kádár, Janos (1912-1989): Became First Secretary of the Hungarian Communist Party after the repression of the Hungarian Revolution of 1956; introduced the "New Economic Mechanism" in 1960's, which partially decentralized the Hungarian economy; forced out of power in 1988.

Kiszczak, Czesław (1925-): Served in Polish army as an intelligence officer since 1945; member of PPR/PZPR since 1945; Minister of Internal Affairs, 1981-1990; directed implementation of martial law in 1981; Vice-Premier 1989-1990; worked to facilitate negotiations leading to Round Table negotiations.

Kołakowski, Leszek (1927-): One of Poland's most prominent twentieth century philosophers; Professor at the University of Warsaw and Polish Academy of Sciences, 1964-1968; expelled from PZPR, 1966; forced into exile, 1968; Professor at Oxford University, 1970-present; representative of KOR abroad; member of Polish Academy of Sciences since 1991.

Konwicki, Tadeusz (1926-): Author and filmmaker; major works include *The Polish Complex* (1977) and *The Little Apocalypse* (1979).

Krzaklewski, Marian (1950-): Member of Solidarity since 1980; chair of Solidarity since 1991; co-founder and chair of AWS, 1996; Delegate to the Sejm since 1997.

Kukliński, Ryszard (1930-): Head of the Strategic Planning Office of the Polish General Staff, 1976-1981; worked as a CIA agent since 1970; left Poland for the United States in 1981.

Kuroń, Jacek (1934-): Anticommunist dissident since the 1960's; co-founder of KOR; member of Solidarity since 1980; participant in Round Table negotiations; Minister of Labor and Social Policy, 1989-1990, 1992-1993; co-chair of UD, 1991-1994; presidential candidate from UW, 1995.

Kwaśniewski, Aleksander (1954-): Member of the PZPR, 1977-1989; editor of *Sztandar Młodych* (*The Banner of the Youth*), 1984-1985; Minister for Youth Affairs, 1985-1987; Chair of the Committee for Youth and Sports, 1987-1990; chair of the Polish Olympic Committee, 1988-1991; participant in the Round Table negotiations; chair of SdRP, 1990-1995; chair of parliamentary delegation of SLD, 1991-1995; President, 1995-present.

Lityński, Jan (1946-): Imprisoned for student activism in 1968; member of KOR and editor of their periodicals, *Biuletyn Informacyjny* (*Informational Bulletin*) and *Robotnik* (*The Worker*), member of Solidarity since 1980; Delegate to the Sejm since 1989; member of UD/UW.

Macharski, Franciszek (1927-): Instructor at the Kraków Seminary since 1961; rector, 1970-1979; close advisor to Cardinal Karol Wojtyła (later Pope John Paul II); Cardinal since 1979.

Mazowiecki, Tadeusz (1927-): Co-founder of the Warsaw Club of Catholic Intellectuals, 1957; co-founder and editor of the Catholic monthly, *Więź*, 1958; advisor during Gdańsk strikes of 1980; member of Solidarity since 1980; participant in Round Table negotiations; first non-communist Premier, 1989-1990; co-founder and chair of UD/UW to 1995.

Michnik, Adam (1946-): Dissident since the 1960's; member of KOR; member of Solidarity since 1980; editor-in-chief of *Gazeta Wyborcza* (*The Electoral Gazette*), Poland's largest-circulation daily.

Mikołajczyk, Stanisław (1901-1966): Premier in the exiled Polish government, 1943-1945; Vice-Premier in communist-dominated "Government of National Unity," 1945-1947; forced into exile once again in 1947; leader of PSL from 1945.

Miller, Leszek (1946-): Secretary of the Central Committee of the PZPR, 1988-1990; participant in the Round Table negotiations; Minister of Labor and Social Affairs, 1993-1996; Minister of Internal Affairs, 1997; Chair of the SdRP/SLD, 1997-present.

Miodowicz, Alfred (1929-): Steelworker since 1952; chair of OPZZ, 1984-1991; member of the Politburo, 1986-1989; participant in the Round Table negotiations.

Moczar, Mieczysław (1913-1986): Member of the PPR/PZPR since 1942; Minister of Internal Affairs, 1964-1968; Secretary of the Central Committee of the PZPR, 1968-1971; member of the Politburo, 1980-1981; leader of the "partisans," a nationalist faction within the PZPR.

Modzelewski, Karol (1937-): Professor of History at the University of Wrocław; member of the PZPR, 1957-1964; dissident since 1964; member of Solidarity since 1980; Senator, 1989-1991; honorary chair of UP, 1992-1995.

Okulicki, Leopold (1898-1946): Fought for Polish independence during WWI; soldier in the Polish Army since 1918; interned by the Soviets during the early part of WWII; after release, commander of the AK, 1944-1945; arrested by communists in 1945; died in prison.

Olszewski, Jan (1930-): Lawyer; dissident since the 1950's; member of KOR; member of Solidarity since 1980; participant in the Round Table negotiations; Premier, 1991-1992; co-founder and chair of ROP, 1995-present.

Onyszkiewicz, Janusz (1937-): Mathematician; dissident since 1968; member of Solidarity since 1980; press spokesman for Solidarity, 1981-1989; Delegate to the Sejm, 1988-present; Minister of Defense, 1992-1993, 1997-present; member of UD/UW.

Orszulik, Bishop Alojzy (1928-): Director of the Press Department of the Polish Episcopate, 1968-1993; Bishop of the Diocese of Łowicz since 1982; participant in the Round Table negotiations.

Ossowska, Maria (1896-1974): Professor of Sociology at the University of Warsaw from 1948; director of the Department of the History and Theory of Morality at the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology in the Polish Academy of Sciences, 1956-1962.

Paczkowski, Andrzej (1938-): Professor of History at the Polish Academy of Sciences since 1991; specialist on the contemporary history of Poland; member of the Institute for National Memory, 1999-present.

Piłsudski, Józef (1867-1935): Co-founder of the PPS in 1893; fought for Polish independence during W.W.I; Head of State in Poland, 1918-1922; led coup d'état in 1926 to establish authoritarian government.

Pipes, Richard: Professor of History at Harvard; specialist in Soviet history; advisor to President Ronald Reagan.

Popiełuszko, Jerzy (1947-84): Roman Catholic priest; member of Solidarity since 1980; murdered by security police for his dissident activities.

Raina, Peter: Conservative Catholic publicist, author of several books in Polish and English on the Catholic Church in Poland.

Rakowski, Mieczysław (1926-): member of the PPR/PZPR since WWII; editor-in-chief of the weekly magazine *Polityka* (*Politics*), 1958-1982; member of the Politburo, 1987-1990; First Secretary of the PZPR, 1989-1990; Vice-Premier, 1981-1985; Premier, 1989-1990**.**

Reykowski, Janusz (1929-): Professor of Social Psychology at the University of Warsaw; Director of the Institute of Psychology at the Polish Academy of Sciences; head of the government delegation at the Round Table negotiations.

Romanowski, Bolesław (1910-1968): Navy commander and submariner.

Siła-Nowicki, Władysław (1913-1994): Lawyer and Christian-democratic activist; member of the AK, 1941-1945; imprisoned for anti-Communist activities, 1947-1956; member of Solidarity since 1980; participant in the Round Table negotiations.

Siwicki, Florian (1925-): Soldier and member of the PPR/PZPR since 1943; commander of the Polish forces which invaded Czechoslovakia in 1968 to put down the "Prague Spring"; Minister of Defense, 1981-1983; member of the Central Committee of the PZPR, 1975-1990; member of the Politburo, 1986-1990.

Staniszewska, Grażyna (1949-): High school teacher and librarian in Bielsko-Biała (southern Poland); member of Solidarity since 1980; participant in the Round Table negotiations; Delegate to the Sejm since 1989; member of UD/UW.

Stelmachowski, Andrzej (1925-): member of the AK during W.W.II; Professor of Law at the University of Wrocław and the University of Warsaw since 1962; member of Solidarity since 1980; chair of the Warsaw Club of Catholic Intellectuals, 1987-1990; Marshal of the Senate, 1989-1990; Minister of Education, 1991-1992.

Stroba, Jerzy (1919-1999): Roman Catholic Bishop of Szczecin, 1972-1979; Archbishop of Poznań, 1979-1999.

Szymańska, Irena (1899-1981): Prominent ballet dancer at the Grand Theater in Warsaw; instructor and director at the Ballet School of Warsaw.

Tatarkiewicz, Władysław (1886-1980): Professor of Philosophy and Art History at the University of Wilno, the University of Poznań, and the University of Warsaw.

Tischner, Father Józef (1931-2000): Roman Catholic priest; Professor of Philosophy at the Papal Theological Academy in Kraków; journalist for the Catholic weekly, *Tygodnik Powszechny* (*The Universal Weekly*).

Torańska, Teresa (1946-): Journalist; author of the famous 1985 book, *Oni* (*Them*), about the Stalinist era in Poland.

Urban, Jerzy (1933-): Journalist for the weekly *Polityka* (*Politics*), 1961-1981; press spokesman for the government, 1981-1989; participant in the Round Table negotiations; editor of the satirical weekly *Nie* (*No*) since 1990.

Walc, Jan (1948-1993): Literary critic and journalist; member of KOR.

Wałęsa, Lech (1943-): Electrician and labor activist; co-founder of the Free Trade Union of the Coast, 1978; leader of the Gdańsk shipyard strikes of 1980; chair of Solidarity, 1980-1990; winner of Nobel Peace Prize, 1983; participant in Round Table negotiations; President, 1990-1995.

Wielowieyski, Andrzej (1927-): soldier in the AK, 1943-1945; journalist for Catholic monthly *Więź,* 1961-1980; secretary of the Warsaw Catholic Intellectuals' Club, 1972-1981, 1984-1989; member of Solidarity since 1980; participant in the Round Table negotiations; Senator, 1989-1991; Delegate to the Sejm, 1991-1993.

Wyszyński, Cardinal Stefan (1901-1981): Roman Catholic Primate and Cardinal, 1952-1980.

Zakrzewski, Jan: Officer in the Polish Armed Forces in the West, 1940-1945; television and radio journalist, 1957-1983.

Organizations and Terminology

AK (Armia Krajowa; The Home Army): the Polish underground army during WWII.

AWS (Akcja Wyborcza Solidarność; Solidarity Electoral Action): a conservative, Catholic political organization founded in 1996. It includes several dozen small political parties, including the Christian-National Union, the Center Alliance, the Conservative-Populist Party, the Christian Democrats of the III Republic, and more. Led by Marian Krzaklewski. In 1997 the AWS entered into an alliance with the Freedom Union to form a government.

Bydgoszcz: a city in north-central Poland; the site of a violent police action in 1981 which led to a tense confrontation between Solidarity and the regime.

CBOS (Centrum Badania Opinii Społecznej; Center for the Study of Public Opinion): established in 1982; generally considered to be a reliable source of polling data.

Central Committee: a relatively large institution within the communist party, charged with ultimate powers of appointment and policy-making (though in practice usually subordinate to the Politburo).

Citizen's Committee: created in 1989 to run against the PZPR in the first partially-free elections.

Club of Catholic Intellectuals: network of independent discussion groups created in 1958; allowed to function legally during the communist era.

Comintern: colloquial name for the Soviet-dominated Third International, which existed 1919-1943.

Częstochowa: the monastery here was the site of an important military victory in the seventeenth century, popularly attributed to the intervention of the Virgin Mary,

whose icon hangs here; today millions of Poles each year make pilgrimages to Częstochowa.

Episcopate: an institution made up of all the Roman Catholic bishops in a given country.

Gazeta Wyborcza (*The Electoral Gazette*)**:** newspaper formed in 1989 as an organ for Solidarity; today Poland's largest-circulation daily.

"Grey Ranks" (Szare Szeregi): underground resistance group during WWII, made up of members of the pre-war Boy Scouts.

Jachranka: resort community near Warsaw; the site of an important conference in 1998 where many of the leading politicians from the early 1980's debated the legacy of Solidarity and the era of martial law.

KOR (Komitet Obrony Robotników; Committee for the Defense of Workers): created in 1976 by Adam Michnik, Jacek Kuroń, Edward Lipiński, Jan-Józef Lipski, Jan Lityński, Antoni Macierewicz, and others to provide aid to workers who suffered repression because of labor activism or political dissent; marked an important turning point by creating an alliance between the intelligentsia and the workers in the struggle against the communist regime.

KPP (Komunistyczna Partia Polski; Polish Communist Party): a radical left party existing illegally in Poland from 1918-1937; closely linked to the Soviet Union; dissolved by Stalin.

Kultura (*Culture*)**:** an important émigré periodical published in Paris since 1947.

Lenin Shipyards: the enormous facility in Gdańsk that was the focal point of labor unrest during the communist era; strikes here in 1970 led to a violent military crackdown; strikes here in 1980 led to the creation of Solidarity.

"Lojalki": declarations of loyalty, which the communist government attempted to extract from political prisoners.

London Government: colloquial name for the exiled Polish government during WWII.

Magdalenka: a village near Warsaw where the leading negotiators at the Round Table talks met privately to work out some of the impasses encountered during public

discussions; today the name is a metaphor for those who allege that a secret deal was reached in 1989 which allowed the communists to retain their influence.

Mazowsze: the region in central Poland that includes Warsaw; an important base for the Solidarity movement.

Milicja Obywatelska (Civic Militia): the police during the communist era.

Miracle on the Vistula: colloquial name for a battle in 1920, which repelled a Soviet attack during the Polish-Soviet war of 1919-1921.

Nowa Huta: a massive industrial complex near Kraków built shortly after World War II; one of the main sites of the industrial unrest in 1988 that contributed to the start of the Round Table negotiations.

NSZZ "Solidarność" (Niezależny Samorządny Związek Zawodowy "Solidarność"; The Independent Self-Governing Trade Union, "Solidarity"): the full official name of Solidarity.

October "Thaw": colloquial name for the reforms instituted after Władysław Gomułka became the First Secretary of the PZPR in October 1957.

OPZZ (Ogólnopolskie Porozumienie Związków Zawodowych; The All-Poland Alliance of Labor Unions): a state-sponsored union created in 1984 in an effort to draw labor support away from Solidarity.

PAX: a pro-communist Catholic organization formed in 1952.

PC (Porozumienie Centrum; The Center Alliance): center-right political party formed in 1990 by Lech Kaczyński and Jarosław Kaczyński; today part of AWS.

Politburo: the day-to-day governing body of the communist party; technically (though not usually in practice) subordinate to the decisions of the larger Central Committee.

Polityka (*Politics*)**:** an important monthly magazine founded in 1957; during the communist era, considered to be the organ of the moderate faction of the PZPR.

PPS (Polska Partia Socjalistyczna; Polish Socialist Party): formed in 1892 with the dual objectives of a socialist revolution and national independence; one of Poland's

largest political parties during the interwar years; absorbed by the PPR to create the PZPR in 1948; re-established in 1987, but marginal today.

PPR (Polksa Partia Robotnicza; Polish Workers' Party): the name for Poland's communist party from 1942-1948, at the time when it seized power.

Primate: the highest official of the Roman Catholic Church in a particular country.

PRON (Patriotyczny Ruch Odrodzenia Narodowego; Patriotic Movement for National Rebirth): organization founded by the government in 1982 in an attempt to provide a manageable forum for non-communists to participate in public life; widely perceived among opposition figures as meaningless propaganda ploy.

PSL (Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe; The Polish Populist Party): a peasant party formed in 1895; under the leadership of Stanisław Mikołajczyk, became the focal point of legal opposition to the communists from 1945-1947; dissolved in 1949 to create the ZSL; re-established in 1990.

PZPR (Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza; Polish United Workers' Party): the name for Poland's communist party from 1948-1989; created by the merger of the PPS and the PPR.

Rural Solidarity: created in 1980 as a rural counterpart to the Solidarity movement.

Sejm: the Polish parliament.

SdRP (Socjaldemokracja Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej; The Social-Democratic Party of the Polish Republic): the successor party to the PZPR, after the latter's dissolution in 1989; dissolved in 1999 with the reorganization of the SLD.

SLD (Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej; The Alliance of the Democratic Left): political organization created around the SdRP, the OPZZ, and several other smaller leftist parties; reorganized and centralized in 1999 as the Party of the Democratic Left (Stronnictwo Lewicy Demokratycznej; still SLD); held power in Poland (together with the Polish Populist Party) from 1994-1997.

Small Constitution: colloquial name for the set of laws passed in 1992 establishing the governing institutions of Poland, pending the passage of a new constitution (which was finally accomplished in 1997).

Solidarity (Solidarność): a labor union and protest movement created in August, 1980, as a result of a nation-wide wave of strikes; at its peak in 1980 it had approximately ten million members; outlawed after declaration of martial law in December, 1981, but continued to organize underground opposition to the communists throughout the 1980's; relegalized as a result of the Round Table talks of 1989.

Synod: a periodic conference of bishops, organized when there is a perceived need to deal with a special set of problems.

TKK (Tymczasowy Komisja Koordynacyjna; Provisional Coordinating Commission): the governing body of Solidarity from 1982-1987.

UD (Unia Demokratyczna; The Democratic Union): liberal party created in 1990 from the center-left wing of the Solidarity movement; leading members include Jacek Kuroń, Tadeusz Mazowiecki, Zbigniew Bujak, and Adam Michnik; merged with The Liberal-Democratic Congress in 1994 to create the UW.

UP (Unia Pracy; The Labor Union): social democratic party created in 1992 from a number of smaller leftist organizations; includes both former members of the Solidarity movement and some former communists.

Ursus Tractor Factory: a huge firm near Warsaw that was the site of much labor unrest during the communist era, most notably in 1976; one of the leading centers of strength for the Solidarity movement; employees included Zbigniew Bujak and Zbigniew Janas.

UW (Unia Wolności; The Freedom Union): created in 1994 with union of UD and Liberal-Democratic Congress; a sometimes awkward amalgamation of moderate Catholics (such as Tadeusz Mazowiecki), social-welfare liberals (such as Jacek Kuroń and Adam Michnik), and free market liberals (such as Leszek Balcerowicz); since 1997, part of a coalition government with AWS.

Viceroy's Palace: the former seat of the Russian governor during the era of the partitions; used variously in the 20th century as the seat of the Council of Ministers and as the presidential palace (its current use); in 1989, the site of the Round Table negotiations.

Więź **(The Bond):** a Catholic monthly founded in 1958; allowed to publish legally throughout the communist era.

WRON (Wojskowa Rada Ocalenia Narodowego; Military Council for National Salvation): organized in 1980 to govern during the period of martial law.

Young Poland Movement: a Catholic, nationalist, conservative opposition movement founded in 1979 by Aleksander Hall.

Znak (*The Sign*)**:** a legal Catholic periodical during the communist era; also, the name given to a small group of Catholics allowed to hold parliamentary seats, 1957-1976.

ZSL (Zjednoczone Stronnictwo Ludowe; The United Populist Party): created 1949 after the dissolution of the PSL; allowed to send delegates to parliament throughout the communist era, but had no autonomy or power; rebelled against the communists in 1989 by supporting the creation of the Mazowiecki government.

Contributors

László Bruszt is Associate Professor of Political Science at Central European University in Budapest. He participated in the Hungarian Round Table discussions as the permanent representative of the League of Independent Trade Unions. The coauthor of *Pathways from State Socialism* (1998), he has published widely on problems of interest representation and corporatism.

Mark Chesler is Professor of Sociology at the University of Michigan. His specialties include action research; conflict resolution; racism, sexism and multicultural organizations; and psychological aspects of cancer. His recent publications include articles and edited journals on diversity and change in organizations and the coauthored volume *Cancer and Self-Help: Bridging the Troubled Waters of Childhood Illness* (1996). He actively consults with universities, corporations, public agencies, and community groups on problems of conflict and change.

Michael D. Kennedy is Vice Provost for International Affairs, Director of the International Institute, and Associate Professor of Sociology at the University of Michigan. He has conducted extensive research on intellectuals, professions, civil society, and the nation in East Central Europe, particularly Poland. His books include *Professionals, Power, and Solidarity in Poland: A Critical Sociology of Soviet-Type Society* (1991), the edited volume *Envisioning Eastern Europe: Postcommunist Cultural Studies* (1994), and the coedited volumes *Intellectuals and the Articulation of the Nation* (1999) *Globalizations and Social Movements: Culture, Power and the Transnational Public Sphere* (2000). He is currently completing a book on postcommunism's cultural formations.

Heinz Klug is Assistant Professor of Law at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. A specialist in comparative constitutional law, international law, and property, he has published several articles on land reform and constitution-making in South Africa. He is the author of *Constituting Democracy: Law, Globalism and South Africa's Political Reconstruction* (2000), and is currently doing research on the impact of the AIDS crisis on the struggle over international patent protection.

Jan Kubik is Associate Professor of Political Science and Director of the Center for Russian, Central and East European Studies at Rutgers University. His research interests include politics and culture, local level politics, protest and movement politics, and postcommunist transformations. He is the author of *The Power of Symbols Against the Symbols of Power: The Rise of Solidarity and the Fall of State Socialism in Poland* (1994) and coauthor of *Rebellious Civil Society: Popular Protest and Democratic Consolidation in Poland, 1989-1993* (1999). Currently he is doing research on the role of historical legacies in postcommunism.

Margarita Nafpaktitis is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures at the University of Michigan. She is completing a thesis on the semantics of space in the literature of Russian modernism.

Stephanie Platz is Assistant Professor of History at the University of Michigan. A specialist in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Armenian history and culture, she has published several articles on problems of identity, ethnicity, and nationalism. She is currently completing a book on the relationships among history, science, and Armenian national identity.

Donna Parmelee, a sociologist and Balkan specialist, is Manager of Sponsored Projects and Administrative Associate at the Center for Russian and East European Studies and International Institute at the University of Michigan.

Brian Porter is Associate Professor of History at the University of Michigan, and the author of *When Nationalism Began to Hate: Imagining Modern Politics in Nineteenth-Century Poland* (2000). His work focuses on the intellectual history and political culture of East-Central Europe in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Currently he is conducting research for a book about the emergence and development of Catholic patriotism in Poland.

Gay W. Seidman is Associate Professor of Sociology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Her research interests include labor movements in developing countries, gender ideologies, racial stratification, and economic restructuring. The author of *Manufacturing Militance: Workers' Movements in Brazil and South Africa, 1970-1985* (1994), she is currently doing research on transnational labor activism.